

COM223: Principles & Methods of Interviewing

Spring 2010 (Wednesday, January 18 – Wednesday, April 25)

Instructor: Amanda Lohiser

Cell Phone: (716) 983-2272*

Email: alohiser@buffalo.edu

Classroom: Fronczak 454

Office: BASEMENT of Baldy: 8M

Mailbox: 3RD FLOOR of Baldy: Baldy 356
(the copyroom)

Time: W 7:00-9:40

Course Description and Objectives

Principles of Interviewing is a course that applies communication theory to principles and methods of interviewing. It is designed to teach you communication skills essential for your professional career (and maybe even your personal life!). Because this course is designed to teach you theoretical principles of interviewing as well as skills necessary for conducting successful interviews, I will integrate concepts from the textbook into our activities, lectures, class assignments and discussions.

After successful completion of this class, you should be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for taking part in several types of interviews including informative interviews, persuasive interviews, medical interviews and job selection interviews. More specifically, as a result of taking this class you should be able to:

1. Identify, explain, and apply general theoretical principles related to interviewing including the major types of interviews, the parties involved in interviews, the roles enacted during interviews, the role of perception in interviews and the nature of communication interactions.
2. Identify the functions and techniques for the three major components of an interview: the opening, the body, and the closing.
3. Construct an interview guide containing a variety of primary and secondary questions following a sequence appropriate for the purpose of the interview.
4. Prepare a job description, cover letter, and resume appropriate for a position you would apply for within the next 5 years.
5. Answer questions during a mock employment interview based on the job description, cover letter, and resume you create.

Required Textbook, UBLearns and Readings

The text we will use in this class is:

Stewart, C., & Cash, W. (2007). Interviewing: Principles and practices, 12th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

I have elected to use this PAST EDITION of the book for one main reason: It is CHEAP. The newest version of the book costs around \$80. You can get this older edition online for as low as \$5, including shipping.

* This is my cell phone number. **Calls** are accepted ANY day of the week from 9:00AM-9:00PM. Please don't text. If I miss a call but there is no voice message to accompany it, I will not return the call. Voice messages must include your full name, your phone number and the reason you're calling.

This book is NOT available for you at the UB Bookstore. I encourage you to shop online for the best price. You must have 12th edition (and only this edition) by the end of the second week of classes (Jan. 25).

Since I am attempting to make this text as affordable and accessible as possible, I fully expect everyone in the class to have the book. Please read the chapters assigned for each week. As we will be using the book for in-class activities, it is imperative that you bring it with you every day.

This course is active on UBLearn. Your grades will always be visible to you here, as well as many necessary and useful documents. You will also be responsible for monitoring your UB email account for updates on assignments, class work, etc. If you have not already done so, you may wish to forward received mail from your UB account to one that you use on a daily basis, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

Course Policies

Attendance: You are expected to not only be in class on time, but to also make appropriate contributions to class discussion. Active participation will be figured into your final grade for the course. Missed classes cannot be “covered” by reading the text and borrowing class notes. ***Excused make-ups of in-class assignments will be granted only when the reason for the absence can be documented in writing.*** This policy is meant to ensure fairness to all students.

It is your responsibility to follow through to get assignments and materials missed due to excused absences. Any assignments emailed to me must also be turned in as a hard copy. If they were previously emailed (to indicate that they were turned in on time), please staple a copy of the email exchange to the assignment. This ensures that no points are taken off of your assignment for lateness. ***Late assignments are only accepted up to one week after the original due date.***

You may not miss the day when you are scheduled to perform an interview. If you do miss your interview day or are late and your absence is not excused, you will receive a zero for the assignment. If your absence from your interview is excused, your interview must be made up as soon as possible to accommodate the schedule of the course.

Any misrepresentation regarding the reason for missing an in-class assignment will result in a failing grade in the course. I reserve the right to use my discretion to decide what constitutes an excused absence on a case-by-case basis.

