



**PATH8306 Interpersonal
Relationship Skills**
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Church Ministry Division
Summer Semester: June 6-8, 2026
Orlando, FL

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

This seminar is designed to survey major interpersonal relationship skills needed by the minister in the following areas: intrapersonal, marriage and family, staff, church, and community. Special attention is given to self-evaluation. Projects for improving interpersonal relationship skills will be developed and evaluated. Topics include listening skills, assertion skills, conflict resolution skills, and collaborative problem-solving skills.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Appreciate the value of developing healthy relationships.
2. Identify personal patterns of interaction and impact of those patterns on relationships.
3. Develop an appreciation for individual differences among people and how this relates to interpersonal relationships.
4. Grasp essential principles for developing healthy relationships.
5. Practice the basic skills required for healthy communications within relationships.
6. Attain greater understanding of the application of the basic skills in a variety of church and ministry contexts.
7. Commit to building healthy relationships.

Textbooks

The following texts and resources are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified. Assigned texts (4 books) should be read prior to the

first day of class.

Bozeman, Jeanine C., and Argile Smith, eds. *Interpersonal Relationship Skills for Ministers*. Gretna, LA: Pelican, 2004.

Lutzer, Erwin W. *When You've Been Wronged: Moving From Bitterness to Forgiveness*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007.

Maxwell, John. *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect: What the Most Effective People Do Differently*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2010.

McKay, Matthew, Martha Davis, and Patrick Fanning. *Messages: The Communication Skills Book*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger, 2018.

Parrott, Les, and Leslie Parrott. *Healthy Me, Healthy Us: Your Relationships Are Only as Strong as You Are*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2020.

Townsend, John. *People Fuel: How Energy from Relationships Transforms Life, Love, and Leadership*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019.

Course Teaching Methodology

This course will utilize lectures and interactive discovery-learning format.

Requirements

Assignment Formatting:

- Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be in Turabian format.
- All assignments should be in 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

Pre-Seminar Assignments:

Presentation: Each student is to develop a significant presentation on an interpersonal relationship issue. Suggested topics for the presentation include: listening, emotional intelligence, relating to difficult people, barriers to communication, problem solving, generational communication, culture and communication, social media, building relationships in the community, building healthy church staff relationships, handling anger and hostility, forgiveness and reconciliation, empathy, assertiveness, encouraging others, and managing conflict. **Your topic must be pre-approved by Dr. Duenke via email by May 29th.** Your presentation will also engage at least 10 scholarly sources (e.g., journal articles, exegetical commentaries, academic books) and provide biblical support for your thesis/argument. The summary of the presentation (6-8 pages) should be **posted on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on June 8, 2026**. Each student should be prepared to respond to questions by seminar participants. (30% of grade)

Annotated Bibliography: Each student will prepare an annotated bibliography of 5 books (excluding textbooks) related to the major presentation topic. The annotated bibliography should include one-typed page (single-spaced) per book. The annotated analysis of each resource should include the following: a) a bibliographical entry of the book; b) information about the author(s) or editor(s) (1 sentence); c) a summary of the book including the thesis/main argument of the book (2 paragraphs); d) summary of helpful features of the book for ministers (2 or 3 features/1-2 paragraphs total); e) summary of deficiencies or limitations of the book for ministers dealing with the thesis/main argument (2 or 3 deficiencies/limitations/1-2 paragraphs total). **Post on Canvas by 11:59 p.m., June 8, 2026.** (20% of grade)

Required Reading: Each student should read 4 out of the 6 required textbooks prior to the beginning of class. **Please email Dr. Duenke with your 4 chosen textbooks by May 29th.**

Assignments During the Seminar:

Seminar Attendance and Participation: Each student is expected to attend all seminar sessions and participate fully in the seminar. (5% of grade)

Presentation: Each student will present the chosen topic in *the Presentation Assignment* and guide the seminar discussion associated with it.

