

COMM 360: Interviewing - Theory & Practice

192:360:06 - Winter 2011
MTWThF 6:00 - 9:00 pm
Scott Hall 120

Contact information:

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(the yellow house across from SC&I)

Office hours: 3:30 - 5 pm, MTWThR (and by appointment)

Course Description:

In the broadest sense, whether it be asking your classmates about a class session you missed or exchanging personal beliefs with a potential romantic partner, interviewing is an important part of our everyday communicative practices. According to University of Texas Professor John Daly¹, interviewing is “a concentrated attempt to understand another person through direct and immediate communication”. In this course, we will examine interviewing as a genre of social interaction, that is used to collect and disseminate spoken information under a variety of conditions. Put another way, this semester we will explore various forms of focused conversation. Throughout the semester we will seek to accomplish the following objectives:

- Increase your awareness and understanding of the interview as a communicative event
- Develop your understanding of the communication processes and related factors that shape the outcomes of the various types of interviews.
- Enhance your knowledge of theory and research findings to help you to choose effective communication strategies for specific contexts of goal-oriented conversation
- Improve your skills as both an interviewer and interviewee in a variety of interview contexts through analyzing and participating in goal-oriented communication.

Prerequisites:

Although COMM 360 assumes no prior knowledge of the subject matter, the course is intended for students with a *genuine interest in the topic*. Without such an interest this course may be difficult, tortuous, boring and painful; however, *with* such an interest, it can be a memorable experience, one you will carry with you for a long time to come. Please talk to me if you have questions or concerns.

Course web site:

Sakai will be a central resource for information and you will be expected to check it regularly. Announcements (emergency class cancellations), student grades, and the additional required readings will all be posted on the Sakai page.

¹ Daly's own interviewing course at the University of Texas - Austin had a significant influence on me when I designed and taught this course for the first time in 2008.

Materials & Readings:

Readings are to be done by the date assigned to them in the Course Schedule. Lectures are designed to supplement, *not replace*, the readings. You will be tested on materials from both lectures and the readings.

1. **REQUIRED:** An handheld audio recorder for recording the interviews the interviews you conduct for the class. You can buy a decent one for as cheap as (\$15 - 20 digital/mp3 compatible recorders may work best for you since you can upload the audio files directly to your computer and have an easier time at data transcription than wasting time using the manual pause/rewind controls of an analog device. Other options include purchasing an iPod recorder add-on that attaches directly to your iPod's USB slot (search on Google or Amazon for more info). If you choose *not* to purchase one of these devices, you will be expected to rent or borrow one from another source (friend, campus media office). **Note:** This item is a *SUPERB* long-term investment for recording college lectures, review sessions, as well as also simple “notes to self”.
2. **REQUIRED:** Additional required PDF readings will be placed on online on course website. You may access this collection by visiting <http://sakai.rutgers.edu> and clicking on “Resources” on the left hand side of the page. It is expected that you PRINT your readings and bring them to each class session.
3. **OPTIONAL:** Interviewing: Principles and Practices by Charles Stewart & William Cash (12th ed) [Yes, there is indeed no required textbook for this class.]

Recommended Texts

COMM 360 was designed so that you won't need to look beyond the required readings or material covered in lectures and discussions. However, if you are looking for extra tips or help in reference to employment interviews, then these books will be useful for to you. They are all available on various online book-selling websites (Amazon, Borders, etc.) and *sell for around \$10-12* each.

- * 301 Smart Answers to Tough interview Questions by Oliver [most extensive prep. guide out there]
- * Resume Magic by Susan Whitcomb (3rd Ed.) [the top-selling reference on resume design]
- * The Business Writer's Handbook by Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu (8th Ed.) [quick reference for writing]
- * How To Say It: Job Interviews by Linda Matias [excellent pocket/“morning of” resource]

Major units of the course

Unit I: Interviewing as Interaction

Unit II: Informational Interviews

Unit III: Employment Interviews

Unit IV: Qualitative Research Interviews

Unit V: Medical Interviews

Unit VI: Miscellaneous Interview Genres

Course Requirements

(* = indicates that you will be *required* to use an audio recorder for this assignment.)

All assignments are due at the start of class. Credit will not be given to work that is turned in late. I do give extensions, though, when appropriate. If you think you might need an extension, please ask early. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and in a legible font. Any thing you hand in that is more than one page must be stapled. Further information about the requirements specific to each assignment will be distributed throughout the semester. All assignments are listed in the order in which they are due:

