

COMM 101: FUNDAMENTALS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STEVENS POINT, WINTER '17 (Jan 3 – 20)
(MTWRFS 8:30AM-12:00PM; 201 CAC)

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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 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

Griffin, C. L. (2015). *Invitation to Public Speaking* (Fifth Edition). Stamford: Cengage Learning (Available through text rental)

Additional Course Materials

Additional course materials – short readings and class assignments – will be made available through the course's D2L 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 over the course of the winterim:

Speeches (schedules and instructions will be distributed through D2L): **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 D2L): **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 1 unexcused absence will result in a reduction of one letter grade. Thus, for instance, if you were receiving a B- and you have 2 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 use of “another person’s words and ideas as your own ... and taking credit for [them]” (p 93). 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 8:30AM, by which the instructor will be ready to teach. Lateness is considered as disruptive and an emergent pattern of lateness will be treated as equivalent to absences.
- 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. Any use of cell phones, including text messaging, is considered as disrespectful and disruptive. Also, since those who engage in such conduct are mentally absent, cell phone use will result in marking the offender as absent from class.
- 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.

Course Schedule

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

Date	Topics and Activities	Reading Assignments & Tasks Due
3-Jan	Introduction to the course; first speaking assignment instructions; fear of speaking DISC: past experiences	
4-Jan	Listening skills; Class introductions speeches	Ch 1, 2
5-Jan	The features of informative speaking; researching your topic; second speaking assignment; DISC: Topic selection workshop	Ch 3, 5, 12
6-Jan	Audience & situation; organizing & outlining; Visual aids and technology, DISC: equipment review	Ch 4, 6, 7, 8, 11
<i>7-Jan</i>	<i>Preparation & on-line discussion day - class does not meet</i>	
9-Jan	Informative speeches	
10-Jan	Exam #1; (Informative speeches 2); third speaking assignment instructions DISC: discussing the experience	
11-Jan	The attitude system, the persuasion process DISC: Topic selection workshop	Ch 14, 15
12-Jan	The theory of persuasion	Paper 1 due
13-Jan	Evidence, proof, & arguments	
<i>14-Jan</i>	<i>Preparation & on-line discussion day - class does not meet</i>	
16-Jan	Catch-up day & Persuasion case study DISC: case study discussion	
17-Jan	Persuasive speeches (will be video recorded)	
18-Jan	(Persuasive speeches 2?) Features of ceremonial speaking; Delivery; fourth speaking assignment instructions; case study	Ch 10, 16
19-Jan	The power of words & stories; DISC: story telling workshop	Ch 9
20-Jan	Exam #2; Ceremonial speeches; wrapping up class	Paper 2 due