>3 Strikes Policy: As this class meets only once a week, attendance for each class session is especially important. It will be impossible for you to pass the course if you miss more than three classes, ***whether the absence is excused or not.***

Punctuality: Please be on time. While “life happens” and accidental lateness happens to everyone on occasion (myself included), chronic lateness is disruptive and disrespectful.

Etiquette: *Please turn cell phones off before coming to class.* While laptops/tablets are welcomed in the classroom as note-taking devices, using them to watch YouTube, instant message or read email is ***not*** welcomed.

Also along these lines, sleeping, carrying on private conversations, reading outside materials etc., is noticed by me and by your classmates. This behavior is disrespectful, disruptive, reflects poorly on you and will definitely affect your grade. Likewise, enthusiastic, well-intentioned and relevant participation keeps the class interesting and moving, and consequently is rewarded.

Classroom condition: Please practice carry-in/carry-out when you are in the classroom – it is my request that we leave the room each evening in the condition in which we found it or better, if possible.

Respect: **Although you can expect some lively discussion in this class, students are expected to respect gender, sexual identity, race, religion, and other similarities and differences.**

Plagiarism: Plagiarism often occurs and students are regularly caught. Copying the work (in whole or in part) or borrowing the ideas of others without attribution is a serious offense and will cause you to fail a paper and possibly this class. If you are not sure whether you are leaning too heavily on someone else's ideas and/or words then it is your responsibility to check with me before you submit the work as your own.

Resources: For issues outside of understanding interviews (study skills, counseling, special services, financial aid), the campus is equipped with many student support services. I am happy to refer you to any of these, especially if you suspect that you have a disability – physical, learning, social – which might impede your progress in the class. Do not procrastinate in seeking out help! There is plenty available.

Grading. There will be Unit Assignments and In-Class Assignments in this class. Here is a list of those assignments and points possible:

Unit 1 Assignment	30 points
Unit 2 Assignment	50 points
Unit 3 Assignment (Part 1: 30, Part 2: 20)	50 points
Unit 4 Assignment (Part 1: 10, Part 2: 20, Part 3: 20)	50 points
Unit 5 Assignment	40 points
Unit 6 Assignment	30 points
Unit 7 Assignment	50 points
In-class assignments (7 assignments; 20 points each)	140 points
Merit (attendance, punctuality, contribution)	30 points

Your grade will be figured by dividing the number of points you have earned by the total number of possible points for this class: 470 and then applying the appropriate letter grade to the percentage. Extra credit will not be available in this class.

Once you have calculated your percentage, you can determine the letter grade you will earn in the class below:

A	100 – 95	B+	89 – 87	C+	79 – 77	D+	69 – 67
A-	94 – 90	B	86 – 83	C	76 – 73	D	66 – 60
		B-	82 – 80	C-	72 – 70	F	59 or less

Assignment policies and procedures

Each assignment takes about a week to evaluate and grade. Late work will take longer.

The in-class assignments are designed to be started and completed in class, with the exception of typing up your final copy. I've designed the class in this way to give you maximum opportunities to apply the material we're learning about while trying to keep the out-of-class work you must complete at a reasonable level. Your typed in-class assignments are to be turned in the class period following the class in which you do the assignment.

You are expected to complete assignments by the due date indicated on the course schedule. Late in-class assignments will not be accepted unless documented as described above in Attendance. Late Unit Assignments will have an automatic 30% deducted. If you know in advance that you will miss class on a day when a Unit Assignment is due, you must make arrangements to get it to me on the day that it is due. This policy is necessary so that I can return graded assignments in a reasonable amount of time.

If you email an assignment to me, (e.g. you know you will be missing a class, so you email the assignment to make sure it is in on time) the emailed assignment serves to prove that it was finished by the due date and

therefore not counted as late. However, a hard copy is required to receive a grade on the assignment. Please be sure to turn in a hard copy of the assignment to me along with a printed copy of the email in which you had attached the assignment during the next class period.

