

**SPC 3301: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

Typically meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays for an hour and 15 minute class  
Typically meets in a large lecture hall with 110-125 students enrolled

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**Florida International University**

College of Architecture + The Arts

Communication Arts Department

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Office: VH 212A

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**TEXT**

Beebe, S. A., Beebe, S. J., & Redmond, M. V. (2014 <available immediately on-line>).  
*Interpersonal communication: Relating to others*. Boston: Pearson.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**SPC 3301 Interpersonal Communication (3)**. Review of the major theories and research findings concerning the role communication in beginning, maintaining, and ending healthy relationships including romantic relationships, friendships, family relationships, collegial relationships as well as superior-subordinate relationships.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will be able to identify, understand, and apply the major concepts and theories in interpersonal communication as well as display a working knowledge of the effective interpersonal communication skills that facilitate the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

**COURSE CONTENT AND COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change)**

***Unit One: Theoretical Perspectives on Relational Communication***

W1	-orientation to the course - social construction of reality theory -basic vocabulary -Hart & Burks rhetorical perspective	Chapter 1  Chapter 2
W2	-pragmatics of human comm. -Laing's theory of relational perspective	Chapter 3
W3	-systems theory perspective -standpoint theory	Chapter 4
W4	-social learning theory; Bernstein's elaborated and restricted codes -Knapp's developmental theory	

W5 -**Test One administered in class**

***Unit Two: Interpersonal Attraction***

W5 -interpersonal attraction Chapter 5

W6 -Berger & Calabrese' theory of uncertainty reduction  
-initiating conversations Chapter 6

W7 -effective questioning  
-leave taking

***Unit Three: Symbolic Messages and Initial Interactions***

W8 -La Russo's theory of nonverbal communication Chapter 7  
-giving & receiving positive and negative feedback  
-giving negative feedback

W9 -complimenting Chapter 8  
-Homans' exchange theory

W10 -**Test Two administered in class**

***Unit Four: Relational Escalation***

W10 -Petronio's boundary and privacy management theory; self -disclosure Chapter 9

W11 - relationship building and continuity Chapter 10  
-Millar & Rogers' relational theory of intimacy

W12 - Rawlin's dialectical theory of friendship Chapter 11

W13 -family communication environments Chapter 12

***Unit Five: Relational De-escalation***

W14 -Cushman & Cahn on reassessing relationships

W15 -Thibaut & Kelly's comparison level theory  
-Baxter on ending relationships

W16 - **Test Three administered in class**  
NO CUMMULATIVE FINAL EXAM IN THIS CLASS

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### **Instructions and Course ID for MyCommLab Fall 2014 Courses**

Pearson Home: <https://pearsonmylabandmastering.com/>

Please purchase access to your instructor's MyComLab section, where your course material and special FIU edition eBook are located. You can purchase an access code from the FIU Bookstore OR direct access from the publisher, Pearson.

#### **MyComLab Instructions:**

To enroll in a typical course, a student needs to have a:

- Student access code, a valid credit card, or a PayPal account— Students get an access code with a new book purchase or by buying the code separately in a student access kit/card at the campus bookstore. Students can also buy access to a course online with a credit card or PayPal account while they are enrolling.
- The student access code is nontransferable and can be used only once.

#### *To purchase course access online*

- Go to the MyLab and Mastering website and click Student in the Register area. Enter the Course ID provided by your instructor and click Continue. After verifying your course information, enter your username and password, and click Sign In. If you don't have a Pearson account, click Create an account. Complete the Create an Account page. Helpful hints display to guide you. Read and accept the license agreement. Click Create Account. Select the button for the access level you want. Select whether you want to pay with a credit card or use PayPal and enter payment information. Click Review to review your order details. If you need to change anything, click the Change link. Click Make Payment to submit your order. Click Go to Your Course to access your online course.

