

**SYLLABUS**  
**COUN 513: Communication in Marriage**  
**Spring 2019**

**INSTRUCTOR**

Linda Ball, EdD

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**OFFICE HOURS: To be determined by first week of Spring Semester**

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE**

Coun 513. *Communication in Marriage*. Three semester hours.

Theories and techniques of verbal and nonverbal communication in marriage relationship are studied.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES** include, but are not limited to, the following.

Students should be able to:

1. Understand the behaviors and patterns of verbal and nonverbal communication in marital relationships.
2. Understand the individual (emotional and developmental) and family (developmental and multigenerational) dynamics that contribute to and influence marital communication.
3. Understand the systemic context in which communication is perceived, defined, and responded to by individuals within marital dyads.
4. Know the characteristics of functional and dysfunctional marital communication.
5. Become familiar with several approaches to marital therapy.
6. Become familiar with current models of marital enrichment program.
7. Become aware of current research on marital functioning.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Berger, R. & Hannah, M.T. (Eds.). *Preventive approaches in couples therapy*. Philadelphia: Brunner/Mazel

\*Gottman, J., & Gottman, J. S. (2014). *Level 1 clinical training Gottman method couples therapy: Bridging the couple chasm*. Seattle, WA: Gottman Institute.

. \*Hold off on this purchase for now.

**On Reserve in Library or through online resource**

Selected articles/programs ... stay tuned

**METHOD OF INSTRUCTION/COURSE FORMAT**

The class will consist of lectures, discussions of assigned readings, audio and video tapes of theoretical presentations and clinical applications.

**STUDENT REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance & Participation**

Students are expected to attend all classes and to be prepared to discuss assigned readings. Attendance and participation will be considered as part of your final grade. For completion certificate of Level 1 Gottman Training, you must be in attendance for all training modules. You will be responsible for any

material missed due to an absence. You will also be responsible for material assigned, but perhaps not discussed in class.

**Note due dates** on all assignments and assume a professional position on this. Specific requirements include:

**Couple Interview**

You will be required to interview one (1) couple, at a selected stage of marriage (committed relationship) from the following.

Stage 1:	0-3 years
Stage 2:	4-8 years
Stage 3:	9-15 years
Stage 4:	16-25 years
Stage 5:	25+ years

Bonus Stage:  
50+ years

Indicate whether the couple is within their first marriage or remarried, with or without children.

This should be an informally structured interview designed to discover how the couple makes the marriage work. As such, no specific set of questions is required. This allows you, the interviewer, the privilege and freedom to explore the unique set of dynamics that exists in your couple. Also, videotaping or recording the interview will allow you to be fully involved in the process, while simultaneously providing you with the recording to reflect on later. Provide a permission to record document and execute with signatures (form will be distributed). Areas to tap into, using your own style of engagement, are: How long have you been married?; Initial attractions; How did you know this person was the one for you?; Qualities you love and appreciate in your partner; How do you express that to each other?; Discoveries/surprises along the way; How do you handle conflicts?; What characteristic or quality would you say contributes the most to the success of your marriage?; What advice or suggestions for a successful marriage would you give to couples contemplating marriage? Any other areas that naturally flow out of the interview can be addressed as well. Summarize your interview by incorporating the above information as well as your observations of the couple in areas of style of communication, level of connectivity, ways of interacting, verbal/non-verbal patterns, seating arrangement, etc. Include any personal reaction you might have had to the couple.

**Reflective Paper**

You will keep a working written reflection of readings and their application to your personal and professional development, particularly pertaining to your own style of communication. At the end of the semester you will write an integrated personal reflection on your progress throughout the course regarding your style of communication within relationships, working with couples, your fit, and your walked path into an increased level of self-awareness and hopefully congruence. As this assignment is partly developmental in nature, you may be asked to show your written reflections after you have turned in your paper.

**Presentation**

You will participate in a group presentation of a preventative approach (couples enrichment programs, etc.) in couples therapy. You may select from the approaches we discuss (in text), or from another source with permission from the instructor. You are encouraged to be creative, yet professional, in your presentations. Use of technology is required.

