
UW-Stevens Point
Division of Communication

Communication 101: Fundamentals of Oral Communication

Dr. Steve Hill, Instructor, Winterim 2019

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Course Description

Effective presentation skills are essential for success in college-level coursework and after graduation in a highly competitive job market. This is an entry level skills-based course covering the fundamentals of informative and persuasive presentation development and delivery. The COMM 101 course has been designed to assess conceptual and skills-based learning outcomes. This course prepares students for more advanced presentation training available in departmental and/or career-specific courses. Those who commit to active study, preparation, and practice will see noticeable improvement and increased confidence in their presentation skills as a result of taking this course.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Research, write, and deliver** effective informative and persuasive presentations.
2. **Critically evaluate** the credibility and overall merit of informative messages and persuasive appeals.
3. **Identify, describe, and explain** the central concepts and principles of oral communication.

Required Materials

- **Textbook:** *Gunn, Joshua. (2018). Speech Craft. Bedford/St. Martin's.*
- **D2L Access** (*Contact UWSP IT Help Desk if you need help logging on, etc.*)
- **Two-pocket folder** (*NO 3-RING BINDERS*), *print your name, section#, and semester on folder*

Course Assignments & Grading

Activity		Pts	Course %
Discussion Session (In Class)	Presentation Assignments	650	65%
	P1: Informative – “Teach Something Novel & New”	150	
	P2: Persuasive – “Take a Stand” (Monroe’s Motivated Sequence)	300	
	P3: Commemorative – “Pay Tribute”	200	
	Supplemental Assignments	150	15%
	Surveys over colleague speeches (20, 20, 20)	60	
	Presentation outlines (30, 30, 30)	90	
Online via D2L	Online Assignments	200	20%
	Quizzes over readings and D2L resources	120	(+2% bonus!)
	Final Test (Cumulative)	100	
		1020	100% (+2!)

Grade Percentage Distributions

(Grades will be assigned using this points scale, which equates to percentages of 93 for an A, 90 for an A-, 87 for a B+, 83 for a B, etc.)

A	=	930 pts & above
A-	=	900-929.9 pts
B+	=	870-899.9
B	=	830-869.9
B-	=	800-829.9
C+	=	770-799.9
C	=	730-769.9
C-	=	700-729.9
D+	=	670-699.9
D	=	600-669.9
F	=	Below 600 pts

All assignment descriptions available via D2L.

Basic Grading Rubric Used for Presentation Evaluations

* criteria adapted from *National Communication Association Standards for Public Speaking*, will be refined and vary for each speech

C (Level 1) = “average presentation” (C+, C, or C- based on quality) must accomplish the following. Generally, if you miss meeting more than one or two of these criteria, your grade will be a D or lower:

1. Conform to the kind of presentation assignment given – informative, persuasive, etc.
2. Be ready for presentation on the assigned date.
3. Conform to the time limit
4. Fulfill any special requirements of the assignment – preparing an outline, using visual aids, conducting an interview, etc.
5. Have a clear specific purpose and central idea.
6. Have an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion.
7. Show reasonable directness and competence in delivery.
8. Be free of serious errors in grammar, pronunciation, and word usage.

B (Level 2) = “above average presentation” (B+, B, or B- based on quality) should meet all of the “C” or Level 21 criteria, and also:

1. Deal with a challenging topic.
2. Fulfill all major functions of an introduction and conclusion.
3. Display clear organization of main points and supporting materials.
4. Support main points with evidence that meets the test of accuracy, relevance, objectivity, and sufficiency.
5. Exhibit proficient use of connectives – transitions, internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts.
6. Be delivered skillfully enough so as not to distract attention from the presenter’s message

A (Level 3) = “superior presentation” (A or A- based on quality) should meet all the Level 1 and 2 (“B” and “C”) criteria and also:

1. Constitute a genuine contribution by the presenter to the knowledge or beliefs of the audience.
2. Sustain positive interest, feeling, and/or commitment among the audience.
3. Contain elements of vividness and special interest in the use of language.
4. Be delivered in a fluent, polished manner that strengthens the impact of the speaker’s message.

D or F = “below average or failing presentation” that is seriously deficient in the criteria required for the C speech due to one or more of the following (note that these are the most common reasons, but this is not a complete list):

1. Fails to accomplish most obvious requirements of the assignment
2. Performance demonstrates obvious lack of preparation
3. Missing the required bibliography/works cited (receives a “0” on assignment) which constitutes incremental plagiarism.
4. Does not deliver presentation on assigned day or delivers on a topic other than what has been assigned

General Course Policies

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory – no exceptions. In Comm 101 being “present” means being in your seat within the first 15 minutes of the designated class start time. In a skills-based course like this students must be in class to learn, practice, receive feedback, and give feedback to others. In addition, COMM 101 requires an audience for students to practice and learn correct presentation skills. Attendance records are kept in all sessions. As a courtesy we post attendance records on D2L; however, students are accountable for knowing when they have missed class. If you find a difference between posted attendance and your own records please schedule a time to discuss this with your instructor as early as possible.

Missing class in most cases = “0” on missed in-class activities, collected assignments, and presentations.