#### *Register and Enroll in a New Subject*

- Go to the MyLab and Mastering website and click Student in the Register area. Enter the course ID you received from your instructor for your new course, and click Continue. Follow the instructions to either: Use a student access code, purchase access online, or request temporary access. To use a student access code: Go to the MyLab and Mastering website and click Student in the Register area. Enter the course ID provided by your instructor and click Continue. After verifying your course information, enter your username and password, and click Sign In. If you don't have a Pearson account, click Create an account. Complete the Create an Account page. Helpful hints display to guide you. Read and accept the license agreement. Click Create Account. Click Access Code and enter your six-word access code in the boxes. Click Finish to complete your registration. Click Go to Your Course to access your online course.

#### *To request temporary access (If a student is waiting for financial aid, 17 days of temporary course access without payment may be available).*

- Go to the MyLab and Mastering website and click Student in the Register area. Enter the Course ID provided by your instructor and click Continue. After verifying your course information, enter your username and password, and click Sign In. If you don't have a Pearson account, click Create an account. Complete the Create an Account page. Helpful hints appear to guide you. Read and accept the license agreement. Optionally, you can select the check box to help us make our products better and learn about new offers. Click Create Account. To get temporary access to your course, click the link at the bottom of the page. When a confirmation message appears, click Yes to complete your registration. You will receive a confirmation email with payment instructions. Click Go to Your Course to access your course.

For more help with registration, go to the Get Started for Students area of the MyLab and Mastering website. For instructions on registration, watch the Register for your course videos.

### SECTIONS AND COURSE ID

#### SPC 3301-Interpersonal Communication Face-to-Face class. Section U01

#### INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance is **NOT** required in this class.

- **Therefore, if you choose to attend, you are expected to be in attendance in body, mind, and spirit.**
- Also, please note, that **professional behavior is expected at all times.** The classroom is not the place to study for a test in another class, read email, etc.
- **If you desire to earn a passing grade in this class, you will want to make attendance very high priority for the entire semester.** Please note that more than half of the test questions are taken from the lectures presented in class and NOT from the readings. There are questions on the tests from every single class period. Furthermore, the information covered in class typically does NOT appear in the book AND often represents an alternative viewpoint to that offered in the textbook. In other words, the information given in class is largely unavailable outside of class. The information covered in lectures is often abstract and difficult to understand from borrowed notes. Therefore, attending class is the **best** way to earn a passing grade in this course.
- If you cannot or simply chose not to attend class on a day when class is held, regardless of the reason, **it is your responsibility to get class notes and announcements from a classmate.** Make a friend *now* and exchange phone numbers for this purpose. Under no circumstances will the professor provide lecture notes to students.
- Extra credit opportunities occur on a regular basis in class. Students are awarded points for participation in class activities. Students who fail to attend class fail to earn these points. There is no opportunity to make up extra credit points that are awarded for in-class activities.

Electronic devices, food and beverages: Cell phones, laptops, i-pads, personal digital assistants, beepers and other electronic devices must be turned off and stowed before entering the classroom. All such devices must remain in your back pack during class. Think of class as a business meeting; no one checks their messages when they are in a meeting with the CEO or an important client. **Any cell phone that goes off during class will be confiscated! If you cell phone goes off in class, you are expected to willingly bring the phone to the professor and from the front of the room provide an immediate and sincere verbal apology to the class for disrupting their learning process.** If you cannot comply with this regulation, please drop the class NOW as this policy will not change during the semester.

Food and beverages are allowed in the class—within reason. Do NOT have a pizza delivered or eat smelly food in class!

Email Etiquette: Whenever engaging in professional correspondence, such as with professors and colleagues, appropriate protocols should be observed. Failure to do so makes you look *unprofessional*. A word to the wise: In this economy, no one can afford to develop a reputation for unprofessional behavior. How to do that?

1. Have a subject line. Whenever I receive an email without a subject line, I assume that the message is NOT important as the author simply dashed it off.

