

 POINT ¹⁹  LOMA ⁰² NAZARENE UNIVERSITY	Department of Communication Studies
	COM 1090-1 Interpersonal Communication 3 Units
Fall 2024	

Meeting days: M/W/F	Professor: Dr. Lisa Raser
Meeting times: 11:00 - 11:55 am	Phone: 619-849-2585
Meeting location: Cabrillo Hall 202	Email: lraser@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Dec 16 th , 10:30 am	Office location: Cabrillo Hall 201
Office Hours: M and F afternoons by apt.	

PLNU MISSION

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

REQUIRED MATERIALS & RESOURCES

Guerrero, L. K., Andersen, P. A., & Afifi, W. A. (2021). *Close encounters: Communication in relationships* (6th ed.). Sage Press.

Rosenberg, M. (2015) *Nonviolent communication: A language of life* (3rd ed.). Puddle dancer Press.

Additional course materials will be posted on Canvas.

→ Please read and save this syllabus. If you remain in the course after the first day of class, you are stipulating that you will abide by the university and course policies described within this syllabus.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Description: Focuses on the social scientific study of dyadic (two-person) communication. Opportunities are given to integrate theory and practice in an effort to stimulate self-awareness and highlight taken-for granted aspects of interpersonal communicative behavior.

And more... Relationships are a central component of our everyday lives and influence how we construct our personal sense of identity. In this course, we will be taking a relational approach to the study of interpersonal communication (communication between individuals) by focusing mainly on close relationships (family, friends, romantic partners). We will critique positive and negative communication patterns that we have observed in the media and past interactions and we will apply interpersonal theory and concepts to improve our communication within our own close relationships. In addition, we will be learning the language of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) to implement into our daily interactions. Through NVC practice and reflection, we will cultivate a practice of empathetic communication to both self and others.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Explain theories and concepts of interpersonal communication and apply these concepts to personal relationships.
- Identify the guiding principles of Nonviolent Communication and apply this communication process/language to your relationships, workplaces, and communities.
- Distinguish empathetic communication from other forms of non-empathetic communication and demonstrate empathic communication to both self and others.
- Evaluate the positive and negative effects of communication behaviors and their impact on close relationships.
- Self-reflect and assess your own communication behaviors in relationships through journaling and sharing in a supportive group environment.

COURSE FORMAT AND POLICIES

Support: I am committed to helping every student attain their best possible education.

I am here to help! Please do not hesitate to ask questions, or ask for help, in or out of class. I will also be available if you would like me to review your work and give you feedback before it is turned in or presented. If you have any needs that it would be helpful for me to be aware of, please do let me know.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy: Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

COM 1090 Attendance Policy: As members of a learning community, your presence is appreciated, and your absence is noticed. The class sessions are set up to help people learn from each other (through discussions, activities, etc.) and you are expected to attend each class session. Everyone has useful and insightful information to offer to the class. Participation is the core of this work, and to help keep track of that, I take attendance.

You are allowed two (2) absences in the course of the semester without penalty. The only absences excused after that will be university approved absences (see section below). It is your choice how you use these absences and it is encouraged that you use them wisely. Please note that these 2 absences DO include instances of illness and family obligations. Each absence over two will result in a 10-point deduction to your overall grade.

University Approved Absences: Absences for certain events and obligations recognized by the University (i.e.: participation in sports, forensics, music tours, field trips, etc.) may be counted as “excused.” Please notify me at least one week prior to such absences with documentation and contact information from the sponsoring program/department. You are responsible for making up all work missed due to absences in a timely manner, to be worked out ahead of time with me.

Late to Class/Leaving Early: It is an expectation of this class community that we begin our class time together, and complete our class time together each day. Instances of habitual lateness are a distraction to our class community and will impact your ability to participate fully in the course. Please talk to me early in the semester if you have any concerns about arriving to class on time.

Being absent for more than 20 minutes during any part of a class period, whether at the beginning, middle, or end, will constitute an absence. Similarly, it is expected that you remain actively engaged in the classroom discussion and activities until the end of the class period. If you absolutely must leave early one day for a personal/emergency reason, please let me know at the class period prior or via email before class. (During advising time, please arrange any advising meetings with your academic adviser so that they do not conflict with your class schedule.)

