

COMM 101: FUNDAMENTALS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STEVENS POINT, SPRING '20
(Section 33H MW 8:00AM-9:15AM; 202 CAC)

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Office Hours: M 9:30-10:30AM; W 12:00–1:00PM - and by appointment
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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 address both cognitive (concepts & theories) and behavioral (skills) learning outcomes. This course prepares students for more advanced presentation training available in departmental and/or career-specific courses.

Objectives

Developing oral skills

Our world, our culture, and even our personalities are products of human communication. The pivotal form of communication is oral communication. To be an effective oral communicator means that you have opportunities to make a difference. When seeking employment, stepping forward in your career, or even simply seeking to have your ideas and values heard in your community, your public speaking skills will be your major ally. This course helps you develop those skills. A common misconception is that excellent speakers are born with their skills. Although some individuals are naturally gifted communicators, with appropriate training, invested efforts, and practice anyone could become a good speaker.

Developing listening skills

A second objective of this course is centered on the counterpart of speaking: listening. Becoming an effective speaker starts with critical, and at the same time, constructive listening. You will acquire listening skills by listening with care and attention to your fellow students' speeches. The listening skills you will develop throughout the class will enable you to become a better consumer of information.

Developing awareness of the ethical dimension of public speaking

There is something inherently powerful about public speaking. Indeed, if a speech makes a difference, it means that the speaker exercises some sort of power. Exercising any kind of power inevitably raises ethical issues. This course provides you with attentiveness to the ethical dimensions of public speaking that both speakers and listeners need to possess.

Textbook

Gunn, J. (2018). *Speech Craft*. Bedford/St. Martin's: Boston/New York
(Available through text rental)

Additional Course Materials

Additional course materials – short readings and class assignments – will be made available through the course's Canvas site and/or occasionally distributed in class.

Class Activities and Grading

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments and activities taking place throughout the term:

Speeches (schedules and instructions will be distributed through Canvas): **50%**

1. Introduction of a fellow student: 5%
2. Informative speech: 15%
3. Persuasive speech: 20%
4. Ceremonial speech: 10%

Papers (instructions will be distributed through Canvas): **20%**

1. Paper #1 (3 pages): 10%
2. Paper #2 (3-4 pages): 10%

Exams (multiple choice and short answer questions on lectures and readings): **25%**

1. Exam #1: 10%
2. Exam #2 (cumulative): 15%

Participation in Discussion: **5%**

Grading scale for final grade:

A= 95% and up	B= 85%-87.9%	C=75% - 77.9%	D= 60 - 69.9%
A- = 90 – 94.9%	B- = 80% - 84.9%	C- = 70% - 74.9%	F= 59.9% or less
B+ = 88% - 89.9%	C+ = 78% - 79.9%	D= 60 - 69.9%	

Grade Explanations for Presentation Evaluations

** criteria adapted from National Communication Association Standards for Public Speaking*

C = “average presentation” (C+, C, or C- based on quality) should accomplish the following:

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 = “above average presentation” (B+, B, or B- based on quality) should meet all of the highest “C” 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 = “superior presentation” (A or A- based on quality) should meet all the highest “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:

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

Attendance

You must be present in class in order to understand the assignments and carry them out effectively. Also, if you are not present you cannot participate in class discussions and help others with your feedback. Therefore, more than 2 unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one letter grade. Thus, for instance, if you were receiving a B- and you have 3 unexcused absences, your grade will be C-. Excused absences (for illness, death in the family, or other unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from attending class) can be arranged only if proper documentation -- from a physician or a university official -- is presented.

Missed/Late Assignments

You are expected to give your speeches on the class days when you are scheduled.

Written assignments must be submitted by the due date, as specified. Late papers receive a failing grade.

If you miss a speaking assignment or an exam, unless you are granted an excused absence, you will not be permitted to make it up.

Academic Honesty

When completing your speaking and written assignments, you are expected to do original work. That is, you must avoid any form of plagiarism. I consider plagiarism - as defined by your textbook -- the "representation of someone else's ideas or words as your own" (p. 38). A student caught on plagiarizing shall receive a failing grade for his/her assignment. Moreover, academic misconduct shall be sanctioned in accordance with the *UWSP Chapter 14 -- Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures*.

Conduct in Class

To provide a fruitful experience and an effective learning environment for all of us, I expect each of you to conduct yourself with respect for your fellow students. Also,

- Students are to be seated in class by 8:00AM for the class sessions, by which I will be ready to teach. I consider lateness disruptive. Accordingly, I close the classroom door at the beginning of the class session. Late arrivals are asked to wait by the door until an appropriate time to enter. I signify the appropriate time by opening the door.
- Any use, including the visual display of **cell phones** is not tolerated in this class. By the beginning of class, all cell phones must be **turned off and put away** until the end of class. I consider any use of cell phones, including text messaging, as **disrespectful and disruptive**.
- Use of **laptop** computers and **tablets** is **not allowed** in class. Exception is made in case of students who are unable to take paper notes due to some documented physical condition.
- UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology

Center (DATC) on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu.

E-mail Policy

As a future communication professional, you need to develop and practice professional e-mail etiquette. E-mail communication with your professor is expected to conform to a professional standard. Thus, your e-mails addressed to me need to:

- identify a subject in the subject line
- start with an appropriate salutation (Dear/Hello Prof./Dr./Mr. Bodor etc.)
- contain a message written in **full** sentences
- end with a close (e.g. Sincerely,) and your name

Emails that do not conform with the above standard may not be answered. Also, in your e-mails refrain from asking for information that is already available in the syllabus or has been communicated via Canvas. I check my emails at least twice a day and do my best to reply within 24 hours. I do not deal with emails after 4:00PM and during weekends and holidays.

Office Hours

Your success in learning is my priority. Therefore, should you have any questions or concerns about the class, you are strongly encouraged to stop by during my office hours or set up an appointment with me. Also, note that my office door is often open, and you are most welcome to stop by any time when I'm around.

Course Schedule

(Note: This schedule is subject to change. Should changes occur, they will be announced in class)

Date	Topics and Activities	Activities & Assignments Due
22-Jan	Introduction to the course; first speaking assignment	
27-Jan	Getting started; fear of speaking	ch 1
29-Jan	Listening skills	ch 2
3-Feb	Class introductions 1	
5-Feb	Class introductions 2	
10-Feb	Topic selection - second speaking assignment	ch 4
12-Feb	The features of informative speaking; researching your topic	ch 14; 5
17-Feb	Audience & situation; organizing & outlining	ch 3; 7
19-Feb	Transitions, intro. & conclusion; Visual aids and technology	ch 8; 11
24-Feb	Exam 1	
26-Feb	Informative speeches 1	
2-Mar	Informative speeches 2	
4-Mar	Informative speeches 3	
9-Mar	Catch -up day (Informative speeches 4?)	
11-Mar	The attitude system; the persuasion process; third speaking assignment	ch 15
16-Mar	Spring break	
18-Mar	Spring break	
23-Mar	The theory of persuasion	Paper 1 due
25-Mar	Evidence, proof, & arguments	ch 6; 16
30-Mar	Persuasion case study	
1-Apr	Persuasive videos 1	
6-Apr	Persuasive videos 2	
8-Apr	Persuasive videos 3	
13-Apr	Persuasive videos 4	
15-Apr	Features of ceremonial speaking; fourth speaking assignment	ch 13
20-Apr	Delivery	ch 10
22-Apr	The power of words & stories	ch 9; paper 2 due
27-Apr	Catch -up day	
29-Apr	Exam 2	
4-May	Ceremonial speeches 1	
6-May	Ceremonial speeches 2; wrapping up class	