2. Ideally, in the subject line (if not then in the body of the email), indicate the exact class and section in which you are enrolled. If you do not tell me which class you are in, I cannot help you. I have multiple

classes. The activities and assignments are different for each. I have very large classes. I will not know your name or which class you are in. Please tell me so I can know what you are talking about.

3. For purposes of this class, when you are initiating or responding to on-line messages with the professor or peers, please use an appropriate salutation and greeting (e.g., “Dear Dr. Webb,” or “Hello Fellow Group Members,”).
4. Have dedicated body to the message; please spell check and grammar check messages before sending. If necessary, draft in Microsoft Word to enable these checks and then cut and past the message into the email.
5. Finally, please provide a signature at the end of the message. A signature line would be even better. Also, please note, that all emails related to courses are saved on the University hard drive. Should your email need to be retrieved, and it is written poorly, you will leave an unfavorable impression.

***Quizzes and Tests:*** There are NO papers, written assignments, group projects, or presentations. *Your entire grade for this course is determined by on-line testing.* The quizzes and tests are *not* cumulative. In both the quizzes and tests, look for multiple choice questions. The vast majority of your final grade is based on these three objective tests and the twelve quizzes. Please study long and hard for these examinations. Obviously students are expected to turn in their own original work and to work independently during tests. Nonetheless, tests and quizzes are administered and handled quite differently in many ways. Please note the differences below:

***Quizzes.*** Weekly quizzes will test your knowledge of the readings. Each quiz will test your knowledge of one chapter from the assigned textbook. Quizzes can have as few as 10 questions and as many as 25 depending on the length of the chapter itself. Please note that all quizzes are administered on-line in [www.myComLab.com](http://www.myComLab.com). The quizzes are available to you outside of class. The quizzes are open-book quizzes with no time limit. Take as long as you need to complete the quiz and earn a high score. Note, though, that you are required to complete the quizzes on campus at any of the many free computer labs on a computer hard wired to the Internet. If you elect to take quizzes at an alternative location, you are likely to experience connectivity problems and we will NOT reset the quiz for you.

***Tests.*** Three major tests will assess your knowledge and understanding of the lecture material presented in class as well as class discussions. They contain NO material from the textbook. The tests have 35-50 questions each and cover about 5 weeks of class material. The tests are not cumulative. Please note that the three tests are administered in class during a regular class period. There is no cumulative final examination in the course. Please note that the third and final test, Test 3, will be administered during our assigned 2 hour slot during final exam week.

**The tests are not designed to be open book exams and do not function as open book exams. You are not permitted to consult notes during the test.** Obviously students are expected to work independently during tests.

***Grades.*** Please feel free to come to your professor’s office to discuss any questions or concerns regarding the tests or quizzes. You may stop by before or after the exams. Please stop by the office if you wish to appeal your grade on a given quiz or test. While the professor welcomes the opportunity to discuss any matter related to grades, such conversations are most productive for the student if they take place in the privacy of the professor’s office.

***Quiz schedule.*** You can earn 10 bonus points each time you complete a quiz in a timely way. Please see the due dates below for earning the bonus points:

W1	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 1 on Chapter 1
W2	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 2 on Chapter 2
W3	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 3 on Chapter 3
W4	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 4 on Chapter 4

W5	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 5 on Chapter 5
W6	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 6 on Chapter 6
W8	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 7 on Chapter 7
W9	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 8 on Chapter 8
W10	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 9 on Chapter 9
W11	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 10 on Chapter 10
W12	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 11 on Chapter 11
W13	Wed. 12 noon	Quiz 12 on Chapter 12

**All quizzes absolutely due on 12 noon Monday, Week 14.  
Quizzes will close at this time and students will be awarded their scores at that exact moment. A score of zero will be awarded for any unopened quiz.**

*Policy for Making-Up Work.* When a student fails to complete any assignment, including the taking of a quiz or test, I assume that the student is an adult who elected that choice. You certainly are under no legal or moral obligation to complete an assignment. Conversely, universities across the United States, including FIU, provide for a few limited circumstances under which any instructor is obligated to allow students to make up work. If you will provide me with written evidence of any of the three circumstances named below, then I am happy to work with you to make up a test or quiz:

1. Illness for which you were treated or hospitalized.
2. Death in the immediate family.
3. You were an official representative of the University at a meeting or event.

