

Core Course Syllabus



Course COMM 1315.0H9 - Public Speaking - F25
Course Title Public Speaking, Hybrid
Professor Sarah Spikeston
Term Fall 2025
Meetings 1-2:15pm, Fridays, ATC 3.205

Professor's Contact Information

Office Phone None (adjunct, please use email, Microsoft Teams)
Other Phone None (adjunct, please use email, Microsoft Teams)
Office Location None (adjunct, please use email, Microsoft Teams)
Email Address Sarah.Spikeston@utdallas.edu
Office Hours Student Visiting Hours are Fridays 12-1pm (MS Teams or in ATC 3.205) and by appointment at other times
Other Information Email is the best way to contact me. Student emails are answered within two business days, M-F

General Core Area 010 Communication

Description: Courses in this category focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively. Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

Objectives: **Critical Thinking (CT)**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
Communication (COM)—to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
Teamwork (TW)—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
Personal Responsibility (PR)—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions COMM1315 is an introductory course that does not 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 This course is an in-depth examination of the principles of public speaking, with an emphasis on the preparation and performance of speeches in informative, persuasive, and special occasion contexts. Speeches are presented in virtual and face-to-face settings, and individual speeches and a team presentation are required.

Upon successful completion of this course, I am both confident and hopeful that students will be able to:

- Learning Outcomes**
1. Demonstrate ethical and critical thinking skills in selecting, researching, and adapting topics for informative and persuasive speeches.
 2. Develop proficiency in creating formal speech outlines using audience-centered principles and strategies of public speaking.
 3. Deliver extemporaneous speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal techniques in individual and group presentations.
 4. Exhibit respect, responsibility, and restraint when collaborating with team members and providing feedback to classmates.

Required Texts & Materials Steven A. Beebe and Susan J. Beebe, *Public Speaking: An Audience Centered Approach*, 11th ed., Boston: Pearson. (10th edition can be used.) ISBN-10: 0135709717 ISBN-13: 978-0135709719

Students are encouraged to stay on top of local, state, federal, and global news from a variety of sources.

Suggested Texts, Readings, & Materials 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.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Assignment	Points
Present-Past-Future Introduction (C/NC)	30 points
“What’s My Name?” Speech	
Outline	50 points
Presentation	50 points
Informative Speech Working Outline	50 points

Assignment	Points
Full-Sentence Outline	100 points
Informative Speech PPT	40 points
Informative Speech Presentation	100 points
Self-Assessment	40 points
Team Persuasive Speech	
Getting Started Form (team grade)	50 points
Working Team Outline (team grade)	50 points
Full-Sentence Outline (team grade)	100 points
Team PPT (team grade)	40 points
Team Presentation (team grade)	100 points
Team Peer Evaluation (individual grade)	50 points
Self-Assessment (individual grade)	40 points
Course Reflections	
Practical Application	30 points
Skills Assessment	10 points
My Three Takeaways	30 points
Midterm Survey	20 points
Course Evaluation	20 points
Total	1,000 points

Week	In Class Friday	Due by Sunday 11:59pm
Week 1 8/25-8/31/2025 <i>Introductions</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> The Audience-Centered Approach to Public Speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus Overview <input type="checkbox"/> eLearning Tour <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: "What's My Name?" <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise: Present-Past-Future <input type="checkbox"/> Introductions (C/NCR, 30 pts.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Post completed "What's My Name?" Outline Template in Week 1 folder (50 pts.)
Week 2 9/1-9/7/2025 <i>Speaking with Confidence</i> <i>Presenting Your First Speech</i> Before class: <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 2 <input type="checkbox"/> View feedback for "What's My Name?" Outline in My Grades and edit as needed <input type="checkbox"/> View "How to Practice a Speech or Presentation," by Dr. Alex Lyon	<input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Practical Application <input type="checkbox"/> "What's My Name?" Presentations (50 pts.) <u>Assignment by class time</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare 2-minute "What's MyName" Speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Practical Application <input type="checkbox"/> Post Practical Application in Week 2 folder (30 pts.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Begin practicing your speech, for a total of ten or more times with 2-4 note cards, if needed		
<p>Week 3 9/8-9/14/2025 <i>Speaking Freely and Ethically</i> <i>Developing Your Speech</i> <i>Support Materials</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapters 3 & 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare to create oral citations, thesis statements, and main points in class	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise: Class Demographics Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Informative Speech <input type="checkbox"/> Possible Topics <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Working Outline <input type="checkbox"/> Reference Documents for Informative Speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Plagiarism Policy in Informative Speech folder <input type="checkbox"/> Read Researching a Speech Topic in Informative Speech folder <input type="checkbox"/> Post two possible topics for the Informative Speech on the Class Discussion Board
<p>Week 4 9/15-9/21/2025 <i>Organizing and Outlining Your Speech</i> <i>Speaking to Inform</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Example Research Procedure for Informative Speech <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on completing Working Outline when Informative Speech Topic is approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Full-Sentence Outline <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 8 Exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 13 Highlights <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Speaking <u>Assignment by class time:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on completing Working Outline	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Working Outline in Informative Speech folder (50 pts.)
<p>Week 5 9/22-9/28/2025 <i>Introducing & Concluding Your Speech</i> <i>Using Presentation Aids</i> <i>Delivering Your Speech</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Read feedback on Working Outline in My Grades as it becomes available and edit as needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: How to Create an Eight-Slide Organizational PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Teams Selected <input type="checkbox"/> Informative Speech Presentation Days Assigned <input type="checkbox"/> Creating Note Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 9 Exercise: Creating an Introduction <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 11 Exercise: Random Eye Contact	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Full-Sentence Outline in Informative Speech folder (100 pts.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Begin Full-Sentence Outline		
<p>Week 6 9/29-10/5/2025 <i>Giving Feedback to Classmates</i> <i>Creating the Informative Speech PPT</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Read feedback for Full-Sentence Outline in My Grades as it becomes available and edit as needed <input type="checkbox"/> Begin Informative Speech PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Review "How to Practice a Speech or Presentation," by Dr. Alex Lyon <input type="checkbox"/> Begin Practicing Informative Speech, 10 times or more by presentation, with limited note cards	<input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Evaluating an Informative Speech <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise: Teams Evaluate an Informative Speech Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Displaying PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Speaking: Forced Silences	<input type="checkbox"/> Post Informative Speech PPT in Class Discussion Board (40 pts.)
<p>Week 7 10/6-10/12/2025 <i>Informative Speech Presentations</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Edit PPT as feedback becomes available <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Informative Speech with PPT	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 1 Informative Speakers <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Evaluations as time permits <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory attendance <u>Assignment for Day 1 speakers by class time</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Post Final PPT in Class <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board as MS PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Note Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Plan interview attire	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 1 Speakers post Self-Assessment in Informative Speech folder (40 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Midterm Survey in Week 7 folder (20 pts.)
<p>Week 8 10/13-10/19/2025 <i>Informative Speech Presentations</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 Speakers prepare Informative Speeches	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 Informative Speakers <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Evaluations as time permits <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory attendance <u>Assignment for Day 2 speakers by class time</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Post Final PPT in Class	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 Speakers post Self-Assessment in Informative Speech folder (40 pts.)