- I) Student - Instructor Interview - 5%
A short (5 minute) interview with the instructor will be required of all students during the first week of class.
- II) Employee Portfolio (EP) - 15%
A collection of professional development documents designed to help you pursue your future goals once you complete the course. A draft of the job description will be due on _____. The final EP (all 3 revised documents) will be due on _____.
 - Job Description (JD) - 5%
 - Resume (R) - 5%
 - Cover Letter (CL) - 5%
- III) Informational Interview* - 10%
Conduct a short (15 min) interview with someone in a field that you are interested in pursuing. This can be conducted by phone or in person. A question schedule and short (3 -4 pages) reflection paper will be due on _____.
- IV) Oral History Interview* - 10%
Details TBA...
- V) Mock Employment Interview -15%
Participate in a mock interview on campus. More details to be provided in a separate handout. This interview will be video recorded.
 - Employee Interviewee Performance (EP) - 5%
 - Employment Interview Critique Paper (EC) - 10%
- VI) Hands-on Case Study Group Presentation - 15%
 - Complete one of the following options with 2 - 3 classmates:
 - a) Broadcast News Interview Analysis & Presentation
Details TBA
 - b) Medical Interaction Analysis & Case Study Presentation
Details TBA
- VII) Exams & Quizzes: - 25%
Ten quizzes and one cumulative final exam will test your knowledge of concepts from both required readings and class sessions. Each exam or quiz may consist of a combination of short answer and/or essay questions. Your lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped.
 - Ten Quizzes (two lowest dropped) - 10%
 - Final Exam - 15%
- VIII) Attendance & Participation - 10%
 - (See details on the top of the next page)

Course Policies

I. Attendance

As mentioned earlier in this document, regular attendance is an essential part of performing well in this course. Any student who misses more than one class session will **FAIL THE COURSE**. Additionally, we will cover exam-related material in class that will not be available in the course readings or in handouts, so it is imperative that you attend. Please e-mail me *before* class time if you are sick or unable to attend. If I approve an absence in advance, e-mail me so we both have documentation of the excused absence. If there is an emergency, call the Communication Department at (732) - 932 - 7500 and leave a message for me with them. Also, if you need to be absent for several classes (e.g. athletes, ROTC) please bring me a list of those dates with proper documentation. Not e-mailing me before class or contacting me *at all* are each excellent ways of falling short of the instructor's expectations of you in the course.

II. Academic Integrity

I encourage you to discuss the material with your classmates; however, all work you turn in must be your own. I take academic integrity very seriously. Students are encouraged to inform themselves of the Rutgers' policy on academic integrity which describes and gives examples of violations on academic integrity. This can be found at the following web address:

<http://cat.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>

If you violate this code, you risk a failing grade in the course and even possible suspension from the university. Violations include (but are not limited to) such things as cheating, use of a paper that has been turned in by you or someone else in another class, plagiarism, and unauthorized possession of exam materials.

III. Grading Scale

Grades in this course will be determined on a straight percentage scale based on the number of points earned out of a maximum of 1,000 points. Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

100-91% = **A**, 90-86% = **B+**, 85-81% = **B**, 80-76% = **C+**, 75-71% = **C**, 70-60% = **D**, 59-0% = **F**

With regards to grading, there are three important points I'd like to make:

- (1) It is my genuine desire to help you excel in this course.
- (2) It is your responsibility to demonstrate that your work is more than just 'satisfactory'.
- (3) Remember that I do not *give* you a grade - you must *earn* one.

IV. Grade Inquiries & Appeals

Grades will be made available as soon as possible following the submission deadline for any assignment. If you have any questions after you receive a grade, I ask that you wait 24 hours from the time you received the document back. In accordance with FERPA (the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act), I will not discuss any grades over email. If you want to appeal your grades, you must turn in to me a well-written, typed critique of your work on the assignment within one week of the assignment being handed back (after one week, the grade stands as posted). The critique must make the argument that claims your work is better than the assigned grades reflects. Although this critique is a requirement, the content of the it may not be sufficient to warrant a grade change.

V. Late Work

Technical problems (including, but not limited to, power outages, erased/lost disks or jump drives, viruses, inaccessible networks, inability to print, etc.) do not in themselves constitute legitimate excuses for late or missing work. I expect all work to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. For every calendar day that your assignment is late, your score will receive a one letter grade deduction (e.g., B to C, C to D) and any assignment turned in after the beginning (first 10 minutes) of class on the designated date will automatically be deemed late. Exceptions will be made only if you provide a letter from the Emergency Dean before or immediately following your absence. Please note that I do not, under any circumstances, accept notes from University Health Services as valid documentation of illness or absence. Students who are members of university athletic teams must provide a letter documenting each day of class that they will miss, and these students are responsible for arranging alternate due dates with me before the due date is missed.

VI. Disruptive behavior

You are expected to give total attention to all speakers. Behaviors such as studying for other classes, sleeping, or texting while someone else is speaking will not be tolerated. Failure to give your full attention to a speaker will result in an absence for that class period. Should you be late on a speaking day, you should wait in the hall until you hear applause to avoid interrupting someone's presentation. For those who typically carry cell phones: JUST TURN THEM OFF. Our time together each session is short and you owe it to yourself to maximize the educational experience you are entitled to (or, furthermore, may be paying for).

VII. Proper Email Communication

The way you compose (and proofread) your emails is an important aspect of your self-presentation in any class. Here are three principles I will expect you to follow when using this medium of communication to contact me:

- 1. Include the course reference number (COM 360) in the subject line.
- 2. Sign the email with your FULL NAME.
- 3. Clearly indicate what your question is. The more relevant information you provide, the more helpful and timely my response can be.