All assignments (including in-class assignments) *must* be typed and formatted in **Times New Roman, 12 point, double spaced**, with **1 inch document margins**. Assignments not presented in this format will be returned for resubmission and the grade will be **reduced by 10%**. There are two reasons that I will be firm on this:

1. Requesting one standard font eliminates subjective interpretations of what some people consider artistic and what others consider illegible.
2. Protocol and adherence to rules will be required of you everywhere you go. It is an important life skill to learn how to follow directions and still maintain your own identity through various modes of expression.

For reasons known only by Bill Gates and God, the default font on Microsoft Office version 2007/2010 is set to Calibri 11 with a line spacing of 1.5 Please be sure to manually reset the font to the above guidelines. You may wish to do this once, then save the blank document as a template to use on a regular basis! This will shave a little time off your out-of-class work as well as prevent mistakes.

Your papers' pages must be stapled together, please (not paper-clipped, origami-folded or stuck together with adhesive or chewing gum). Convenient travel-size staplers and staples can be purchased at the Dollar Tree.

Mechanics (e.g. grammar, syntax, spelling,) will receive deductions on a cumulative basis. This course assumes that you already are competent in these areas, meaning you can recognize and fix your own errors. However, we will use class time to study these issues if a sufficient number of student papers demonstrate the need. Otherwise, there is help available with me outside of class or at the Writing Lab.

Unit Assignments: While in-class assignments and class exercises will be explained in class, unit assignments will be described below to allow for advance preparation:

Unit 1 Assignment: Due 02/15

Observe three face-to-face interactions (minimum length 3 minutes) between two men, two women and man and a woman. Look for similarities and differences in verbal and nonverbal communication. Which factors (e.g. gender, age, race, culture) do you believe influenced these interactions the most? Describe each interview in a detailed paragraph, and then analyze each interaction in a detailed paragraph. Your analysis should be *no less* than two pages and no more than three and should contain six paragraphs (no intro or conclusion necessary). These interactions must be observed in the real world – not on TV or on the internet!

Unit 2 Assignment: Due 02/22

Read “A Probing Interview for Research and Analysis” on page 133. Answer each of the following questions fully and completely (3-5 sentences):

1. How satisfactory is the opening, including involvement of the interviewee?
2. How well does the interviewer avoid common pitfall questions?
3. What areas of potentially valuable information does the interviewer discover and fail to discover?
4. How satisfying is the closing, including involvement of the interviewee?
5. How well does she manage to share control during the interview?

Unit 3 Assignment

Part 1 (30 points) – **DUE MONDAY, 2/27 by 3PM:** Create a free account on Survey Monkey. Then, create your own survey. Your survey **MUST**:

1. Have an intriguing title
2. Have 5 questions (no more, no fewer)
3. Be about anything interesting to you (no obscene or objectionable material, please)

4. Utilize AT LEAST three different answer types (e.g. multiple choice, short answer, scale)
5. Contain 3 pages: an introduction, survey body (your 5 questions) and a closing page, which should:
 - a. Thank the survey taker for his or her time
 - b. Contain the title of the survey AND your name
6. Create a collection link and email it to me by **3PM on Monday, 2/27**.

Part 2 (20 points) – **DUE WEDNESDAY 02/29**: Take 5 of your classmates' surveys – survey links will be on UBLeans. Turn in a stapled packet of 5 different closing pages with your name written on the top for credit.

Unit 4 Assignment

Part 1: Due 03/07: Find a job position for which you would hypothetically be interested in applying within the next 5 years. Print out a copy of the job description and turn it in to me with a short paragraph about why you chose it.

Part 2: Due 03/07: Draft a resume and cover letter for the job application. You will be self-correcting these in class.

Part 3: Due 03/21: Come to a mock interview at your predetermined time slot with me serving as an interviewer and you as the interviewee. Bring your drafts AND final copies of both your cover letter and resume, dress professionally and be prepared to be interviewed!