Late Work/Make-Up Work: All assignments are to be submitted/turned in according to the due dates set on this syllabus schedule and on Canvas. In general, no late or makeup written assignments/presentations/exams will be allowed. Please communicate with me in advance of an assignment due date (not the day of) if you are concerned that an illness or other personal hardship may prevent you from turning in an assignment on time. Presentation dates are your commitment and should not be changed, as changes impact class planning. Exam or presentation makeups will only be considered in the rare instance of a documented illness or personal emergency and you have notified me prior to the beginning of class.

Incompletes: Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances, given reasonable justification.

Electronic Devices: The use of cell phones and laptops during class is prohibited unless I ask for them to be used as a specific part of a class activity. Please join me in turning off or silencing all cell phones, laptops, and similar electronic devices and keeping them out of sight for the duration of class. You will need to bring a laptop to class to take the reading quiz on quiz days (see syllabus schedule).

Notetaking in Class: Please plan to take lecture notes in class by writing rather than typing and using a pen/pencil and paper. A notebook is recommended to keep all class notes together and organized. Laptops will not be permitted for notetaking. A tablet with a stylus that lays flat on

the desk is the only electronic device that will be permitted for notetaking in class. The purpose of this policy is to limit multitasking and distractions during lecture for yourself and others.

This notetaking policy was influenced by two important pieces of research: 1. Faria Sana, Tina Weston, and Nicholas J. Cepeda, "Laptop Multitasking Hinders Classroom Learning for Both Users and Nearby Peers," *Computers and Education* (March 2013): "We found that participants who multitasked on a laptop during a lecture scored lower on a test compared to those who did not multitask, and participants who were in direct view of a multitasking peer scored lower on a test compared to those who were not. The results demonstrate that multitasking on a laptop poses a significant distraction to both users and fellow students and can be detrimental to comprehension of lecture content." 2. Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking" (April 2014). In this study, the authors found that students who hand wrote their notes during lectures remembered more material than students who used laptops for notetaking because they could not write everything down verbatim. The extra processing required by the hand writers to select important over extraneous information was beneficial for their retention of the material they were learning.

Email: I will frequently use email to communicate with you and I do my best to respond to your emails as promptly as possible. If you send me an email after 5 pm, or over the weekend or on a holiday, I will respond on the following school day.

Written Work: It is my expectation that all submitted writing will be clear, coherent, and free of grammatical/spelling errors. Please proofread all written work – your grade will reflect both the substance and the style of your writing.

Exam Policy: Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The midterm exam and final exam will not be given before or after our assigned date/time. Please arrange any activities or transportation for the breaks around this exam schedule so that you can be present at the assigned time. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy: Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy: Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) may only be used to generate IDEAS. You are not allowed to use AI tools to generate CONTENT (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any intention to use AI, or any concerns about using AI, please consult with the instructor.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy: PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

Spiritual Care: PLNU strives to be a place where students grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain, or if you have prayer requests, you can contact the [Office of Student Life and Formation](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination: In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix. If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

State Authorization: State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU Copyright Policy: Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification: In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel. Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Empathy Practice Groups: In an effort to grow our Nonviolent Communication skills within the context of community, you will meet with a group of classmates of your choice in an empathy practice group. You will meet with your group at least three times and you will have the opportunity to practice giving and receiving empathy and expressing yourself honestly. All group members must be present together for each meeting. Empathy practice groups give you a space to reflect on what you are learning and apply it along with others who are engaging the same material. After each meeting, you will write and submit a reflection that summarizes the ways that your empathy group members met your needs and how you contributed to the lives of your empathy group members. A guide (along with more assignment details) for these meetings will be provided on Canvas.

NVC Journals: Your NVC journals will include reflections on thoughts, feelings, and observations from a current or past experience of your choosing. You will use a specific guide for these journals and we will look at a sample together in class. Ideally, try journaling once a week, and I will collect at least one journal entry twice during the semester. (You may turn in what you consider to be your best, most complete and in-depth efforts, and keep the others as practice.) Please type your NVC journals and submit them to Canvas. In reviewing the journals, I will be looking for completion and a thorough use of the NVC components. I will offer supportive feedback/guidance on these, rather than scrupulous editing.

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam in this course. These exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice, T/F, fill-in-the-blank, and short response/essay questions. No early or late make-up exams will be given. Please arrange any activities and transportation for the breaks around our schedule so that you can be present to take the tests at the assigned time.