VIII. Session Notes/Outlines

There are no lecture notes or handouts guaranteed for this course. Psychologists know that people learn best when using as many of their senses as possible including sight, sound, and touch. It is also through repetition that we are able to memorize things better. So, by reading and making notes while you progress through the assigned readings, listening and remaining actively engaged during our sessions, keeping your own session notes, and playing an active part in workshops and discussions, you will enhance your grasp of the level of knowledge and understanding necessary for success in the course.

IX. Disability Statement

Rutgers University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of disability-related accommodation in this course, please tell the TAs as soon as possible and/or contact the Office of Disability Services, 151 College Avenue, Suite 122, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, (732)-932-2848. If you seek assistance due to a disability, it is your responsibility to inform me and make arrangements prior to any relevant assignments.

Tentative Session Schedule

- (S/C = Stewart and Cash, all other readings available on Sakai under “Resources”)

Session	Date	Topic	Reading(s) to do <i>before</i> the session
Week 1:			
BEFORE OUR FIRST MEETING ON THE 27th: In lieu of our initial meeting on the 23rd (now <u>CANCELLED</u>), you are required to complete the tasks & readings emailed to you by the end of the day on December 26. There will be an in-class quiz covering these items on the 27th.			
1	T 28 Dec	1) Interviewing as Interaction 2) Turn Taking Organization 3) Interpersonal characteristics of interviewing [****Complete this session <u>ONLINE</u> via online podcasts, lecture notes, and powerpoint****]	1) N/A 2) Nofsinger (Ch 4) 3) Tannen: 25 - 29 & 32 - 42
2	W 29 Dec	{Daily Quiz #1} 1) Types and Uses of Questions 2) Common Pitfalls	N/A
3	R 30 Dec	{Daily Quiz #2} 1) Question Sequences & Information Preservation 2) Intro to Informational Interview 3) <i>Workshop</i> : Writing a Question Schedule	1) S/C 77 - 95 & 113 - 132, & 95 - 100 2) N/A 3) N/A - Bring ideas/sketches
	F 31 Dec	NO CLASS	1) Enjoy a safe end of 2010... 2) ...and start to 2011!

Week 2:			
4	M 3 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #3}</p> <p>1) Intro to Employment Interview</p> <p>2) Resumes (lecture & workshop)</p> <p>3) Cover Letters (lecture & workshop)</p>	<p>1) S/C 215 - 227 & 240 - 256</p> <p>2) S/C 227 - 239 & Alred (p. 479 - 494)</p> <p>3) S/C 227 - 239 & Alred (p. 127 - 128)</p>
5	T 4 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #4}</p> <p>1) Answering Questions as an IE - I</p> <p>2) Answering Questions as an IE - II</p>	<p>1) S/C 243 - 251</p> <p>2) Reading TBA</p>
6	W 5 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #5}</p> <p>1) Answering Questions as an IE - III <i>Guest Speakers: Karen Whittey, William Wanas, & Lori Pesnell</i></p> <p>2) <i>Workshop: Resume Critique</i></p>	<p>1) Reading TBA</p> <p>2) Bring a presentable draft to receive credit!</p>
7	R 6 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #6}</p> <p>1) Intro to Qualitative Research Interview</p> <p>2) Conducting Research Interviews</p> <p>3) Analyzing Data: Transcription & Analysis</p>	<p>1) Baxter & Babbie (Ch 14 excerpt), Rubin & Rubin (p. 83 - 89)</p> <p>2) Reading TBA</p> <p>3) OPTIONAL: Ten Have (Ch 5), Cameron (Ch 3)</p>
8	F 7 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #7}</p> <p>1) Intro to Oral History Interview</p>	<p>1) TBA</p>
Week 3:			
9	M 10 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #8}</p> <p>1) Intro to Institutional Interaction</p> <p>2) Conducting the Medical Interview</p> <p>3) Counseling Interviews</p>	<p>1) Ten Have Ch 8 - Excerpt</p> <p>2) Heritage & Maynard (2006) - OPTIONAL: S/C 386 -402</p> <p>3) N/A</p>

10	T 11 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz 9}</p> <p>1) Performance Interviews <i>Guest Speaker: Muge Haseki</i></p> <p>2) Broadcast News Interviews</p>	<p>1) S/C 265 - 278</p> <p>2) Whalen (2003) Excerpt</p>
11	W 12 Jan	<p>{Daily Quiz #10}</p> <p>1) Networking I: How to manage your network</p> <p>2) Networking II: Getting your head in the game</p>	<p>1) Reading TBA</p> <p>2) Reading TBA</p>
12	R 13 Jan	<p>1) Broadcast News & Medical Interaction Case Study Presentations</p> <p>2) Looking back: Rethinking what it means to be “interviewng”</p>	<p>1) Be ready to present with your group!</p> <p>2) N/A</p>
13	F 14 Jan	<p>FINAL EXAM</p>	<p>Study!</p>