Unit 5 Assignment: 04/04

Plan a hypothetical performance review policy for the University at Buffalo. This policy should be targeted toward all staff or a select portion of staff. The policy should describe:

- The review model (at least 5 sentences)
- The purpose of the review (at least 5 sentences)
- The procedures used for the review (at least 5 sentences)
- The potential outcomes of favorable and unfavorable reviews (at least 5 sentences)

Unit 6 Assignment: 04/18

Select a person you either admire or dislike – a casual acquaintance, a fellow student or worker, a relative, a national figure, etc.

- Make a list of 30 adjectives (e.g. honest/dishonest, competent/incompetent, trustworthy/untrustworthy) that you think describe this person.
- Which of these traits are important facets of credibility and why? (3-5 sentences)
- What could this person do to alter their credibility or lack of credibility in your mind? (3-5 sentences)

Unit 7 Assignment: 04/25

Analyze your own experience of a **counseling interview** – not a job interview – that you have taken part in as either the interviewee or the interviewer. Please consider:

- The effectiveness of the opening and closing (3-5 sentences)
- The appropriateness of the setting (3-5 sentences)
- How well the interviewer meets the four phases of counseling interviews (3-5 sentences)
- The level of disclosure (1, 2, or 3) of the interviewee's revelations (3-5 sentences)
- The effectiveness of the interviewer as a listener (3-5 sentences)

A final note: This syllabus should be viewed as a contract. In reading this syllabus and maintaining your registration in this course, you are indicating that you accept its terms and conditions. **The last day to drop courses without academic or financial liability is 01/23/2012.**

Course Schedule: Subject to change at the instructor's discretion based on students' needs

Week 1	01/18	Ch. 1	Class Intro Lecture: Introduction to Interviewing In-class #1: Ice Breaker Interviews	<i>Course Intro</i>
Week 2	01/25	Ch. 2	Exercise: Good or Bad Interviewer? Lecture: An Interpersonal Communication Process In-class #2: Televised News Interview Analysis	Unit 1 due 02/15
Week 3	02/01	Ch. 3	Lecture: Questions and their uses Discussion: Question Pitfalls (p. 70) Exercise: Common Pitfalls and How to Fix Them	
Week 4	02/08	Ch. 4	Lecture: Structuring the Interview Discussion: Analyzing an Interview Schedule (p. 89) Exercise: Establishing Rapport	
Week 5	02/15	Ch. 5	Lecture: The Probing Interview Exercise: Probing Interview In-Class #3: White House Press Conference (p. 136, #3)	Unit 2 due 02/22
Week 6	02/22	Ch. 6	Lecture: The Survey Interview	Unit 3 Part 1 due 02/27 Unit 3 Part 2 due 02/29
Week 7	02/29	Ch. 7 & 8	Lecture: The Recruitment & Employment Interview: Preparation In-class #4: Writing SMART Responses (handout)	Unit 4:1 due 03/07 Unit 4:2 due 03/07 Unit 4:3 due 03/21 (individual timeslots TBA)
Week 8	03/07	Ch. 8	Lecture: The Employment Interview: Execution Exercise: Top 10 Gaffes	
	03/14	SPRING RECESS: NO CLASS		
Week 9	03/21	<i>Individual Mock Interviews</i>		
Week 10	03/28	Ch. 9	Lecture: The Performance Interview In-class #5: Scenario for Discussion (p. 291, #3)	Unit 5 due 4/04
Week 11	04/04	Ch. 10	Lecture: The Persuasive Interview (Persuader) In-class #6: Persuasive Video Analysis (p. 349, #3)	Unit 6 due 4/18
Week 12	04/11	Ch. 11	Lecture: The Persuasive Interview (Persuadee) In-class #7: <i>White Collar</i> Episode Analysis	
Week 13	04/18	Ch. 12	Lecture: The Counseling Interview Discussion: Counseling Interview Analysis (p. 372) Exercise: Which Counseling Approach is Used?	Unit 7 due 4/25
Week 14	04/25	Ch. 13	Lecture: The Health Care Interview Discussion: Health Care Interview Analysis (p. 403) Exercise: 5 Critical Relational Factors Discussion	Late Unit Assignments or excused make-up work due 04/27