

Syllabus for Summer Session A

COMM 115: Interpersonal Dynamics

Instructor Grace Miao (q.miao@ucla.edu; gracemiao.com)
 Office hours: right after class (or by appointment)

Days, time, location Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:15-5:20pm, Kaufman Hall 153

Course Website <https://bruinlearn.ucla.edu/courses/210437>

Course Overview. This course provides an overview of recent scientific approaches to dyadic communication, focusing on how interpersonal interactions are dynamic processes. We will survey a selection of experimental, observational and quantitative methods, and learn how they can be applied to key issues in interpersonal contexts, such as casual conversation, conflict, negotiation, and more. Topics will include recent technological techniques for measuring and influencing dyads, including the role of peripheral devices, such as phones, wearable devices, skin conductance, and neuroimaging technology. These techniques will be illustrated in class, and you will have an opportunity to try them yourself in a class project. We will also consider how findings apply beyond dyads, to teams.

Course Readings. I have curated a set of readings that will be distributed freely through the BruinLearn website linked above. These readings are in PDF format, and will mostly be short journal articles from the primary research literature, along with occasional summaries from outlets with a general readership (e.g., science journalism). The journal articles may be more challenging to digest if you are new to this field. **I will, of course, summarize and discuss the articles carefully in slides.** These readings are an opportunity to experience primary-source research literature.

Course Website. All materials, scheduling, evaluation, slides, reading, etc. will be on the BruinLearn Canvas website. It is important to check it frequently for updates, and to email me if you have any questions.

Evaluation. Your grade will be based on three parts: weekly reading reflections, a “lab” assignment as midterm, and a short final project. I will provide additional information about each of these as they arise over the quarter. You are, of course, free to contact me about them at any time if you have questions or concerns.

- **Weekly reading reflections** (20% of grade): Each week, students must upload a short reflection about the reading materials to the course website (100-400 words). This could be clarification questions about concepts, critique about various components of the article, thoughts about relating the article to experiences in your real life, etc. Each submission accounts for 4% of grade, and 5 submissions are required for the quarter.
- **Lab activity** (35% of grade) will involve hands-on experiences with analyzing interpersonal interaction. I will make available a series of laboratory activities to you as our quarter progresses. You can choose 1 of the labs to complete as your midterm submission. Software will be freely available, and will be demonstrated in class and completed at home. We will integrate these activities with our experience this quarter, and explore how interpersonal processes are affected by technologies and remote interaction patterns.
- A short **final project** (45% of grade) will be an extended lab activity from class. The final paper will be a simulated *technical report*, in which you summarize an analysis for general audiences.

Note: I assign + and – letter grades based on the final percentage of your score. 97.5% and above would be an A+, between 97.5% and 92.5% an A, 92.5% to 90.0% an A–, 87.5% to 89.99% a B+, etc.

Ground Rule. Be nice. Please don’t engage in disruptive actions that may distract your fellow students or me. I’m sure this goes without saying, but it is important to note it.

Electronic Devices. Please DO NOT wear headphones in class. I make no other rules about electronic devices, but I expect your use of them will show conscientiousness for your fellow students and me. This especially includes device screens (laptop, tablet, phone, etc.): Please do not use them in a way that is distracting to students sitting behind you.

Academic Integrity. All work should be your own. Violation of academic integrity will be taken up with the Dean of Students for potential sanction. <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Academic-Integrity>

Accommodations. I am committed to ensuring equal academic opportunities and inclusion for students with disabilities based on the principles of independent living, accessible universal design and diversity. I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first two weeks of the quarter, except for unusual circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Students with needs for accommodations should register with CAE to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations (<http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>).

Final note. Anything on this syllabus is subject to change, and if so, this change will be clearly communicated by the instructor in advance. Any information not contained on this syllabus should not be assumed, and students are responsible for consulting with the instructor to clarify any ambiguities or missing details.

Preliminary Schedule (subject to change, always check course website)

Weeks 1 Theories for Interpersonal Dynamics

Weeks 2 Patterns of Social Interaction

(with demonstration on computational simulation of interaction patterns)

Week 3 Computer-Mediated Communication

(with illustration on automated analysis of emotions from transcript and video recordings)

Week 4 Artificial Intelligence and Interpersonal Dynamics

(with demonstration on how to design your own AI chatbot)

Week 5 Advanced Methods on Physiological Measurements of Interaction

(with showcase of a portable neuroimaging technology – functional near infrared spectroscopy)

Week 6 Applications of Interpersonal Dynamics, Synthesis, and Thank You