

from the authors

FROM THE AUTHORS

Dear Colleagues:

This communication text was written by four teachers with extensive backgrounds in communication fundamentals. One married couple—Pearson and Nelson—has written many editions of communication texts for almost four decades, and they have served as basic course directors and introductory course teachers at a number of private and public universities. The other married couple—Titsworth and Harter—is much younger but equally involved in introductory courses. Together, this foursome wrote an earlier edition of this textbook. Their common love of communication studies, undergraduate instruction, and translation of complex research into useful application drove this enterprise.



(left to right) Judy Pearson, Paul Nelson, Lynn Harter, and Scott Titsworth

Human Communication is an introductory college textbook designed to make communication studies immediate and relevant to students. Some communication textbooks rest on rhetorical traditions that extend back over two millennia. Other textbooks mainly cite experimental studies, the results of social science research over the last 45 years. This textbook embraces both approaches: It respects the field's rich rhetorical traditions and practices, and it uses the results of current social science research to enlighten students about how communication works in personal relationships, interviews, work teams, and public forums.

Because the beginning course is often the only communication course many students take, instructors have ambitious goals for their students. Students are expected to learn about how communication operates in their minds (intrapersonal communication), how communication works on the job (interviews, organizational communication, and work teams), how communication works in dating, courtship, and marriage (interpersonal communication), and how communication works in the one-to-many context (public speaking). While no student will emerge from the course with expertise in these areas, they will learn the fundamentals of human communication, giving them a basis from which to grow and develop into more fully functioning communicators.

Judy C. Pearson Paul E. Nelson Scott Titsworth Lynn Harter