We have a firm 1-absence grace period policy in Comm 101 for the winterim session, just as there is a firm 3-absence policy during a regular semester. Any time you miss a class session class you are marked “absent” from class (you are not “in your seat”). Avoid being **absent** for non-critical reasons since any absence beyond the 3-absence grace period will result in a final grade penalty. For example:

If sick 1 day, unexcused = marked as 1 absence.

If course added a day late = marked as 1 absence.

If missing class for an unexpected emergency = marked as 1 absence.

If missing class for athletics = marked as 1 absence.

If car trouble on the way to give a speech = marked as 1 absence.

PLEASE NOTE: If a serious emergency occurs (car accident, hospitalization, etc.) contact your instructor immediately via email to explain the situation. You will still be marked absent (since you are not “in your seat”), but exemptions from a grade penalty for missing an assignment deadline, missing a scheduled presentation day, etc. will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Exemptions due to extreme individual circumstances are at the discretion of each instructor in consultation with the Assistant Course Director &/or Course Director based on the student’s previous class participation, previous attendance, overall standing in the course, etc. Accommodations like this are rare, seldom repeated, and may require confirmation from multiple third-party individuals/organizations via official documentation and/or phone calls to ensure validity.

If an instructor deems a student is contagiously sick that student will be required to go home and get well before returning to class (counted as an absence for each day they miss class). If it is a presentation day, sick students still will be asked to go home and get well but can reschedule their presentations without penalty by demonstrating they were prepared to go before being asked to leave class (all required materials for presentation are completed and submitted according to class policy).

Students have a grace period of 1 absence before receiving a penalty on their final course grade (other than the natural consequence of missing in-class assignments, etc.). The second absence and all those beyond result in incrementally larger penalties.

Four or more absences means a student has missed approximately one-third of total class time and must repeat the course to receive credit.

To clarify how this works, a student who finishes coursework with a 90% and has:

- (0-1) absences = no penalty, final grade of “90%” (A-) in the course
- (2) absences = 10 percent penalty, final grade of 80% (B+) in the course
- (3) absences = 20 percent additional penalty final grade of 70% (C) in the course

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- **(4) or more absences = Failing Grade = must repeat the course**

Student Absences for Documented Military Service

Many of our students sacrifice time while in college serving in our armed forces. Students with required (and documented) military activities during the regular semester may receive reasonable accommodations as long as documentation of that service (including contact information for the commanding officer) is provided to me by the end of the second class day and we are able to work out a reasonable plan of action. This will require that any student in the military is available to attend the majority of class sessions. Because of the compressed nature of an interim class, for instance, a student with a two-week National Guard training camp that is scheduled during our less-than-three-week session would be placing an undue burden on our collective resources for efficiently conducting the class.

Tardy:

Students more than 30 minutes late to class will be counted as absent. Please arrange your schedule to arrive to class on time.

No late Work:

Late work is not accepted. Turn assignments in on time and deliver presentations on the day you are assigned. Each student is required to know when posted assignments are due, to ask about deadline changes when absent, and to turn assigned materials in on time. Students must have access to reliable and up to date computer equipment as part of this course. Avoid missing deadlines and being late on a presentation day by planning ahead.

Make up Work:

Missing class means missing course credit offered for in-class activities, exams, and presentations. Students who miss class must contact a fellow class member to get discussion notes. As is appropriate for the circumstances and extent of your needs, I may answer questions about assigned materials but will not:

- repeat any substantial amount of material from class session,
- give you simple information readily available elsewhere,
- or otherwise spend extra time sharing information that students have missed.

Time spent on the bulleted items above is time better spent on tasks that help the remainder of the class which has kept up with responsibilities as members of our learning community. Please see my e-mail policy for more information.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services, Student Services Center Room 103, call 715-346-3365, or email disserv@uwsp.edu.

Academic Integrity

Be honest in what you do in this class. Do your own work in this course and uphold the UWSP tradition of integrity and hard work. Plagiarism is a major issue at UWSP and elsewhere and is not tolerated in my classroom. Those caught plagiarizing will face charges of academic misconduct which will result in failing the course and can even lead to expulsion from the university. Please talk with me and refer to Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” (<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>) if you have any questions.

Community Rights and Responsibilities

As a UWSP student you have specific rights and responsibilities. You have the right to receive fair and equitable evaluations based on course objectives outlined in the syllabus and without reference to personal or political views. You have the right to expect timely and accurate information and feedback about your progress and achievements in this course. You also have the responsibility to participate fully in the learning experience and to complete all course requirements. Please refer to the following link for more specific rights and responsibilities afforded to you as a UWSP student:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsCommBillRights.pdf>.

Class Member Contact Information:

To ensure you have someone to contact if you are absent, ask a few class members for the following information early in the semester – then you won’t have to worry about who to call for notes, etc.

Class Member	Name	Email	Other contact info
1			
2			
3			

AFTER SIGNING, REMOVE THIS PAGE AND RETURN TO YOUR ASSIGNED INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT

COMM 101 Student Recognition of Course Policies

I have read and fully understand the general course policies regarding absences, late work, and make-up work. I recognize it is also my responsibility to read and abide by all guidelines posted on D2L related to this course (e.g., written work, support materials, etc.) I understand it is my responsibility to follow the stated course policies and that failure to do so will result in established penalties:

First and Last Name (please print):	
Signature:	Today's Date:
Name of Discussion Instructor:	Section #: