

Valencia College  
SPC 1017 Interpersonal Communication CRN 20648

**Instructor:** Elisabeth Mendes

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Course Information:**

Fall 2015, October 12 – December 20

Monday 6:00 – 9:20 p.m.

3 credit hours

**Final Exam Date:** TBD

Students explore a range of communication concepts and topics from interpersonal communication, to small group communication, to public speaking. Students develop skills to put the communication principles to work.

**Text:** Kory Floyd (2012), *Interpersonal Communication*, Valencia College Special Edition

**Grading Scale:**

**A:** 100-90 **B:** 89-80 **C:** 79-70 **D:** 69-60 **F:** 59-0

**Grades:**

45% Quizzes

15% Speech & Reflection

15% Weekly Blog Post

15% Class Participation

10% Attendance

**Attendance and Tardy Policy and Expectations**

- Be on time for class and stay the entire time.
- If you come late, leave early, and/or miss large portions of class you will lose attendance points
- If you do not come to class you will lose all your attendance points for that class session
- Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis at my discretion, and this will require appropriate documentation.

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments will only be accepted up to 7 days late and will receive a 25% penalty off the total grade. This includes quizzes, blog posts, your speech and any other assignments. If you have an extenuating circumstance you can discuss this with me, and we can make appropriate arrangements for a makeup.

**No Show Policy:** It is assumed that a student who has not attended the first two classes of the course is a 'no show' and will be dropped from the roll.

**Withdrawal Policy:** The withdrawal deadline is TBD. You may withdraw yourself from the course until that date. However, consider speaking to me about your options before withdrawing. Please note that I **will** withdraw you if you have **4 consecutive absences** or **6 total absences**.

**Speech Communication Department Academic Honesty Policy:**

All forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited at Valencia. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (purposeful and accidental), cheating, furnishing false information, forgery, alteration or misuse of documents, misconduct during a testing situation, and misuse of identification with intent to defraud or deceive.

All speeches and assignments must be your original work. Any sources used in any assignment must be properly cited (this includes both direct quotes as well as information that you synthesize and report in your own words). Consequences according to Valencia Policies and Procedures include:

1. Failure of the assignment
2. Failure of the course
3. Being reported to the Dean of Communication which may result in expulsion from the college

**Students with Disabilities:**

"Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities (SSB 102, ext. 1523)."

**Classroom Rules of Student Behavior**

- Participation requires good listening and a sincere effort to process what other people are saying. Please focus on the discussion and do your best to share your own view.
- Texting or other use of your cell phone is prohibited during class time; therefore you are also prohibited from taking pictures of: the screen/board, notes, quizzes, handouts, etc., and yourself or others.
- You are responsible for behaving in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct in the current Valencia Student Handbook:  
<http://valenciacollege.edu/studentdev/CampusInformationServices.cfm>.
- Disciplinary action can include withdrawing a student from class or initiating a disciplinary warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate and authorized actions.

**How We Treat Each Other – Our Practice of Respect and Nonviolence:**  
**(Prepared by the Peace and Justice Initiative)**

- **Create a hospitable and accountable community.** We all arrive in isolation and need the generosity of friendly welcomes. Bring all of yourself to the work in this community. Welcome others to this place and this work, and presume that you are welcomed as well. Hospitality is the essence of restoring community
- **Listen deeply.** Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. Strive to achieve a balance between listening and reflecting, speaking and acting.
- **Create an advice free zone.** Replace advice with curiosity as we work together for peace and justice. Each of us is here to discover our own truths. We are not here to set someone else straight, to “fix” what we perceive as broken in another member of the group.
- **Practice asking honest and open questions.** A great question is ambiguous, personal and provokes anxiety.
- **Give space for unpopular answers.** Answer questions honestly even if the answer seems unpopular. Be present to listen not debate, correct or interpret.
- **Respect silence.** Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words. This applies to the speaker, as well – be comfortable leaving your words to resound in the silence, without refining or elaborating on what you have said.
- **Suspend judgment.** Set aside your judgments. By creating a space between judgments and reactions, we can listen to the other, and to ourselves, more fully.
- **Identify assumptions.** Our assumptions are usually invisible to us, yet they undergird our worldview. By identifying our assumptions, we can then set them aside and open our viewpoints to greater possibilities.
- **Speak your truth.** You are invited to say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard and your contribution respected. Own your truth by remembering to speak only for yourself. Using the first person “I” rather than “you” or “everyone” clearly communicates the personal nature of your expression.
- **When things get difficult, turn to wonder.** If you find yourself disagreeing with another, becoming judgmental, or shutting down in defense, try turning to wonder: “I wonder what brought her to this place?” “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” “I wonder what he’s feeling right now?”
- **Practice slowing down.** Simply the speed of modern life can cause violent damage to the soul. By intentionally practicing slowing down we strengthen our ability to extend non-violence to others—and to ourselves.
- **All voices have value.** Hold these moments when a person speaks as precious because these are the moments when a person is willing to stand for something, trust the group and offer something he or she sees as valuable.

- **Maintain confidentiality.** Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions held in the group. Allow what is said in the group to remain there.

### **Valencia College Core Competencies**

*“The faculty of Valencia College has identified four core competencies that define the learning outcomes for a successful Valencia graduate. These competencies are at the heart of the Valencia experience and provide the context for learning and assessment at Valencia College. You will be given opportunities to develop and practice these competencies in this class. The four competencies are:*

1. **Think** - think clearly, and creatively, analyze, synthesize, integrate and evaluate in the many domains of human inquiry
2. **Value** - make reasoned judgments and responsible commitments
3. **Communicate** - communicate with different audiences using varied means
4. **Act** - act purposefully, effectively and responsibly.”

### **Faculty/Student Communication**

- Information and updates about class and assignments will be sent to students via email. Please use email for any questions or concerns you have about class, assignments, projects, etc.
- Students can expect a response to emails within 24 - 48 hours.
- Please check your email frequently, every other day, at least. You are responsible for knowing information provided in emails [even if this information is not stated verbally in class] such as, but not limited to: changes in assignment requirements and due dates.
- You are welcome to ask questions about specific issues or concerns before or after class.
- Valencia College is committed to providing each student a quality educational experience. Faculty members have set high standards of instruction for themselves and for you. If you have a problem in a class, your first step is to talk to your instructor. If you are still dissatisfied, you may talk with the academic dean of the division for your class. We will work together to resolve any issues that arise.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS MAY BE ALTERED AT MY DISCRETION THROUGHOUT THE DURATION OF THIS COURSE. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS AS ANNOUNCED.