	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board as MS PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Note Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Plan interview attire	
<p>Week 9 10/20-10/26/2025 <i>Informative Speech Presentations</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3 Speakers prepare Informative Speeches	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 3 Informative Speakers <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Evaluations as time permits <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory attendance <u>Assignment for Day 3 speakers by class time</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Post Final PPT in Class Discussion Board as MS PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Note Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Plan interview attire	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 3 Speakers post Self-Assessment in Informative Speech folder (40 pts.)
<p>Week 10 10/27-11/2/2025 <i>Understanding Principles of Persuasive Speaking</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 14 <input type="checkbox"/> View “The Art of Persuasion Hasn’t Changed in 2,000 years,” by Harvard Business Review <input type="checkbox"/> Consider possible topics for Team Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Practice Speaking: Count to 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Team Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Team Peer Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Teams select topics <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise: Class attitudes <input type="checkbox"/> Team presentation days assigned <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Getting Started Form <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Working Outline	<input type="checkbox"/> Getting Started Form in Team Project folder (50 pts.)
<p>Week 11 11/3-11/9/2025 <i>Using Persuasive Strategies</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Read Chapter 15 <input type="checkbox"/> View “How to Organize a Persuasive Presentation or Speech,” by Dr. Alex Lyon <input type="checkbox"/> Read feedback on Getting Started Form and revise decisions as necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Team collaborates on Working Outline	<input type="checkbox"/> The “Big Perspective” for the Team Project <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Working Outline <input type="checkbox"/> Team Planning Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Working Outline due in Team Project folder (50 pts.)

<p>Week 12 11/10-11/16/2025 <i>Team collaboration</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read feedback on Working Outline as it becomes available and edit as Necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Team collaborates on Full- Sentence Outline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Team PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Team Planning Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Full-Sentence Outline due in Team Project folder (100 pts.)
<p>Week 13 11/17-11/23/2025 <i>Team collaboration</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read feedback on Full-Sentence Outline as it becomes available and edit as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing: Remaining <input type="checkbox"/> Assignments & Optional Early <input type="checkbox"/> Submission <input type="checkbox"/> Staging Team Presentations <input type="checkbox"/> Team Planning Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Team PPT due in Team Project folder (40 pts.)
<p>Week 14 11/24-11/30/2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Break, No Assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Break, No Assignments
<p>Week 15 12/1-12/7/2025 <i>Team Presentations</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Edit Team PPT as necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Teams prepare for presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1 Team Presentations <p><u>Assignment for Day 1 teams by class time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Post Final PPT in Class Discussion Board as MS PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate professional attire of Teammates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1 Teams submit individual Self-Assessments in Team Project folder (40 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Assessment Survey (10 pts.) in Course Reflections folder <input type="checkbox"/> My Three Takeaways (30 pts.) in Course Reflections folder
<p>Week 16 12/8-12/12/2025 <i>Team Presentations</i></p> <p>Before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Edit Team PPT as necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Teams prepare for presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> UTD Course Evaluation (15 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Team Peer Evaluations (50 pts.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 Team Presentations <input type="checkbox"/> COMM1315 Wrap-up <p><u>Assignment for Day 2 teams by class time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Post Final PPT in Class <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board as MS PPT <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate professional attire of Teammates <p><u>Assignment for Day 2 teams by 11:59PM Friday</u></p>

		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Self-Assessments in Team Project folder Class closes at 11:59PM Friday!
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Course Policies

Class Materials	<p>The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.</p>
Class Attendance	<p>Your instructor abides by the policy of “your choice, your consequence” when it comes to attendance. Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. Your instructor is your primary audience and will grade your speeches. If you do not attend, you cannot understand your audience or “get into the head” of your instructor when it comes to grading. Absenteeism will prevent you from acquiring the skills essential for good communication. Roll is taken in the first 10 minutes of class. Students who are tardy without an excused absence may miss in-class exercise points. Your choice to attend, your consequence when it comes to your grade.</p>
Class Participation	<p>Your choice, your consequence. In-class activities have points assigned. If students choose to not participate, they lose the opportunity for those points. Regular class participation is expected since a portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Texas Senate Bill 17, the recent law that prohibits diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and activities at public universities in Texas, does not in any way apply to academic course instruction. Students should not feel the need to self-censor or limit their participation in academic courses pertaining to topics of race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or diversity, equity, and inclusion, and related topics.</p>
Class Recordings	<p>Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the AccessAbility Resource Center has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or</p>

