**Communication Skills II**

*2025-2026*

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***SYLLABUS***

## Course description

This course develops **advanced communication competencies** for future engineers by focusing on the *psychological mechanisms* behind effective interaction: how people interpret messages and form assumptions; how emotions shape reasoning and escalation; how teams build psychological safety; how trust is built with stakeholders under uncertainty; how introverted students can train communication confidence; and how to influence ethically without manipulation.

The course is strongly **practice-based**: each session combines **≤30 minutes of theory** with **structured active practice –** students will practice communication as happens in real life and professional contexts – through structured exercises, simulations, and collaborative tasks. Students progressively build a **personal "Communication Toolkit"** through weekly artifacts that can be reused in academic, professional, and everyday contexts.

The course is designed to be **inclusive** for students with introverted profiles and/or social anxiety, using "write-first" strategies, gradual exposure, and predictable participation formats.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. **Diagnose misunderstandings** using mental models, attribution errors, common ground, and the ladder of inference.

2. **Write and speak with clarity**: define assumptions, align on decisions, and choose the right communication channel (email/chat/ticket/meeting).

3. **Manage emotion in communication**: identify threat vs safety cues, notice triggers, apply regulation strategies, and de-escalate tense interactions.

4. **Support high-performing teamwork** through psychological safety, norms, roles, and meeting/decision practices that reduce coordination costs and groupthink.

5. **Communicate with stakeholders** by translating technical content into outcomes, stating uncertainty responsibly, managing scope expectations, and repairing trust when issues arise.

6. **Train communication confidence** (especially for introverts) using graded exposure, attention shift, cognitive defusion/self-talk, and authentic presence.

7. **Influence ethically**: reduce reactance, frame choices transparently, use autonomy-supportive language, and set boundaries with assertive communication.

## Teaching & Learning Methods

- **Format:** weekly sessions, 3 hours each (per shift).

- **Structure:**
  - **Opening:** provocative questions and a claim.
  - **Mini-lecture (≤30 min)**: evidence-based psychological concepts.
  - **Active practice:** script drills, roleplays, simulations, peer feedback.
  - **Artifacts:** students build a toolkit across the semester. Artifacts are used in class practice and may be used as preparation support for assessments.

- **Participation:** students are expected to participate in class practice. Activities are designed to be introvert-friendly (write-first, structured roles, predictable scripts). No student is required to disclose personal information.

## Weekly Schedule

**Note:** Dates vary by shift.

| Week | Topic | Claim | Theory | Active Practice | Artifact | Assessment Assignment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 1** (25, 26, 27 de February) | **How Misunderstandings Happen: Perception, Assumptions, Mental Models** | *We respond to our interpretation of reality, not reality itself.* | Communication is Cultural<br><br>Mental models<br><br>Common ground<br><br>Attribution errors<br><br>Ladder of inference<br><br>Business Communication: communicating "so work happens"<br><br>Message channels | Misunderstanding Lab<br><br>Ladder of Inference Drill | Clarity Checklist | No Assessment |
| **Week 2** (4, 5, 6 March) | **Emotion in Communication: Triggers, Regulation, De-Escalation** | *Emotion is information.* | Threat vs safety cues<br><br>Positive communication<br><br>Beliefs about emotions<br><br>Emotional regulation<br><br>De-escalation | Rewrite for Safety<br><br>De-Escalation Triads | Personal Cool-Down Protocol<br><br>Team De-Escalation Agreement | **Assessment Assignment 1** |
| **Week 3** (11, 12, 13 March) | **Psychological Safety & Teamwork: Group Communication Dynamics that Make Teams Work** | *The best teams aren't conflict-free — they're safe enough to disagree and correct errors.* | Psychological Safety<br><br>Internal Communication and Coordination Costs<br><br>Teams Roles and Norms<br><br>Groupthink Prevention | Meeting Lab<br><br>Team Charter | Meeting Decision Log<br><br>Team Charter | No Assessment |

| Week | Topic | Key Idea | Content | Sprint | Deliverable | Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 4** **(18, 19, 20 March)** | **Stakeholder Communication** | *Trust is built when people experience clarity, honesty about uncertainty, and consistent follow-through.* | Communication with Stakeholders<br><br>Translating Technical Language<br><br>Build Shared Language<br><br>Scope Communication<br><br>Communicating Uncertainty and Risk<br><br>Complaint Psychology<br><br>Trust Repair | Stakeholder Update and Repair Sprint | Stakeholder Update Template<br><br>Uncertainty Messaging Template<br><br>Repair Checklist for Complaints & Trust Breaks | **Assessment Assignment 2** |
| **Week 5** **(25,26,27 March)** | **Communication for Introverts** | *Confidence is trainable.* | Confidence in the Communication Context<br><br>Introversion ≠ shyness ≠ social anxiety<br><br>The Extrovert Ideal<br><br>The Avoidance Cycle<br><br>How Confidence is Built (Exposure graded steps)<br><br>Performance Moments (Attention Shift, Cognitive Defusion, Self-Talk, Authentic Presence) | Exposure Ladder Sprint | Personal Communication Growth Plan | **Assessment Assignment 3** |
| **Week 6** **(1, 2, 3 March)** | **Influence Without Manipulation** | *Influence works best (and stays ethical) when people experience autonomy, respect, and alignment with their goals/identity.* | Influence vs Manipulation<br><br>Reactance (why people resist when pushed)<br><br>Reduce Reactance (autonomy-supportive language)<br><br>Ethical Framing and Choice Architecture<br><br>Collaborative Persuasion<br><br>Assertiveness | Reactance Radar<br><br>Persuade a Stakeholder<br><br>Boundary Scripts Lab | Personal Assertive Scripts | No Assessment |

## Assessment

**There is no written test or final exam.** Assessment is continuous and based on **three in-class evaluation moments** (Weeks 2–5). All assessments are practical and aligned with training in class.

**Final Grade (0–20) = 0.30 × Assignment 1 + 0.30 × Assignment 2 + 0.40 × Assignment 3** To pass: **≥ 9.5/20** and participation in all evaluation moments (or officially accepted justification).

**All assessment moments include an oral component** (presentation / spoken simulation / spoken answers). Students are evaluated on clarity, structure, and professional interaction – not on extroversion.

## Academic Integrity

All submitted work must be the student's/group's own. Templates and collaboration are permitted within the assigned groups; external copying or misrepresentation of contribution is not.

## Classroom Norms

- Respectful communication: disagreement is welcome, disrespect is not.
- No student is required to share sensitive personal experiences.
- Feedback is specific and behavioral (what worked / what to improve), never humiliating.
- Practice is part of learning: mistakes are treated as data for improvement.