Reading Quizzes and Reading Notes: You will have quizzes throughout the semester (see course schedule for dates) on the assigned chapters of reading. Quizzes will consist of a mix of multiple choice, T/F, fill-in-the-blank, and short response/essay questions. Please make sure that you have a laptop with you in class to complete the quiz on Canvas with Honorlock proctoring. You may not take quizzes on your phone or on a tablet. If you do not have a laptop to bring to class that is set up with Honorlock, please let Dr. Raser know in advance. **At the end of the semester, the quiz with the lowest score will be dropped.**

Please bring one sheet of paper (8.5 x 11, front and back) of handwritten notes to class as an aid for the quiz. You can receive up to 10 points for turning in your notes with your quiz if at least one side of the page is fully complete and your notes adequately cover both chapters of reading. A maximum of 5 points are assigned if the notes only cover one chapter of reading, rather than both. These should be your own original notes – no credit will be given if they appear identical to a classmate’s notes.

Quiz Policy: Quizzes will not be given early or late. If you are absent (for illness, travel, etc.) on the day of a quiz, that first quiz grade will be dropped. If you miss more than one quiz, make-up quizzes will only be given if you have an illness or other personal hardship and you notify me in advance of your absence. Exception to this policy: a first and subsequent missed quiz may be made up only for instances of university approved absences (debate team, athletic team travel, field trip for another class, etc.). Reading quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. If you come late to class, you will not be given extra time to complete a quiz.

Final Project: You will develop and produce a final creative project for this class that reflects and extends your learning and interests in the course. You will choose a topic from the course that you would like to explore further (i.e.: self-disclosure, expressing anger, long-distance relationships) and a genre/modality for how to explore that topic (a video, podcast, magazine, social media campaign, website, workshop, NVC letters, game, etc.) You will submit a tangible/deliverable component of your project to Canvas and present your project to the class in a graded presentation with quality visuals. We will talk about examples in class so that you can brainstorm ideas and receive feedback on your project proposal before starting your project. You may complete this project and presentation individually, or with a partner of your choice.

In-Class (or Canvas) Assignments: At times, you will be given short assignments or exercises in class (or on Canvas) that are worth points toward your final grade. These assignments may include written responses/reflections, collaborations, podcast notes, etc. The point value for these assignments may vary, but will be clearly designated on the assignment.

ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Grade Scale (% to Letter):

93-100	A	73-76.9%	C
90-92.9%	A-	70-72.9%	C-
87-89.9%	B+	67-69.9%	D+
83-86.9%	B	63-66.9%	D
80-82.9%	B-	60-62.9%	D-
77-79.9%	C+	0-59	F

Rounding: Typically, grades follow the scale above and are not rounded up. Rounding of grades is only done in rare circumstances when the percentage point after the decimal is extremely close to the next grade and the student has demonstrated exemplary participation and effort in the course. **Any possible changes are made by instructor discretion; please do not request that your grade be rounded up.**

Point Distribution

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	Number of Points AVAILABLE	Number of Points I EARNED
Reading Quizzes (20 pts each x 5)	100	
Reading Notes (10 pts each x 5)	50	
NVC Journals 1 & 2	50	
Empathy Practice Group Reflections (15 pts x 3)	45	
Midterm Exam	60	
Final Exam	100	
Final Project & Presentation	100	
In-Class (or Canvas) Assignments	50	
TOTAL	555	
- Absence/Tardy penalties (10 pts. per absence after 2 absences)	(e.g., 3 absences = -10)	

NOTE: There may be adjustments made to the point values/totals listed above. Each assignment will be clearly marked with the point value when assigned in class or on Canvas.

Student grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book after each assignment has been graded. It is important to read the comments written on your assignment or posted on Canvas as these comments are intended to help you improve your work.

COM 1090 Course Schedule

- Subject to change with fair notice.
- Please complete reading prior to arriving at class on the assigned due date.