Please be advised that you will NOT be permitted to make-up work for any of the following circumstances:

- Work-related circumstances (e.g., “I had to stay late at work.”). If you elect to work while in college, please arrange your work schedule so that it does not interfere with school work. To do otherwise is to make work a higher priority than school. That is your choice, of course, but then honor your own choice by taking the zero. Do not expect a university professor to share your priorities; such priorities are antithetical the professor’s basic values. At the very least, such a rationale for a requested “retake” is an ineffective persuasive strategy.
- Child care (“My child got sick. What could I do?”). If you have primary responsibility for the care of one or more children, make a plan of what you will do if your regular child care arrangements fall through. Then make a back-up plan to that plan. Live 3-plans deep and you will rarely need to miss anything important in your life. Conversely, if you want to be the person who stays with your child when he/she is ill and thus you miss a testing event, respect your own priorities and take the zero, just as you would take the cut in pay if you did not go in to work.
- Emotional distress (e.g., “I broke up with my girlfriend/boyfriend and could not think straight”). In such emotional circumstances, please do what all responsible adults do. Take a deep breath and carry on. Plan to eat your ice cream and have a good cry later tonight, after the test.
- Family demands (e.g., “I had relatives visiting from another country and had to...”). Ask the relatives if they would rather you miss a test/quiz or spend an extra few hours with them. If they genuinely care for you and about your future, they will urge you to take the test.
- Pet emergency (e.g., “I had to take my dog to the vet.”). See child care above for an alternative way of dealing with such an emergency.
- Transportation malfunction (e.g., “I missed the test because of bad traffic.”). On test days, leave for campus at least an hour early. If you arrive on campus with time to spare, grab a cup of coffee and a quiet spot to study for a bit. It is time well spent.

- Poor preparation (e.g., “I stayed up all night studying and...”). Develop a study plan that spans multiple days/nights. Enact your plan to feel well prepared and avoid the last minute panic. No one should be taking a test on no-sleep. This is a plan for failure and not a plan for success. Make a plan for success.
- Disorganized (e.g., “I wrote the time down wrong in my class notes.”) If you are relying on class announcements to learn the dates and times of tests, you are missing out on the golden opportunity to calendar EVERY quiz and test you have in every class this semester on your personal calendar—during the first week of classes! Just check your syllabi and enter the dates and times. You probably have a free calendar on your cell phone. Use it! On the first of every month, take 5 minutes to look over the month ahead and see what is coming. Make plans, such as marking out blocks of time to study for upcoming tests. Every Sunday afternoon, look over your calendar for the coming week. Allocate and prepare. Check your calendar every morning to see what’s on the agenda for the day. Every successful professional in the world keeps a calendar and consults it frequently. If you have not already done so, get serious about calendaring.
- Too busy (e.g., “I’ve been overwhelmed with midterms and papers deadlines. I just didn’t have time to study for the test.”). See above about getting organized, making plans, and thus mitigating that experience of being overwhelmed.
- Ran out of time (e.g., “I had so many things I had to do today for work, family, friends, and school, that I did not even make it to class to take the test.”). If you are so over scheduled and committed that you literally cannot fit your life in the 24 hours per day that we are all given, you probably want to take a serious look at two things: your commitments and your priorities. I have been teaching college students for 34 years and I was in college myself for almost a decade before that earning my three degrees. One truism has never changes about college: It is among the most rewarding intellectual experiences on the planet, if the student makes school a high priority. Conversely, the student’s experience will be disastrous (poor grades, failed classes) if school is his/her last priority in a full life. A meaningful college education is not something you can squeeze in between other aspects of your real life. If that is your goal, please do not take my class. Spoiler alert: This class will demand more than that of you and you will, not doubt, land up very unhappy with the class if it is your last priority. You have been warned.

