

COMM 1315 Public Speaking – Hybrid Course Syllabus

Course Information

Course Number/Section	COMM 1315
Course Title	Public Speaking
Term	Fall 2024

Professor Contact Information

Professor	Mike Saenz
Email	mike@utdallas.edu
Online Study Hours	Email every business day from 8AM–5PM. I will respond to emails within 1 business day.
In-Person Study Hours	By appointment anytime, over the phone, as well as Teams and Zoom options. Email me and we'll schedule it!

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

COMM 1315 is an introductory public speaking course that doesn't require prerequisites. It is assumed that students who enroll in the course have the grammatical, logical, and rhetorical skills necessary for university-level writing.

Course Description

The purpose of COMM 1315 is to explore the application of communication theory and practice to the public speaking context, with emphasis on audience analysis, speaker delivery, ethics of communication, cultural diversity, and speech organizational techniques to develop students' speaking abilities, as well as ability to effectively evaluate oral presentations.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the foundational models of communication, including identifying how cultural, ethnicity, and gender influence communication. (assessed via online Discussion assignments and in-class activities and Reflection Papers). CT, PR
2. Apply appropriate and ethical methods of audience analysis and audience adaptation to prepare for various types of speeches. (assessed via speech proposal forms and feedback, and Reflection Papers). CT
3. Demonstrate ethical speaking and listening skills by analyzing and evaluating presentations for evidence and logic. (assessed via peer evaluations of all speeches, both oral and written). COM, PR
4. Research, develop and deliver extemporaneous speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal techniques. (assessed via four different types of speeches, both individual and group presentations, and Reflection Papers). COM, CT, TW
5. Demonstrate appropriate methods of speech topic research, as well as effective usage of technology when researching and/or presenting speeches. (assessed via speech proposal forms and feedback and Reflection Papers). CT, PR
6. Develop proficiency in presenting a variety of speeches as an individual and in a group (e.g. narrative, informative, or persuasive, and special occasion) using audience-centered principles and strategies of public speaking. (assessed via four different types of speeches, both individual and group presentations, and Reflection Papers). COM, TW
7. Exhibit skills in developing formal speech outlines and organizing a message following appropriate outline formats. (assessed via formal speech outlines that accompany speeches and Reflection Papers). COM, CT

8. Effectively identify and use one or more skills for managing communication apprehension. (assessed via performing four different types of speeches, both individual and group presentations, and Reflection Papers). COM, TW

Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

- Steven A. Beebe and Susan J. Beebe, *Public Speaking: An Audience Centered Approach* (9th ed or 10th ed is fine.) Boston: Pearson.

Suggested Readings/Texts

- O’Hair’s Pocket Guide to Public Speaking

Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important technical requirements on the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage.

Course Access and Navigation

This course can be accessed using your UT Dallas NetID account on the [eLearning](#) website. Please see the course access and navigation section of the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage for more information. To become familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage. UT Dallas provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The [eLearning Support Center](#) includes a toll-free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service.

Communication

This course utilizes online tools for interaction and communication. Some external communication tools such as regular email and a web conferencing tool may also be used during the semester. For more details, please visit the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage for video demonstrations on eLearning tools. Student emails and discussion board messages will be answered within 3 working days under normal circumstances.

Distance Learning Student Resources

Online students have access to resources including the McDermott Library, Academic Advising, The Office of Student AccessAbility, and many others. Please see the [eLearning Current Students](#) webpage for more information.

Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable learning management system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the online [eLearning Help Desk](#). The instructor and the eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Grading Policy

Grading (credit) Criteria

Assessment	Points
Speech of Introduction uploaded from Box into eLearning	50 pts
Speech of Introduction Part 2 – Welcome your Peers and Review/Evaluate your Speech	50 pts
Research-oriented Informative Speech Outline	50 pts
Research-oriented Informative Speech	100 pts
Informative Speech Analysis/Reflection Paper	50 pts
Research-oriented Persuasive Speech Outline	100 pts
Research-oriented Persuasive Speech	200 pts
Persuasive Speech Analysis/Reflection Paper	50 pts
Team Project, Team Presentation – Special Occasion Speech	100 pts
Individual Team Response Paper	20 pts
Participation Grade	50 pts
Digital Discussion Posts (five)	100 pts
Speech Readiness Quizzes (two)	40 pts each

Grading Scale

The standard university scale will be used to convert points into letter grades.

Grade	Percentage	Points
A+	97% to 100%	970-1000
A	93% to 96.9%	930-969
A-	90% to 92.9%	900-929
B+	87% to 89.9%	870-899
B	83% to 86.9%	830-869
B-	80% to 82.9%	800-829
C+	77% to 79.9%	770-799
C	73% to 76.9%	730-769
C-	70% to 72.9%	700-729
D+	67% to 69.9%	670-699
D	63% to 66.9%	630-669
D-	60% to 62.9%	600-629
F	Less than 60%	less than 599

Special Assignments

CommLab tutorials required

Course Policies

No Make-up Quizzes

To stay compliant with the face-to-face classes, no make-up Quizzes, speeches or other assignments/Quizzes are permitted unless the absence is a university-approved excused absence with the accepted form of documentation.