**Case Conceptualization**

Using the couple from our initial class video, select a timeframe within this couple's marriage and apply the Gottman approach to "our class couple, the Roses." A handout with guidelines will be given, though basically you will include background information, assessment of the couple along the lines of healthy functioning, constructs associated with this approach applied, role of the facilitator/therapist, goals of treatment, and how you might use the techniques of this approach with a rationale for use. Again, your grade will be based on demonstrated applied knowledge of the constructs of the Gottman approach, overall presentation of the material, and thoroughness.

**Exam**

Multiple choice short answer format based on assigned readings

**GRADING**

All components, save the exam, will be graded on a  system): ✓+ = 95; ✓ = 85; ✓- = 75

The following components with assigned percentages will be reflected in arriving at your final grade:

1. Attendance & participation 15% (More than 3 absences results in one letter grade reduction, and in order to receive the Gottman level one completion certificate you must make up any work missed.)
2. Interview 20%
3. Reflective Paper 10%
4. Presentation 20%
5. Case Conceptualization 15%
6. Exam 20%

Thus, averaging the above with assigned percentages:

A	90 & up	
B	80-89	
C	70-79	

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES****Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Gee Library Rm 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Faculty members teaching courses must also include in their syllabuses the following disavowal of discriminatory practices by the university (I have touched it up to name the university correctly, and to eliminate an unnecessarily ugly passive voice construction):

[Texas] A&M [University]-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, [we will maintain] an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression ~~will be maintained~~.

### **CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Polices and Procedures, Conduct) "Graduate students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work." (See Section A13.12, Academic Honesty, A&M-Commerce Procedures.)

### **UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER**

Check <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/> regarding class cancellations. Also, KETR radio on 88.9 FM and television channels 4, 5, and 8 (channel 7 for Tyler & Longview Area).

### **Course Calendar** (with flexibility intended)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Week 1 1/14/18	Course overview, communicating expectations	Opening Video	
Week 2	History of the institution of marriage and current statistics	In class, Open discussion	
Week 3	The Research: What makes Relationships Succeed or Fail?	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 4	The Sound Relationship House Theory.	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 5	Aspects of Assessment	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 6	Assessment, con't	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 7	Intervention	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 8	Conflict Management	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 9	Conflict Management, con't	Follow topic in	Readings in Gottman manual

		manual...	Other material as assigned
Week 10 (week of March 11-15)	<i>Spring Break</i>	(NO CLASS)	<i>Time to rejuvenate</i>
Week 11	Working with resistance	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 12	Building Friendship...	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 13	Putting it all together, the process of therapy	Follow topic in manual...	Readings in Gottman manual Other material as assigned
Week 14 & 15	Preventative measures...		Presentations
Week 16 & 17	Marital Conflict and the Children		Interviews Case conceptualization; Reflection paper
Week 18 (week of 5/13)	Final Examination		

University mandates for course syllabi... some overlap from above.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Browser support**

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

### Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

### Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or <b>point</b> release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or <b>point</b> release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version.  Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome,	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
		Firefox	

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
  - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
  - Speakers or headphones.
  - \*For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.
- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA web site](http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp)  
<http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  - [Adobe Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/) <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - [Adobe Flash Player \(version 17 or later\)](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/) <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
  - [Adobe Shockwave Player](https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/) <https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/>
  - [Apple Quick Time](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/) <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

### **Brightspace Support**

#### ***Need Help?***

#### **Student Support**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

#### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words "[click here](#)" to submit an issue via email.



#### **System Maintenance**

D2L runs monthly updates during the last week of the month, usually on Wednesday. The system should remain up during this time unless otherwise specified in an announcement. You may experience minimal impacts to performance and/or look and feel of the environment.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### ***Course Specific Procedures/Policies***

Attendance/Lateness, Late Work, Missed Exam: see above

## **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

## **University Specific Procedures**

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](#)

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

### **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

## **ADA Statement**

### **Students with Disabilities**

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Email: [Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu](mailto:Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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