

Course Outline for: COMM 2111 Family Communication**A. Course Description:**

1. Number of credits: 3
2. Lecture hours per week: 3
3. Prerequisites: COMM 1100 (C or higher) or COMM 1111 (C or higher)
4. Corequisites: None
5. MnTC Goals: Goal #5 History and the Social & Behavioral Sciences

This course explores how communication functions within families to develop, maintain, enrich, or limit family relationships. Descriptive rather than prescriptive, the course emphasizes understanding families as unique communication systems embedded within sub-cultural and cultural ecosystems. Awareness of the functions of communication in families can help students understand more about how and why their families behave as they do. The course also provides several theoretical approaches to help students better understand the interactional dynamics occurring in their family or families.

B. Date last reviewed/updated: May 2023**C. Outline of Major Content Areas:**

1. Theoretical approaches to the study of family communication
2. Family cohesion and flexibility
3. Family rules and communication networks
4. Family images, themes, metaphors, myths and stories which shape a family's collective identity
5. Family roles
6. Power processes and outcomes
7. Decision-making and problem-solving
8. Family conflict and stress
9. Family change
10. Creating and maintaining healthy families

D. Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how communication patterns and dynamics in families may affect individuals within the family system. (Goal 5a)
2. Articulate how their extended family and family-of-origin have affected their own development and competence as a communicator. (Goal 2b, 2c, 5a, 5c)
3. Exhibit knowledge of communication theory and practices as applied to the family as a unique communicational context. (Goal 2c, 5c)
4. Demonstrate and evaluate family decision making processes and influence strategies through problem-solving activities. (Goal 2a, 5a)

5. Classify which communication behaviors and patterns contribute to and/or inhibit family cohesion and flexibility. (Goal 5a, 5c)

E. Methods for Assessing Student Learning:

Methods for assessment may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Speeches
2. Self-reflection paper
3. Testing
4. Journals
5. Application papers
6. Case studies
7. Group assignments
8. Service learning
9. Research papers

F. Special Information:

None