Hello, and welcome!

In this course, you will learn about interacting with others and managing conflict. You will also develop internal self-awareness. This skill will help you build positive relationships at home, work, and school. As you strengthen your skills and apply them to your life, you will reflect on your progress.

At Academy, we encourage you to improve your communication and relationship management skills. We also offer strategies for working on your self-awareness, empathy, emotion management, and thriving mindset. We believe having all these skills will increase your chances of success in academics and in your career. (And research supports that!)

Rest assured:
You are in the right place. You belong here. You can do this!
Course Requirements and Competencies

This course is split into three types of requirements:

1. **Learn.** For each of the 7 topics, you will complete “Learn” modules. These include various readings, videos, engaging activities, and reflections that prepare you for each of your 7 “Practice” Live Sessions.

2. **Practice.** These are real-time virtual meetings with your peers and PACA Coach. Each Live Session provides a chance to reflect on the material from the “Learn” modules.

3. **Demonstrate.** Each topic ends with a “Demonstrate” assessment in which you submit original work to show what you have learned.

You must complete all Learn, Practice, and Demonstrate sections to pass this course. This includes 7 “Learn” Topics, 7 “Practice” Live Sessions, 2 “Demonstrate” Quizzes, and 5 “Demonstrate” Performance Assessments (Videos, Presentation Outline, and Educational Journey Map).

Live sessions are not optional. Your classmates are counting on you to be in the sessions so you can listen to and learn from one another. If you must miss a Live Session, contact your PACA Coach before the session. Your PACA Coach will provide you with a limited number of make-up options.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify foundational elements of communication theory and understand how it impacts one’s own personal and professional relationships.

2. Describe the role of empathy, listening skills, and self-awareness in managing one’s own emotions.

3. Identify strategies to reduce and manage conflict and improve interpersonal skills through the application of appropriate communication theory.


5. Describe the concept of a thriving mindset by integrating the role of self-reflection, self-efficacy, resilience, mindfulness, and interpersonal skills.

6. Describe how socio-cultural environments shape self-identity, interpersonal communication, and learning opportunities.

7. Develop meaningful goals through an increased value of learning and internal motivation to achieve personal and professional pursuits.

**Note:** Practice assessment scores will not count toward your final grade. These results are meant only to give you feedback on how you are doing.

The objective assessment allows you to demonstrate three core competencies from the course. You must achieve a ranking of competent on each of the five performance assessments to pass the course. You will have three attempts to pass each assessment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success Center</td>
<td>New Student Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Changing Thoughts     | Live Session 1  
|                       | Quiz: Brain Science                                                          |
| Managing Emotions     | Live Session 2  
|                       | Assignment: Mini-Lesson Oral Presentation with Peer Feedback                 |
| Trusting Abilities    | Live Session 3                                                              |
| Exploring Bias        | Live Session 4  
|                       | Assignment: Storytelling Oral Presentation with Peer Feedback                |
| Knowing Theory        | Live Session 5  
|                       | Quiz: Communication Theory                                                   |
| Applying Skills       | Live Session 6  
|                       | Assignment: Presentation Outline Outline                                     |
| Thriving              | Live Session 7  
|                       | Assignment: Educational Journey Map                                           |

**Final Assignments**

At the end of the course, you will complete your Educational Journey Map worksheet and give an oral presentation on your Educational Journey Map. You will also complete a Post-Course Survey.
### Assignment Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brain Science Quiz</strong></td>
<td>This quiz will assess your understanding of how learning happens in the brain, how the brain responds to perceived and real threats, how these responses impact our ability to communicate, and the role of neuroplasticity in developing new skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video 1: Mini-Lesson</strong></td>
<td>You will demonstrate your understanding of course material by teaching how mindfulness, bioresponses (brain science), and managing emotions impact decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video 2: Storytelling</strong></td>
<td>You will demonstrate your oral presentation skills and use of presentation technology by telling a personal story that reflects how your sociocultural environment impacted your interpersonal communication skills, self-identity, learning opportunities, and academic self-efficacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Theory Quiz</strong></td>
<td>This quiz will assess your understanding of communication theory and application. Two theories and one communication practice are included: Communication Accommodation Theory, Symbolic Interactionism Theory, and Nonviolent Communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation Outline</strong></td>
<td>This assignment will help you think critically about your final presentation and demonstrate your ability to identify your intended audience, purpose, supporting points, organization of the presentation, and reflection on what you have learned in the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Journey Map</strong></td>
<td>This template documents your reflection on major topics learned in the course including understanding and managing emotions, self-efficacy, interpersonal skills, and communication skills, and application of these topics to your educational journey and professional career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Video 3: Educational Journey</strong></td>
<td>You will demonstrate your improved presentation skills, along with your ability to apply the concepts learned in the course. Specifically, you will demonstrate what you have learned about understanding and managing emotions, self-efficacy, the impact of bias and sociocultural concepts, and interpersonal skills. You will also explain how these concepts impact communication skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Policies

PACA Journal
We ask that you have a notebook or small journal dedicated to this course. You will be answering questions and reflecting on the material throughout your homework and the Live Sessions. We ask that you bring this notebook or small journal to each Live Session to fully participate in the discussions.

