

Summer 2016

General Course Syllabus

Instructor Contact Information

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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:** *Griffin, C. L. (2015). Invitation to Public Speaking (5th Edition). Cengage Learning.*
- **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
- **USB storage device** (1 or 2 GB)

Course Assignments & Grading

Activity	Course %	Grading
Presentation Assignments	70%	
P1: Informative – “Tell a Story”	15% of category grade	Pass/Fail
P2: Informative – “Teach Something Novel & New”	35% of category grade	Letter Grade
P3: Persuasive – “Take a Stand”	50% of category grade	Letter Grade
Support Activities	30%	
Topic Commitment Forms	15% of category grade	Pass/Fail
Library Research Forms	10% of category grade	Pass/Fail
Class Citizenship <i>Overall attendance, participation, preparation, civility and positive contributions, misc. in-class assignments, etc.</i>	35% of category grade	Letter Grade & Pass/Fail
Online Quizzes via D2L	40% of category grade	Letter Grade

Pass/Fail Grades

Pass/Fail grades will be assessed on some course assignments. Our purpose in using pass/fail on some assignments is to help students focus on skill development. A “passing” grade can be earned by fulfilling all required aspects of an assignment at a “C” (beginning) level or higher. However, we encourage students to do their best on these assignments and improve since the skills developed on pass/fail activities impact subsequent letter grades. Student performance is not expected to be perfect, but incomplete effort and/or inadequate effort will receive a “failing” grade on these activities.

Letter Grade Percentage Distributions

Letter grades will be assessed on most major assignments in this course. We will use the percentage scale below to assess letter grades:

A	=	100 - 93	C	=	76.9 - 73
A-	=	92.9 - 90	C-	=	72.9 - 70
B+	=	89.9 - 87	D+	=	69.9 - 67
B	=	86.9 - 83	D	=	66.9 - 63
B-	=	82.9 - 80	D-	=	62.9 - 60
C+	=	79.9 - 77	F	=	Below 60

All assignment descriptions available via D2L.

Grading Rubric Used 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

General Course Policies

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. In Comm 101 being “present” means being in your seat within the first 15 minutes of 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 for mass lecture and discussion sessions. As a courtesy we post attendance records periodically (as time permits) 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 assigned instructional assistant as early as possible.

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

We have a firm 1-absence grace period policy in Comm 101. Any time you miss a discussion session class you are marked “absent” from class (you are not “in your seat”). **An absence during the Summer semester is the same as missing a little more than 1 week of class during the standard Fall/Spring semester.**

Avoid being absent for non-critical reasons since any absence beyond the 1-absence grace period will result in a final grade penalty. For example:

If sick 1 day = 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 assigned instructional assistant immediately via email to explain the situation. Obviously if you are physically injured you should contact your IA as soon as it is reasonably possible to explain the reason for your absence. 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 IA 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 extremely 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, a sick student will still be asked to go home and get well (still counted as 1 absence for each day they miss class) but can reschedule their presentation without penalty by demonstrating they were prepared to go before being asked to leave class (all required materials for presentation are completed and submitted to their assigned Instructional Assistant).

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.)

When students reach two (2) absences for any reason (other than required military activities) they will receive a **full letter-grade drop** on their final grade in the course. Each additional absence beyond two (2) will receive an additional letter-grade drop on their final grade in the course. 3 or more absences means a student has missed over 3 ½ weeks of total class-time and the course must be repeated to receive credit.

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

- (0-1) absences = receives no penalty and a final grade of “90%” (A-) in the course
- (2) absences = incurs a 1-letter grade penalty on their calculated course grade (90%) and a final adjusted grade of “80%” (B-) in the course
- **3 or more absences = incurs a Failing “F” Grade and 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 semester will receive the following accommodations as long as documentation of that service (including contact information for the commanding officer) is provided to their assigned Instructional Assistant prior to their absence(s):

1. Absences due to required military service will be recorded on D2L but will NOT penalize a student’s course grade.
2. Assignments due on class days missed due to required military absences will be accepted after the student returns to class. If the missed assignment was an in-class activity that cannot be duplicated the student will be given an assignment of equal value related to the in-class activity topic. Due dates on such assignments will be set by each IA in consultation with each student.
3. Presentation assignments will be re-scheduled for days of required military absences and will NOT be penalized.

Tardy:

Students more than 15 minutes late to class will be counted as absent. Please arrange your schedule to arrive to class on time.

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. IA’s can answer questions about assigned materials but cannot be expected to “re-teach” material from an entire class session.

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 big deal here and is not tolerated in any instructor's classroom. Those caught plagiarizing will face charges of academic misconduct which can result severe consequences ranging from a failing grade on the assignment, failing the course, and/or university expulsion. Talk with your instructor and/or 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 #: