



MDCA 1310 - Medical Assistant Interpersonal and Communication Skills Course Syllabus

Description

Emphasis on the application of basic psychological principles and the study of behavior as they apply to special populations. Topics include procedures for self-understanding and social adaptability in interpersonal communication with patients and co-workers in an ambulatory care setting.

Semester Offered

Fall and Spring semesters

Credits 3

Lecture Hours 3

Lab Hours 0

Extended Hours 0

Contact Hours 48

State Approval Code CIP 51.0801

Instructor Name Erica Hervey

Semester/Year Fall 2025

Meeting Time and Location

Monday-Friday Face-to-Face

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Panola College to move to altered operations. During this time, Panola College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online learning management system (CANVAS), online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Panola College's website (www.panola.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, CANVAS for each class for course-specific communication, and Panola College email for important general information.

Student Basic Needs

Unexpected circumstances may arise, but Panola College offers various resources to support students. If you need mental health services or are facing challenges with transportation, affording class materials and supplies, or accessing food regularly—issues that may impact your class performance—please visit panola.edu/resources.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance of classes and laboratories is required of all students. When a student has been ill or absent from class for approved extracurricular activities, he or she should be allowed, as far as possible, to make up for the missed work. If a student has not actively participated by the census date, they will be dropped by the instructor for non-attendance. This policy applies to courses that are in-person, online, hybrid, and hyflex.

Attendance in online courses is determined by submission of an assignment or participation in an activity. According to federal guidelines, simply logging into a distance learning course without participating in an

academic assignment does not constitute attendance. Distance learning is defined as when a majority (more than 50%) of instruction occurs when the instructor and students are in separate physical locations. Students must engage in an academic activity prior to the course census date.

When an instructor feels that a student has been absent to such a degree as to invalidate the learning experience, the instructor may recommend to the Vice President of Instruction that the student be withdrawn from the course. Instructors may seek to withdraw students for non-attendance after they have accumulated the following number of absences:

Fall or spring semesters:

3 or more class meeting times per week - 5 absences

2 class meeting times per week - 3 absences

1 class meeting per week - 2 absences

The student is responsible for seeing that he or she has been officially withdrawn from a class. A student who stops attendance in a class without officially withdrawing from that class will be given a failing grade; consequently, the student must follow official withdrawal procedures in the Admissions/Records Office.

Please note: Health Science and Cosmetology courses may require more stringent attendance policies based on their accreditation agencies. Please see the addendum and/or program handbook for further information concerning attendance.

Pregnant/Parenting Policy

Panola College welcomes pregnant and parenting students as a part of the student body. This institution is committed to providing support and adaptations for a successful educational experience for pregnant and parenting students. Students experiencing a need for accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting will find a Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations Request form in the Student Handbook or may request the form from the course instructor.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Course Policy

Use of generated AI Permitted under some classroom circumstances with permission.

There are situations throughout the course where you may be asked to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to explore how they can be used. Outside of those circumstances, you should not use AI tools to generate content that will end up in any student work (assignments, activities, discussion responses, etc.). In such cases for Option #2, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. Use of any AI-generated content in this course without the instructor's consent qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Panola College's standards of academic integrity.

Instructional Goals and Purposes

After studying all materials and resources presented in the course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain and describe effective and non-effective communication techniques.
2. Differentiate between verbal and non-verbal communication.
3. Identify behaviors that interfere with effective communication.
4. Identify elements of active listening and benefits of professional communication.
5. Perform interview techniques and demonstrate or explain appropriate patient education practices.
6. Identify relationships among various health care professionals and patients of various educational levels.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of various ethnic groups and discuss communication between cultures.
8. Discuss the aspects of electronic communication methods.
9. Demonstrate proper grammar and writing skills.
10. Explain basic psychological principles and developmental stages of life.
11. Demonstrate professionalism of an effective health care worker.

Learning Outcomes

Explain basic psychological principles and developmental stages of life; differentiate between verbal and non-verbal communication; identify behaviors that interfere with effective communication; identify elements of active listening; discuss the stages of grief; identify relationships among various health care professions; and describe and demonstrate professionalism of an effective health care worker.

Specific Course Objectives (includes SCANS)

After studying all materials and resources presented in the course, the student will be able to:

1. **Chapter 1 The Communication Process (1 aiv, 1av)**
 - a. Explain the importance of effective communication
 - b. Describe the elements of the communication process
 - c. Describe the obstacles to successful communication
2. **Chapter 2 Nonverbal Communication (1 aiv, 1av)**
 - a. Explain why verbal and nonverbal must be congruent
 - b. Describe why the understanding of nonverbal communication is important in health care
3. **Chapter 3 Verbal Communication (1 av, 1 aiv)**
 - a. Identify practices for effective verbal communication with patients and other healthcare providers
 - b. Develop skills for listening and paraphrasing
 - c. Demonstrate methods of questioning the patient
4. **Chapter 4 Professional Communication and Behavior (1 civ, 1 aiv, 1 av)**
 - a. Explain roadblocks to therapeutic communication
 - b. Identify the benefits of effective professional communication and behavior
 - c. Discuss strategies for working with patients who may be angry or anxious
5. **Chapter 5 Interviewing Techniques (1 ci, 1 ciii)**
 - a. Distinguish between open-ended, closed questions and indirect statements
 - b. Compare and contrast the healthcare professional-centered interview and the patient-centered interview
 - c. Develop skills that lead to the "pinpointing" of the chief complaint
6. **Chapter 6 Adapting Communication to a Patient's Ability to Understand (2 bvi)**
 - a. Explain how low health literacy may impact a patient's health
 - b. Describe strategies that will facilitate communication between a healthcare professional and a patient who is visually impaired, hearing impaired, or speaks a different language
7. **Chapter 7 Patient Education (2 bii, 2 biii)**
 - a. Identify the benefits of patient education
 - b. Distinguish the three types of learning styles
 - c. Describe the benefits of using visual aids and written materials
8. **Chapter 8 Cultural Sensitivity in Healthcare Communication (2 bvi, 2 bi)**
 - a. Define cultural competence and explain the need for it on the part of HCPs
 - b. Discuss nonverbal communication between cultures
 - c. Discuss the need for and the use of interpreters
9. **Chapter 9 Electronic Communication (1 aii, 2 eiii)**
 - a. Explain how telecommunication, fax, and email differ from face-to-face communication
 - b. Discuss the guidelines for the effective use of the telephone in the healthcare setting
 - c. List the symptoms and conditions that require immediate medical help
10. **Chapter 10 Fundamental Writing Skills (1ai, 1aii, 1 bv, 2 bi)**
 - a. Explain the purposes of the parts of speech and punctuation
 - b. Illustrate correct sentence grammar
 - c. Explain the basics of SOAP notes

Course Content

A general description of lecture/discussion topics included in this course is listed in the Learning Objectives / Specific Course Objectives sections of this syllabus.

Students in all sections of this course will be required to do the following:

1. End of chapter questions or quizzes
2. Exams over chapter 1-10
3. Final exam

Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery

Students are expected to demonstrate basic competency in reading, writing, oral communication, math, and computer skills. Students are expected to be an active learning participant by assuming accountability in preparing for each class by completing required readings and/or other learning activities as listed in each unit assignment. Proficiency will be measured by examination scores, oral discussions and/or presentations, case studies and internet research activities.

Students should use the Email within Canvas to communicate with the instructor. Using Canvas email gives you access to the instructor and other classmates without having to remember or type email addresses - you must select a name from the list. If you are not able to contact me using email in Canvas, you may use my Panola College email address, contact me by telephone, or stop by my office. I attempt to respond to all email within 24 hours. Please always include a subject line and your name in your email.

Major Assignments/Assessments

The following items are assigned and assessed during the semester and used to calculate the student's final grade.

Assignments

Assignments

1. Read each chapter and answer end of chapter questions as assigned (chapters 1-10)
2. Complete online quizzes as assigned, on time

Assessments

Assessments

Online quizzes (5 quizzes)

Exam 1 (Ch. 1-3)

Exam 2 (Ch. 4-8)

Exam 3 (Ch. 9-10)

Final exam (comprehensive)

Course Grade

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

- Assignments – 30%
- Exams 30%
- Final Exam 40%

Texts Materials, and Supplies

Communication Skills for the Healthcare Professional, First edition, McCorry, L., Mason, J, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Copyright 2011

Required Readings

Communication Skills for the Healthcare Professional, First edition, McCorry, L., Mason, J, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Copyright 2011

Addendum

Google Classroom

Other

- Courses conducted via video conferencing may be recorded and shared for instructional purposes by the instructor.
- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <https://www.panolacollegestore.com>.
- For testing services, use the following link: <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/student-support/academic-testing-center>.

- The Accommodations & Disability Support (A&DS) Office at Panola College provides and facilitates support services and accommodations for students with disabilities. The A&DS office works under the federal guidelines included in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act. Please contact the Accommodations & Disability Support (A&DS) Office located in the Charles C. Matthews Student Center or go to <https://www.panola.edu/disabilitysupport> for more information.
- Withdrawing from a course is the student's responsibility. Students who do not attend class and who do not withdraw will receive the grade earned for the course.
- Student Handbook: <https://www.panola.edu/> (located on at the bottom under student)

SCANS Criteria

1. Foundation skills are defined in three areas: basic skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities.
 1. Basic Skills: A worker must read, write, perform arithmetic and mathematical operations, listen, and speak effectively. These skills include:
 1. Reading: locate, understand, and interpret written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules.
 2. Writing: communicate thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing, and create documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts.
 3. Arithmetic and Mathematical Operations: perform basic computations and approach practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques.
 4. Listening: receive, attend to, interpret, and respond to verbal messages and other cues.
 5. Speaking: Organize ideas and communicate orally.
 2. Thinking Skills: A worker must think creatively, make decisions, solve problems, visualize, know how to learn, and reason effectively. These skills include:
 1. Creative Thinking: generate new ideas.
 2. Decision Making: specify goals and constraints, generate alternatives, consider risks, and evaluate and choose the best alternative.
 3. Problem Solving: recognize problems and devise and implement plan of action.
 4. Visualize ("Seeing Things in the Mind's Eye"): organize and process symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information.
 5. Knowing How to Learn: use efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills.
 6. Reasoning: discover a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and apply it when solving a problem.
 3. Personal Qualities: A worker must display responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self management, integrity, and honesty.
 1. Responsibility: exert a high level of effort and persevere toward goal attainment.
 2. Self-Esteem: believe in one's own self-worth and maintain a positive view of oneself.
 3. Sociability: demonstrate understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in group settings.
 4. Self-Management: assess oneself accurately, set personal goals, monitor progress, and exhibit self-control.
 5. Integrity and Honesty: choose ethical courses of action.
2. Workplace competencies are defined in five areas: resources, interpersonal skills, information, systems, and technology.
 1. Resources: A worker must identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources effectively.
 1. Time: select goal-relevant activities, rank them, allocate time, and prepare and follow schedules.
 2. Money: Use or prepare budgets, make forecasts, keep records, and make adjustments to meet objectives.
 3. Material and Facilities: Acquire, store, allocate, and use materials or space efficiently. Examples: construct a decision timeline chart; use computer software to plan a project; prepare a budget; conduct a cost/benefits analysis; design an RFP process; write a job description; develop a staffing plan.
 2. Interpersonal Skills: A worker must work with others effectively.
 1. Participate as a Member of a Team: contribute to group effort.
 2. Teach Others New Skills.

3. Serve Clients/Customers: work to satisfy customer's expectations.
 4. Exercise Leadership: communicate ideas to justify position, persuade and convince others, responsibly challenge existing procedures and policies.
 5. Negotiate: work toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolve divergent interests.
 6. Work with Diversity: work well with men and women from diverse backgrounds. Examples: collaborate with a group member to solve a problem; work through a group conflict situation, train a colleague; deal with a dissatisfied customer in person; select and use appropriate leadership styles; use effective delegation techniques; conduct an individual or team negotiation; demonstrate an understanding of how people from different cultural backgrounds might behave in various situations.
3. Information: A worker must be able to acquire and use information.
 1. Acquire and Evaluate Information.
 2. Organize and Maintain Information.
 3. Interpret and Communicate Information.
 4. Use Computers to Process Information. Examples: research and collect data from various sources; develop a form to collect data; develop an inventory record-keeping system; produce a report using graphics; make an oral presentation using various media; use on-line computer databases to research a report; use a computer spreadsheet to develop a budget.
 4. Systems: A worker must understand complex interrelationships.
 1. Understand Systems: know how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operate effectively with them.
 2. Monitor and Correct Performance: distinguish trends, predict impacts on system operations, diagnose deviations in systems' performance and correct malfunctions.
 3. Improve or Design Systems: suggest modifications to existing systems and develop new or alternative systems to improve performance. Examples: draw and interpret an organizational chart; develop a monitoring process; choose a situation needing improvement, break it down, examine it, propose an improvement, and implement it.
 5. Technology: A worker must be able to work with a variety of technologies.
 1. Select Technology: choose procedures, tools or equipment including computers and related technologies.
 2. Apply Technologies to Task: understand overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment.
 3. Maintain and Troubleshoot Equipment: Prevent, identify, or solve problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies. Examples: read equipment descriptions and technical specifications to select equipment to meet needs; set up and assemble appropriate equipment from instructions; read and follow directions for troubleshooting and repairing equipment.