WK	Date	In-Class	Reading/Assignments Due
1	W 9/4	Welcome/Course Intro	Introductions and review of the course syllabus & schedule
	F 9/6	Definitions and Principles of Relational Communication	Close Encounters Ch. 1 Take the Honorlock practice quiz
2	M 9/9	Giving from the Heart	NVC Ch. 1
	W 9/11	Communicating Identity Practice Reading Quiz (on Ch. 2 of CE and NVC) & submit EC notes	Close Encounters Ch. 2 Optional: Prepare extra credit notes for practice quiz
	F 9/13	Communication that Blocks Compassion	NVC Ch. 2
3	M 9/16	Forces of Social Attraction Reading Quiz (on Ch. 3 of CE and NVC) & submit notes	Close Encounters Ch. 3 Prepare notes for quiz
	W 9/18	Forces of Social Attraction Discuss Empathy Practice Groups	
	F 9/20	Observing without Evaluating	NVC Ch. 3
4	M 9/23	Managing Uncertainty	Close Encounters Ch. 4
	W 9/25	Identifying and Expressing Feelings	NVC Ch. 4
	F 9/27	Changing Relationships Reading Quiz (on Ch. 5 of CE and NVC) & submit notes	Close Encounters Ch. 5 Prepare notes for quiz
5	M 9/30	Changing Relationships	
	W 10/2	Taking Responsibility for our Feelings	NVC Ch. 5
	F 10/4	Meet with your Empathy Practice Groups on your own during class time (Come to class first)	Empathy Practice Group Reflection 1 Due by Sun 10/6 by 11:59 pm
6	M 10/7	Revealing and Hiding Ourselves Reading Quiz (on Ch. 6 of CE and NVC) & submit notes	Close Encounters Ch. 6 Prepare notes for quiz
	W 10/9	Revealing and Hiding Ourselves	
	F 10/11	Making Requests	NVC Ch. 6
7	M 10/14	Class discussion of <i>Rising Strong</i> Ch. 6 Audiobook Chapter.	Listening Guide due to Canvas before class. Listen to <i>Rising Strong</i> Audiobook Ch 6: <i>Sewer Rats and Scofflaws</i>
	W 10/16	Communicating Closeness Reading Quiz (on Ch. 7 of CE and NVC) & submit notes	Close Encounters Ch. 7 Prepare notes for quiz
	F 10/18	Receiving Empathically	NVC Ch. 7

			NVC Journal 1 Due on Canvas by 11:59 pm
8	M 10/21	Communicating Closeness through social support	
	W 10/23	Midterm Exam	Midterm Exam (Ch. 1-7 of CE & NVC) Review Study Guide Please note: The midterm will not be given before or after this date/time.
	F 10/25	<i>Fall Break</i>	<i>No Classes</i>
9	M 10/28	Making a Love Connection	Close Encounters Ch. 8
	W 10/30	The Power of Empathy	NVC Ch. 8
	F 11/1	Navigating Difficult Dialogues Workshop	
10	M 11/4	Staying Close Connecting Compassionately with Ourselves	Close Encounters Ch. 10 NVC Ch. 9
	W 11/6	Class discussion on podcast episode, <i>Just Sex</i>	Podcast reflection due on Canvas before class
	F 11/8	Meet with your Empathy Practice Groups on your own during class time (Come to class first)	Empathy Practice Group Reflection 2 Due by Sun 11/10 by 11:59 pm Review Final Project Guidelines on Canvas
11	M 11/11	Coping with Conflict Reading Quiz (on Ch 11 of CE and Ch 10 of NVC) & submit notes	Close Encounters Ch. 11 Prepare notes for quiz
	W 11/13	Coping with Conflict Discuss Final Project Examples	
	F 11/15	Expressing Anger Fully	NVC Ch. 10 Final project plan due on Canvas by 11:59 pm
12	M 11/18	Influencing Each Other	Close Encounters Ch. 12
	W 11/20	Hurting the Ones We Love & The Protective Use of Force Reading Quiz (on Ch 13 of CE and Ch 12 of NVC) & submit notes	Close Encounters Ch. 13 NVC Ch 12 Prepare notes for quiz
	F 11/22	Healing the Hurt: Communicating Forgiveness and Apologies	Close Encounters Ch. 14
13	M 11/25	Healing the Hurt (cont.)	NVC Journal 2 Due on Canvas by 11:59 pm
	W 11/27	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	<i>No Class</i>
	M 11/29	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	<i>No Class</i>
14	M 12/2	Ending Relationships Expressing NVC Appreciation	Close Encounters Ch. 15 NVC 14

	W 12/4	Meet with your Empathy Practice Groups on your own during class time (Come to class first).	
	F 12/6	Final Project Presentations	Project materials due to Canvas by 11:59 pm
15	M 12/9	Final Project Presentations	
	W 12/11	Final Project Presentations	
	F 12/13	Final Project Presentations	Empathy Practice Group Reflection 3 Due on Canvas by 11:59 pm
16	Finals Week	Final Exam 10:30 am – 1:00 pm Monday, Dec 16 th	Final Exam CE (Ch. 8-15), NVC (Ch. 8-14). Review study guide. The final exam will not be given early before our assigned date/time.