Readings Assignments: We will read selected chapters from the required text. Specific assignments are listed on the syllabus. Please read the material prior to attending class. The assignments provide background for the more detailed lectures. Come to class prepared to learn more about what you have read.

#### **DISABILITY NOTICE**

I want to reiterate the University’s desire that students know about the availability of the Office of Disability Services. The office is available to any students who should need it. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the Office of Disabilities Services to process a request to have educational needs met. Of course, students must follow their procedures as to proper notification to the instructor. Please know that I am happy to comply with any reasonable request for accommodation.

#### **COURSE CONTENT AND COURSE CALENDAR**

##### ***Unit One: Theoretical Perspectives on Relational Communication***

W1	Tu	26 Aug.	-orientation to the course - social construction of reality theory -basic vocabulary	Chapter 1
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	Th 28 Aug.	-Hart & Burks rhetorical perspective	Chapter 2
W2	Tu 02 Sept.	-pragmatics of human comm.	
	Th 04 Sept.	-Laing's theory of relational perspective	Chapter 3
W3	Tu 09 Sept.	-systems theory perspective	
	Th 11 Sept.	-standpoint theory	Chapter 4
W4	Tu 16 Sept.	-social learning theory; Bernstein's elaborated and restricted codes	
	Th 18 Sept.	-Knapp's developmental theory	
W5	Tu 23 Sept.	<b>-Test One administered in class</b>	

***Unit Two: Interpersonal Attraction***

	Th 25 Sept.	-interpersonal attraction	Chapter 5
W6	Tu 30 Sept.	-Berger & Calabrese' theory of uncertainty reduction	
	Th 02 Oct.	-initiating conversations	Chapter 6
W7	Tu 07 Oct.	-effective questioning	
	Th 09 Oct.	-leave taking	

***Unit Three: Symbolic Messages and Initial Interactions***

W8	Tu 14 Oct.	-La Russo's theory of nonverbal communication	Chapter 7
	Th 16 Oct.	-giving & receiving positive and negative feedback -giving negative feedback	
W9	Tu 21 Oct.	-complimenting	Chapter 8
	Th 23 Oct.	-Homans' exchange theory	
W10	Tu 28 Oct.	<b>-Test Two administered in class</b>	

***Unit Four: Relational Escalation***

	Th 30 Oct.	-Petronio's boundary and privacy management theory; self -disclosure	Chapter 9
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- W11 Tu 04 Nov. - relationship building and continuity  
 Th 06 Nov. -Millar & Rogers' relational theory of intimacy Chapter 10
- W12 Tu 11 Nov. -Veterans' Day—No Class.  
 Th 13 Nov. - Rawlin's dialectical theory of friendship Chapter 11
- W13 Tu 18 Nov. -family communication environments Chapter 12

***Unit Five: Relational De-escalation***

- Th 20 Nov. -NCA. No class; professor attending conference
- W14 Tu 25 Nov. -Cushman & Cahn on reassessing relationships  
 Th 27 Nov. Thanksgiving
- W15 Tu 02 Dec. -Thibaut & Kelly's comparison level theory  
 Th 04 Dec. - Baxter on ending relationships
- W16 Tu 09 Dec. **Place time here.** - **Test Three administered in class**  
 NO CUMMULATIVE FINAL EXAM IN THIS CLASS

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

The University's policy on religious holy days as stated in the University Catalog and Student Handbook will be followed in this class. Any student may request to be excused from class to observe a religious holy day of his or her faith.

**COURSE GRADES**

All activities are graded on a point system. The TOTAL points available in the class = 2400.  
 12 quizzes, each worth 100 points, for a total of 1200 points; each quiz is worth 4.17% of your final grade.  
 3 tests, each worth 400 points, for a total of 1200 points; each test is worth 16.67% of your final grade.