Textbook Presentation: Students will lead in a presentation of the assigned textbook. The assigned books will be available on Canvas. The presentation should include the following: a) a brief summary of the content; b) a discussion of potential application to ministry situations; and c) a class activity developed by the student that is based upon the content of the textbook (e.g., case study, role play). (10% of grade)

Post Seminar Assignment:

Personal Assessment of Interpersonal Relationship Skills: Utilizing the assigned readings for the class, students should write a reflective paper evaluating their interpersonal relationship skills. Questions for consideration in your discussion are listed below:

- What would you consider to be your greatest strengths in relating to people?
- What do you see as your weaknesses in relating to people?
- What strengths and weaknesses do you bring to your family in developing good interpersonal relationships?
- How have you changed during the past few years regarding your family relationships?
- What actions do you take or attitudes do you have that hinder your relationships with others in your family?
- How do you contribute to strengthening your friendships?
- Regarding interpersonal relationship skills, what actions do you take or attitudes do you have that hinder further development of your friendships?
- What interpersonal relationship skills do you utilize to strengthen the fellowship of your church?
- What relationship skills do you utilize that help you to be a valuable member of your community?
- What changes can you make to help strengthen your relationships in the community?

The paper should be 5-6 pages in length, double-spaced. **Due: July 17, 2026 (submit on Canvas)** (10% of grade)

SBC Leader Assessment: Each student will select three SBC leaders and evaluate their interpersonal relationship skills. The professor will provide more details about the assignment on the first day of the seminar. **Due: July 31, 2026** (submit on Canvas, 25% of grade)

Evaluation

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

Assignment	Percentage of Grade	Due Date
Presentation	30%	June 8
Annotated Bibliography	20%	June 8
Seminar Attendance & Participation (includes reading	5%	June 9

required textbooks)		
Personal Assessment of Interpersonal Relationship Skills	10%	July 17
Textbook Presentation	10%	June 9
SBC Leader Assessment	25%	July 31

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be based on your total accumulation of points as indicated under the Evaluation section of this syllabus according to the grading scale in the NOBTS catalog.

A 93-100 B 85-92 C 77-84 D 70-76 F Below 70

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions according to the formats offered. Any student missing more than nine hours, unless amended by a non-traditional class format, may receive an automatic grade of "F" for the course. Three tardies will count as one absence.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu or My.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. Canvas@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Canvas Learning Management System (Faculty/Students/Staff) Canvas.NOBTS.edu.
3. [Video Conferencing Help Desk](#) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Video Conferencing NOBTS classrooms (On and Off-Campus)
4. TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS On-Campus Phone system.
5. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests in the Flex classrooms and for general technical questions/support requests. If you are not sure who to contact, use this email address!
6. [504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon-Thurs 7:00am-9:00pm & Fri 7:00-7:00pm Central Time)
7. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Disability Accommodations

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by the Assistant Dean of Students for Student Affairs. If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact Conner Hinton immediately at chinton@nobts.edu or 504-816-8246. Students must complete the Accommodation Request Form and provide documentation of their disability. The Assistant Dean of Students notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations. The seminary reserves the right to consider each request for special accommodations on a case-by- case basis pursuant to the criteria enumerated above.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Class Schedule

Monday 4-6 pm

Tuesday 4-6 pm

Wednesday 8-10 am

Students will attend all sessions of the SBC Pastors Conference on Monday afternoon and evening and all the sessions of Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Selected Bibliography

Augsburger, David. *Caring Enough to Confront: How to Understand and Express Your Deepest Feelings Toward Others*, updated ed. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2009.

Baker, Lisa-Jo. *Never Unfriended: The Secret to Finding and Keeping Lasting Friendships*. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2017.

Bird, Michael, and Brian Rosner, eds. *Mending a Fractured Church: How to Seek Unity with Integrity*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015.

Bolton, Robert. *People Skills: How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts*. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1979.

Bradford, David, and Carole Robin. *Connect: Building Exceptional Relationships with Family, Friends, and Colleagues*. New York: Currency, 2021.

Branson, Mark Lau, and Juan F. Martinez. *Churches, Cultures, and Leadership*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.

Branden, Nathaniel. *The Six Pillars of Self Esteem*. New York: Bantam Books, 1994.

Brill, Naomi. *Working with People*. New York: Longman Publishers, 1995.