Webcam / System Requirements
Your live sessions require attendance via a computer and webcam, and you are expected to be on webcam during the entirety of each session. You can use the webcam integrated into a laptop or any other webcam you have access to. If you do not have a webcam, you should be able to find one at a low cost online or an electronics store.

Make-Up Sessions
Live sessions are not optional. Your classmates are counting on you to be in the sessions so you can listen to and learn from each other. If you must miss a live session, contact your PACA Coach before the session. Your PACA Coach will provide you with a limited number of make-up options.

Selecting a Cohort for Live Sessions
It is your job to choose a cohort with whom to attend your live sessions. Once you have chosen your cohort, the same classmates and your PACA Coach will stay with you through all required live sessions.

To choose a cohort from your student dashboard carousel, locate the Manage My Schedule button to select from the available sessions, days, and times. Review the cohort schedules closely and make sure you can commit to all the days and the exact same time for each of those days for your chosen cohort. It is not an option to choose a session time from one cohort schedule and another session time from another cohort schedule.

If it looks like you need to adjust your scheduled live sessions, you can change your cohort if you do so BEFORE your first live session. To accomplish this, return to the scheduling tool in your student portal, unenroll from your cohort, and select another one that’s available.

Live session attendance is recorded and all sessions need to be attended in order to pass the course.

Technology Requirements
We want to be sure you have the tools to succeed! Review the Computer System and Technology Requirements to learn about the technology you’ll need. If you have questions about your setup, contact support@academy.wgu.edu.

You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader DC. If you haven’t already, download this free software.
Key Contacts

Your Fellow Learners

Check out the PACA Lobby in this course site. In this online community, you can ask questions and explore ideas. You can connect with your fellow learners. You will also find helpful videos and exercises. When you use this site, you will realize that other learners may have the same questions you have. You can all benefit from learning together!

Your PACA Coach

You can connect and schedule time with your PACA Coach. They are here to help you every step of the way.

PACA Support

If you have an attendance or scheduling emergency, please contact your PACA Coach or the PACA support line: (888)-320-0540 or support@academy.wgu.edu.

Technical Support

If you encounter technical issues, be sure to contact the Help Desk. Just submit a Support Request for assistance.

Program Support

Do you have questions about your account? Our Academy Support Team has answers. They can help with billing, switching courses, and other requests. You can contact them at (888) 320-0540 or support@academy.wgu.edu.

Accommodations

WGU Academy provides compliant and accessible learning experiences. If you require accommodation, please contact us at the start of the course. You can email StudentAffairs@academy.wgu.edu or call (888) 320-0540. We are committed to ensuring that all students with disabilities have equal access to WGU Academy’s services and materials. We strive to use best practices for accessibility. Our goal is to conform to existing U.S. laws. These include the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Our learning management system (LMS) platform is Open edX. Open edX’s commitment to accessible content is published on their Website Accessibility Policy.
Assignment Descriptions

**Brain Science Quiz**
This quiz assesses a student’s understanding of how learning happens in the brain, how the brain responds to perceived and real threats, how these responses impact our ability to communicate, and the role of neuroplasticity in developing new skills.

**Oral Presentation Mini-Lesson**
Students will demonstrate their oral presentation skills and use of presentation technology by teaching how mindfulness, bioresponses (brain science), and managing emotions impact decision-making.

**Oral Presentation Storytelling**
Students will demonstrate their oral presentation skills and use of presentation technology by telling a personal story that reflects how their sociocultural environment impacted their interpersonal communication skills, self-identity, learning opportunities, and academic self-efficacy.

**Communication Theory Quiz**
This quiz assesses a student’s understanding of communication theory and application. Two theories and one communication practice are included: Communication Accommodation Theory, Symbolic Interactionism Theory, and Nonviolent Communication.

**Presentation Outline**
This assignment helps students think critically about their final presentation and demonstrate their ability to identify their intended audience, purpose, supporting points, organization of the presentation, and reflection on what they have learned in the course.

**Educational Journey Map**
The Educational Journey Map is documentation of the student’s reflection on major topics they learn in the course including understanding and managing emotions, self-efficacy, interpersonal skills, and communication skills and application of these topics to their educational journey and professional careers.

**Educational Journey Map Oral Presentation**
Students will demonstrate their oral presentation skills, use of presentation technology, and their ability to integrate and apply the concepts learned in the course. Specifically, students are asked to integrate what they learned regarding understanding and managing emotions, self-efficacy, impact of bias and sociocultural concepts such as systemic racism, interpersonal skills and how these concepts impact their communication skills.