No Late Work

To stay compliant with the face-to-face classes, no late speeches, assignments, or Quizzes are permitted. Technical difficulties with eLearning or MediaShare are not an excuse – submit your videos and assignments early to avoid any last-minute technical problems. Students are expected to deliver their oral presentations on the days that they are assigned. No exceptions can be made, unless the absence is a university-approved excused absence with the accepted form of documentation. If a student doesn't show up to class on their presentation day, a zero will be recorded for that presentation grade, but they will still have to deliver the speech to me.

Team Work – Individual Scores

Each team member's presentation score is an individual grade. Team members' participation is observed by me and assessed through an Individual Team Response paper. There is also a "Slacker" Clause: If one or more members of a team contact(s) me about a team member not doing her or his "part" in terms of attendance at team meetings (virtual or face-to-face), research, media presentation preparation, etc., I will deduct points from the poor-performing student's total score at my discretion. The team outlines will receive one overall grade, as a team effort. Teams will present on the day that they are assigned, no exceptions. If a team member doesn't show up on the day of the presentation, that member will receive a zero for a grade, but they will still have to deliver the speech to me.

Course Citizenship

Civil communication is required at all times. The eBook, *Communication in a Civil Society*, states that “civil communication allows you to speak your mind in a way that is respectful, demonstrates restraint, and is responsible”. Communicating with civility is a requirement for this course. This course is challenging and may be perceived as threatening for a variety of reasons. For example, we may discuss topics that challenge your perspectives and/or listen to speeches about controversial topics. Students may also comment about emotional issues during class discussions and disclose sensitive, personal information. While passionate debate is acceptable, negative comments about individuals or teams are not acceptable. Similarly, criticism that is not constructive about a student's performance will not be tolerated. I will stop a discussion and/or critique and ask a student to leave the chat/discussion if I perceive that her/his communication is prejudicial, disrespectful, and/or “over-the-top.” Any student who engages in behavior that disrupts the teaching-learning process and/or speech presentations (e.g., ignoring the classroom Netiquette policy; whispering and talking to others; rolling their eyes, “tsking,” smirking, scowling, engaging in behaviors not related to discussion, etc.) will be asked to leave the class and will have points deducted. In class, at work, and in life as a whole, a positive attitude will help you reach your goals while a negative attitude will likely impede your progress towards success. We will practice civility in this class. “Netiquette” is also an important class requirement. Cell phones, smart phones, laptops and other electronic messaging devices must be out of sight and turned off during class. Such devices may not be used in the classroom unless students have cleared it with the professor first and only on an emergency basis.

Civility Clause

The First Amendment is protected in this class. Hate speech is not. Attacks against people, their beliefs, values, culture, race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or political affiliation will not be tolerated. Religious proselytizing of any kind is not permitted. Because the topic of abortion is a value-oriented topic (and therefore, persuasive by nature), it is entirely off limits for the informative speech assignment. Because this is a hybrid course, we will get to know one another through typed conversation and video uploads in addition to in-class interactions. You may know how tricky this can be, and how easy it is to give a wrong impression in writing, to say something that you did not mean to say, or to infer a tone that the writer did not mean. A funny comment can easily get misinterpreted as nasty, biting criticism. Because we are working on our communication skills in the course, and that can be a sometimes difficult learning process, please take extra effort in class to be supportive. That does not mean that we can't be thoughtful responders, there are just more pleasant ways of getting to a point. Give the kind of feedback that you would want for yourself. If, say, an emotionally-gut level topic comes up and someone has a stance that you do not agree with, do not be combative. Part of the goal of this class (and in higher education more broadly) is to see points on contact and how to civilly engage in a dialogue. I will be respectful to you and expect the same.

University Policies and Procedures

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students cannot re-use a paper that was submitted during high school or that has been submitted for another class. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings. Outlines for this class will be submitted through turnitin.com via eLearning.

Turnitin eLearning Assignment Submission Instructions

Two assignments will be submitted and examined through the integrated plagiarism detection tool called Turnitin. Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism. This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Please consult the following web sites addressing academic integrity as well as what constitutes cheating at UTD:

[Link 1](#)

[Link 2](#)

Office of Student AccessAbility

UT Dallas is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities to all University courses and programs. Any student with a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability, which affects his/her academic performance, is eligible for services. If you need classroom accommodations, please make an appointment with the Office of Student AccessAbility.

OSA provides registered students with an accommodation letter to present to faculty members. The letter verifies that the student is qualified to receive certain accommodations. The accommodation letter should be presented to instructors of each course at the beginning of the semester. The approved accommodations should be discussed at that time. It is the student's responsibility to notify his/her professor of their needs.

Guidelines for Success in this Class

1. This course is rigorous and demands your time outside of the classroom. Give the course extra time. Do not get behind in your assignments. Expect to do large amounts of reading to be successful.
2. I cannot accept late assignments (outlines, speeches, or other assignments). There are no exceptions to this policy except for the three university-approved excused absence scenarios. One of the state-mandated core objectives for this course is to gain Personal Responsibility skills. So although no late assignments, speeches, or outlines are accepted, you *can* work ahead and turn in an assignment early.
3. If you need help or have questions – I'm happy to help!
4. The Student Success Center is on the first floor of the library and can assist you with improving your outlines and speeches for this class. Visit their website [here](#).
5. As computers tend to fail when we need them the most, save your work to multiple devices (i.e. USB device, back up hard drive) of your home computer. Computer failure is not a legitimate excuse for your work being late.
6. All speeches will be timed and recorded.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: *"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."*

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.