

PMDU310: Communication Skills for Pharmacists
Northeastern University School of Pharmacy
Department of Pharmacy Practice
Spring Semester 2006

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students with various theoretical frameworks for understanding communication processes and practical tools for engaging in effective interpersonal communication when providing pharmaceutical care to diverse patient populations. The course will support a client-centered approach to how students assess, adapt and evaluate various types of communications within pharmacy settings. Students will apply course concepts in group discussions, interacting with standardized patients during lab sessions, and other written and oral exercises. Students will come away with understanding the importance of such communication skills as: listening, eliciting patient feedback, empathy, asking questions, nonverbal communication, resolving confusion, teaching patients self-monitoring, resolving nonadherence and other medication-related issues, and managing conflict with patients and other health professionals.

Course Goals & Objectives

Course Goals

- To distinguish different factors affecting pharmacist communication, why they are important and how they impact patient and health system outcomes.
- To demonstrate a client-centered approach when providing effective interpersonal communication with various types of patients and other members of the healthcare team.
- To use and apply skills and strategies to effectively assess, adapt, and evaluate a variety of complex communication encounters between pharmacists, patients and/or other health professionals.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Compare different conceptual frameworks for relating communication processes with various outcomes.
- Distinguish the different facilitators and barriers of interpersonal communication between pharmacists, patients, and other health professionals.

Course Objectives (Cont.)

- Assess, adapt, and evaluate various situations encountered by pharmacists working with various practice settings and patient populations.
- Apply appropriate client-centered approaches to resolve communication barriers and improve patient outcomes.
- Incorporate communication tools and problem-solving techniques to improve patient feedback and resolve various medication-specific concerns.

Instructor:

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 Northeastern University School of Pharmacy
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Staff:

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 Northeastern University
 Assistant Lab Coordinator & Research Assistant
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Credit Hours: 3.0 Semester Hours

Clock Hours: 220 min/week

Lecture: 100 min/week

Fridays 9:50 am – 11:30 am Room: 101 CH

Laboratory hours: 120 min/week

Mondays: 11:45 am – 1:45 pm Room: 25 BK

Mondays: 1:45 pm – 3:45 pm Room: 25 BK

Mondays: 3:45 pm – 5:45 pm Room: 25 BK

Thursdays 12:40 pm – 2:40 pm Room: 25 BK

Fridays 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Room: 25 BK

Fridays 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm Room: 25 BK

Learning Resources:

Required Texts:

Berger BA. Communication skills for pharmacists: building relationships, improving patient care. Washington, DC: American Pharmacists Association, 2005.

Fadiman A. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997.

Tindall WN, Beardsley RS, Kimberlin CL. Communication skills in pharmacy practice. 4th Edition. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2003.

Readings from: Pharmacist-Patient Consultation Program: Promoting Adherence. New York: Pfizer, 2003.

Prerequisites or Permission Statement:

Second year standing or by permission of the instructor

Policy Regarding the Use of Taping of Lectures/Cell Phones and Palm Pilots:

University policy dictates that students must seek the instructor's permission to tape record class lectures. All cell phones and palm pilots should be turned off during lectures, laboratory sessions and during examinations

Academic Honesty Statement

Northeastern University is committed to the principles of intellectual honesty and integrity. All members of the Northeastern community are expected to maintain complete honesty in all academic work, presenting only that which is their own work on tests and assignments. If you have questions regarding the definitions of cheating or plagiarism, consult the Northeastern University Student Handbook and/or contact your professor prior to submitting work for evaluation.

Plagiarism is intentionally or unintentionally using the ideas or writings of another person without properly presenting the information and giving credit to the source. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarized work will receive a grade of **F** and may result in the student failing the course.

Cheating will also not be tolerated. Any evidence of cheating on a test or assignment will result in an F for that work, may result in the student failing the course and/or expulsion from the program or University. The student's actions may also be brought to the attention of the Northeastern University Student Judicial Hearing Board.

Academic Honesty Statement (Cont.)

Any member of the academic community who witnesses an act of academic dishonesty should report it to the appropriate faculty member or to the Director of Judicial Affairs. The charge will be investigated and if sufficient evidence is presented, the case will be referred to the Northeastern University Student Judicial Hearing Board.

Statement Concerning Students With Special Needs

Students with special needs (e.g., disabled, Deaf, or hard of hearing) are encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to register and request services. Students must notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester if they plan to use DRC services throughout the course.

Course Grading Criteria

Lecture:

Mid-Term Exam: 120 points (02/24/06, 9:50 am, Churchill 101)

Final Exam: 165 points (4/21/06, 8 am, location: TBA)

Book Assignment: 60 points

Total Lecture points: 345 points

Reading assignments should be done prior to the lecture that week.

Exams will consist of multiple choice questions, matching, short answer and short essays.

Make-up exams will only be provided if given a written note from a physician or lawyer indicating reasons why the student could not be present for the exam. Make-up exams are typically more difficult and largely essay exams.

* **Bonus:** There will be three (3 points each, total possible of 9 points) pop quizzes based on reading and previous lecture materials. The intent of these quizzes is to (1) prepare you for the exams and style of exam questions and (2) provide an avenue for receiving extra points. These points will be added to your total lecture points.

Lab:

Pre-Lab Assignments: 15 points

Self-Evaluations of Sessions: 30 points

Lab Midterm: 60 points

Lab Final: 90 points

*Group Presentation: 60 points

Total Lab points: 255 points

*Projects will involve the development of an intervention to improve communication in one or more types of pharmacy settings. Powerpoint and paper presentations required.

Lab Policies:

- Please show up on time at the assigned lab time/when you are suppose to meet your patient (will change week to week; lab schedules will be posted on

blackboard 3-5 days in advance). Being late disrupts the flow of lab and interrupts the recitation experience. If you are more than 5 minutes late for lab (regardless of reason), it will be noted in your attendance records. If you are late two or more times, you will lose two points for every lab period you are late.

- Please wear your organic chemistry lab coat and name tag (given in lab) during your consult.
- There are 10 labs during the semester. You will lose 2 points for every lab that is missed.
- Attendance will be measured by turning in your pre-laboratory assignments, self-evaluations, and/or any graded assignment due in lab that day.
- One point will be deducted for each day the assignment is late.

Course Total: 600 points (Lecture: 345 points, Lab: 255 points)

A	> 93%		\geq 558.00 points
A-	90 – 92.9%		540.00 points – 557.99 points
B+	87 – 89.9%	=	522.00 points – 539.99 points
B	83 – 86.9%	=	498.00 points – 521.99 points
B-	80 – 82.9%	=	480.00 points – 497.99 points
C+	77 – 79.9%	=	462.00 points – 479.99 points
C	73 – 76.9%	=	438.00 points – 461.99 points
C-	70 – 72.9%	=	420.00 points – 437.99 points
D+	67 – 69.9%	=	402.00 points – 419.99 points
D	63 – 66.9%	=	378.00 points – 401.99 points
D-	60 – 62.9%	=	360.00 points – 377.99 points
F	< 60%	=	\leq 359.99 points

You need a minimum of **73% or a C** to pass the course. **The above point scale will be held tightly when computing grades.**

Table 1: Lecture Outline			
Date	Week #	Topic	Reading Assignment
01/13/06	1	Introduction to course; lecture and lab policies, theories of health communication and behaviors; types of communication- verbal, nonverbal	Svarstad & Bultman Chapter Berger: Pages 25-47 Tindall et al.: Pages 1-26
01/20/06	2	(Cont.) Theories of Health Communication and Behaviors; Structure and Content of Pharmacy Communication; Guidelines of the APhA Academy of Student Counseling Competition; Professionalism; Barriers to Communication	Berger: 1-24, 59-73 Tindall et al.: 49-59, 99-118, 163-174 Pfizer: 3-10
01/27/06	3	Skills #1 & #2: Listening and Asking Questions; Types of Listening styles, Types of questions, reflective probing, Indian Health Service Models of Question-Asking for new and refill prescriptions; Eliciting Feedback	Berger: 49-52 Tindall et al: 27-35, 63-65 Pfizer: 13-21
02/03/06	4	Skill #3: Empathy vs. Sympathy; Conditions requiring empathy; Approaches to provide reassurance, etc.	Berger: 52-58, 141-149 Tindall et al.: 65-80
02/10/06	5	Skills # 4 & #5: Understanding & managing conflict (#4) and confusion (#5); situations of conflict and confusion; Resolutions to conflict and confusion	Berger: 75-106 Tindall et al.: 81-89
02/17/06	6	Skill #6: Understanding theories and applications of nonverbal behavior; Appropriate Uses of Nonverbal Communication	Berger: 177-192 Tindall et al.: 37-47
02/24/06	7	Mid-Term Exam	Fadiman: Start reading
03/03/06	8	Skill #7: Facilitating Health Behavior Change (i.e., treatment nonadherence, unhealthy lifestyles); Motivational Interviewing Techniques and Approaches	Berger: 107-130 Tindall et al.: 121-131 Pfizer: 22-30 Fadiman: Continue reading
03/10/06	9	Spring Break	Fadiman: Continue reading
03/17/06	10	(Cont.) Motivational Interviewing. Skill #8: Communication with special populations	Tindall et al.: 133-161 Fadiman: Complete reading
03/24/06	11	Multicultural Communication: Models of Cultural Competency, Approaches to resolving communication barriers; Tools and resources	Book Assignment Due (In Class) Berger: 193-205
03/31/06	12	Group Communication; Social psychology of group communication; Issues and concerns; Approaches to facilitating patient medication groups, etc.	Kreps & Thornton
04/07/06	13	Intraprofessional Communication; Issues and concerns; Approaches to resolving conflict with other professionals; Approaches to facilitating change among other professionals (i.e, how to communicate recommendations, etc.)	Berger: 131-139 Tindall et al.: 89-91, 96-98 Group Paper Due (In Class)
04/14/06	14	Organizational Communication; Issues and concerns facing individuals within organization; Communication as supervisors, preceptors, etc.; health informatics as a way to improve organizational communication	Tindall et al.: 92-96

Table 2: Lab Outline		
Week of	Week #	Topic
01/09/06	1	No lab this week
01/16/06	2	MLK Holiday; No lab this week
01/23/06	3	Lab 1: Baseline Counseling Assessment; Review flow of lab & policies
01/30/06	4	Lab 2: Listening and Asking questions
02/06/06	5	Lab 3: Empathy; Cases on Communication Ethics
02/13/06	6	Lab 4: Managing the confused patient; Cases on Communication Ethics
02/20/06	7	President's Day; No lab this week
02/27/06	8	Lab 5: Midterm Lab Exam; Discuss Group Projects; Cases on Communication Ethics
03/06/06	9	Spring Break
03/13/06	10	Lab 6: Managing Conflict; Cases on Communication Ethics
03/20/06	11	Lab 7: Facilitating Behavioral Change
03/27/06	12	Lab 8: Final Lab Exam; Meetings on Group Projects
04/03/06	13	Lab 9: BaFa BaFa (Room Assignment Pending)
04/10/06	14	Lab 10: Group Presentations (Room Assignment Pending)
04/17/06	15	No labs on Monday (Patriots' Day)

Course subject content is tentative and may change during the semester. Students will be notified of changes.