Final grades are assigned by comparing the student's total points earned to the following scale:

- A = 94 - 100% = 2245 - 2400
- A- = 90 - 93% = 2148 - 2244
- B+ = 87 - 89% = 2076 - 2147
- B = 83 - 86% = 1980 - 2175
- B- = 80 - 82% = 1908 - 1979
- C+ = 77 - 79% = 1836 - 1907

C	=	73 - 76%	=	1740 - 1835
C-	=	70 - 72%	=	1668 - 1739
D+	=	67 - 69%	=	1596 - 1667
D	=	63 - 66%	=	1500 - 1595
D-	=	58 - 64%	=	1380 - 1499
F	=	00 - 57%	=	0000 - 1379

To calculate how many points you earned on each test, multiply your percent score times 4. For example, if you earned 78% of Test 1, you earned 312 points. For quizzes, your percent score is the number of points earned. For example, if you scored 90% on Quiz 2, then you earned 90 points for Quiz 2. Add all points together and see where the total falls in the above scale.

### **POLICY FOR ASSIGNING AN INCOMPLETE "I" GRADE**

An incomplete grade is a temporary symbol given for work not completed because of serious interruption not caused by the student's own negligence. An incomplete must be made up as quickly as possible but no later than two consecutive semesters after the initial taking of the course or it will automatically default to an "F" or the grade that the student earned in the course. There is no extension of the two semester deadline. The student must not register again for the course to make up the incomplete. Students who have incomplete grades on their records must remove the incomplete by the end of the fourth week of the term in which they plan to graduate. Failure to do so will result in a cancellation of graduation.

Incompletes are awarded only if the student has completed most of the course work. If a student misses a significant portion of the course work, he/she should drop the course. If the drop period has ended, the student may petition for a withdrawal—this requires the student to un-enroll in all of their courses for that semester.

Incompletes are not to be used because a student took on too many credits and they cannot complete everything that is now required of them.

In such cases where the course instructor determines that it appropriate to award a student a grade of "I" (incomplete) the following steps must be followed.

Using an Official University Form the course instructor will report the following:

1. The grade earned by the student to date
2. The missing work and the percentage of the final grade it represents (this requires the details of the specific missing assignment)
3. The date the instructor expects the missing work to be submitted or in the case of an examination made up
4. The justification for awarding the grade of "I"
5. Have the student sign the form
6. Submit this form to the Department Chair and Dean and maintain a copy for instructor records and provide a copy for the student
7. Upon satisfying the requirements for a grade the instructor will sign off on the form and attach it to the change of grade form she or he will submit.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This syllabus is a contract of understanding between professor and student. If the assignments and grading system are not acceptable, then the student needs to negotiate a change by midnight Sunday on the second week of class or accept the rules as written.

### **CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This [Code of Academic Integrity](#) was adopted by the Student Government Association on November 28, 2001 and reflects the values articulated in the Student Code of Standards.

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning.

Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of Florida International University.

As a student of this university:

- I will be honest in my academic endeavors.
- I will not represent someone else's work as my own.
- I will not cheat, nor will I aid in another's cheating.

All students are deemed by the university to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Code of Academic Integrity's procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the FIU Student Handbook. Students have the right to due process in all disciplinary situations. For additional information concerning student rights and responsibilities, please contact FIU's [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#).

Note: Intensive auditing of the course will be conducted to prevent academic misconduct.

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**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
STUDENT CODE OF STANDARDS**

A University is a learning community following a tradition more than 1,000 years old. Florida International University is such a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service.

As a member of this community:

- I will respect the tradition of academic inquiry, the University's rules of conduct, and its mission.
- I will respect the opinions and differences of all members of the FIU community.
- I will practice civility and demonstrate conduct that reflects the values of the institution.
- I will be diligent and honest in my personal and academic endeavors.

The FIU Student Handbook outlines the Student Code of Conduct regarding students with disruptive behavior.

**Website: [www.fiu.edu/~sccr/docs/disruptive\\_brochure.doc](http://www.fiu.edu/~sccr/docs/disruptive_brochure.doc)**

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