Brinkman, Rick, and Rick Kirschner. *Dealing With People You Can't Stand*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994.

Chen, Ling, ed. *Intercultural Communication*. Handbooks of Communication Science Series, 9. Boston: DeGruyter, 2017.

Christensen, Andrew, Brian D. Doss, and Neil S. Jacobson. *Reconcilable Differences*. 2d. ed. New York: Guilford Press, 2014.

Cloud, Henry, and John Townsend. *How to Have that Difficult Conversation: Gaining the Skills for Honest and Meaningful Communication*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.

Corey, Marianne Schneider, and Gerald Corey. *Becoming a Helper*. 5th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson, 2007.

- Crabb, Larry. *Connecting: Healing Ourselves and Our Relationships*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997.
- Darling, Daniel. *A Way with Words: Using Our Online Conversations for Good*. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2020.
- Diehm, William J. *Sharpening Your People Skills: 10 Tools for Success in Any Relationship*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996.
- DuPres, Max. *Leadership Is an Art*. New York: Doubleday, 1991.
- Faber, Adele, and Elaine Mazlish. *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen & Listen so Kids Will Talk*. New York: Scribner, 2012.
- Gamble, Teri Kwal, and Michael W. Gamble. *Interpersonal Communication: Building Connections Together*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2014.
- Gangel, Kenneth O., and Samuel L. Canine. *Communication and Conflict Management: In Churches and Christian Organizations*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002.
- Glass, Lillian. *Toxic People: 10 Ways of Dealing with People Who Make Your Life Miserable*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Glover, David Zachariah. *A Better Way: Where Least is Most*. Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2013.
- Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ*, 10th anniversary ed. New York: Bantam, 2006.
- Grimes, Guy. *Relationship Matters: Foundations for Lasting and Healthy Relationships*. Mustang, OK: Tate Publishers, 2015.
- Hall, Judith A., and Mark L. Knapp, eds. *Nonverbal Communication*. Handbooks of Communication Science Series, 9. Boston: DeGruyter, 2013.
- Hawkins, David. *When Pleasing Others Is Hurting You*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2004.
- Hester, Dennis J. *Pastor, We Need to Talk! How Congregations and Pastors Can Solve Their Problems Before It's Too Late*. Shelby, NC: His Way Publishing, 2001.
- Holladay, Tom. *The Relationship Principles of Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.
- Hunsinger, Deborah van Deusen, and Theresa F. Latini. *Transforming Church Conflict: Compassionate Leadership in Action*. Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2013.
- Hutchins, David E., and Claire G. Cole. *Helping Relationships and Strategies*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1992.
- Hybels, Bill. *Who You Are When No One's Looking*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1987.

- Kaplan, Burton. *Winning People Over: 14 Days to Power and Confidence*. Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996.
- Kappas, Arvid, and Nicole C. Krämer. *Face-to-Face Communication Over the Internet: Emotions in a Web of Culture, Language, and Technology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Keller, Timothy. *Loving the City: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.
- Kendall, R. T. *How to Forgive Ourselves Totally: Begin Again by Breaking Free from Past Mistakes*. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2007.
- Lane, Timothy S., and Paul David Tripp. *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*. Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2008.
- Lundin, William, Kathleen Lundin, and Michael S. Dobson. *Working with Difficult People*. 2d ed. New York: American Management Association, 2009.
- Richo, David. *How to Be an Adult in Relationships: The Five Keys to Mindful Loving*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2002.
- Sande, Ken. *The Peacemaker: The Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, 3d ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004.
- Sande, Ken, and Kevin Johnson. *Resolving Everyday Conflict*. Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2011.
- Satir, Virginia. *Making Contact*. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, 1976.
- Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to be Spiritually Mature While Remaining Emotionally Immature*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- . *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015.
- Schooley, Shirley. *Conflict Management*. Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1994.
- Schuller, Robert. *The Be (Happy) Attitudes*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985.
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- Storlie, Timothy A. *Person-Centered Communication with Older Adults: The Professional Provider's Guide*. Boston: Elsevier, 2015.
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- Williams, Angie, and Jon F. Nussbaum. *Intergenerational Communication Across the Lifespan*.

New York: Routledge, 2012.