	<p>shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.</p> <p>The instructor may record meetings of this course. These recordings will be made available to all students registered for this class if the intent is to supplement the classroom experience. If the instructor or a UTD school/department/office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law.</p>
Grading (credit) Criteria	<p>Grading is based upon the UTD Undergraduate Catalog. Points are accumulated for a total of 1,000 points possible for the semester. Your grade will be based upon the total number of points you earn, not the percentage of points acquired. As a result, there is no “rounding up.”</p> <p>A+ 970-1000 points A 930-969 points A- 900-929 points B+ 870-899 points B 830-869 points B- 800-829 points C+ 770-799 points C 730-769 points C- 700-729 points D+ 670-699 points D 630-669 points D- 600-629 points F Less than 599 points</p>
Make-up Exams	<p>There are no exams in class, so there are no makeup exams. Students who miss required speech days will need to have an excused absence in order to get rescheduled or find alternative arrangements.</p>
Extra Credit	<p>A maximum of 20 extra credit points can be earned during the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Visit with me during office hours (virtually via Microsoft Teams or in person before or after class) in a 15 minute outline review session (10 extra credit points per visit). This option is available through Week 13. <input type="checkbox"/> Share a meal or have a snack with your teammates before your team presentation and document the event by sending two pictures to your instructor. All teammates must be present. (10 extra credit points) <input type="checkbox"/> Practice the Informative Speech and/or the Team Presentation with a COMM Lab coach before the presentation is due (10 extra credit points per coaching visit). <input type="checkbox"/> Receive assistance on your Informative Speech or Persuasive Speech Outline from a COMM Lab coach before the outline is due (10 extra credit points per consultation).
Late Work	<p>Students are encouraged to communicate in writing early and often about the status of their assignments if they are not anticipated to be ontime. Modules will be open 2 modules at a time so you can work ahead a week if you desire. You are encouraged to add “buffer time” by working ahead.</p>

	<p>I do allow a grace period under limited circumstances, but for major assignments (such as speech days), extensions are not permitted without an excused verifiable absence. Technical difficulty with eLearning is not an adequate excuse unless the difficulty is system-wide. Allow at least 30 minutes to post an assignment, especially videos, as eLearning backups occur and if not submitted by the deadline you will receive zero for the assignment. If a personal or family crisis is affecting your class attendance and assignment completion, please discuss your situation with me before your grade suffers. I want you to succeed in this class and am willing to work with you to accomplish this if challenges exist.</p> <p>Makeups are available for documented, excused absences only and are due within one week of your return to class unless otherwise allowed. UTD excuses absences related to the observation of holy days. If documentation is provided, UTD also excuses absences involving personal illness requiring a physician's assistance or hospitalization, emergencies related to a student's family (hospitalization or death), special curriculum requirements (field trip, etc.), official university activities, or military duty. Documentation for an excused absence is due upon your return to class, or before the missed class if anticipated.</p>
<p>Special Assignments</p>	<p>All assignments are considered individual work except for the final group project assignment. Students should document their team progress including non-participation. I permit students to fire teammates that a) fail to communicate within 48 hours to team messages (except for weekends), b) fail to complete internal or class deadlines for work completion, or c) fail to attend team meetings or class without prior approval from the team.</p>
<p>Classroom Citizenship</p>	<p>Take ownership of your education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Check email and Microsoft Teams messages daily (M-F) and read the weekly announcements. Course emails will begin with the course prefix and number, and your emails to me should do the same. <input type="checkbox"/> Study and apply all course materials to your work. Complete all readings and assignments by deadlines and with excellence. Submit your work per instructions. <input type="checkbox"/> Attend all class meetings and engage with me and your classmates with respect. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that all work is your own work - not the product of AI-generation or the work of another person. Abide by all UTD academic honesty policies. <input type="checkbox"/> All drafts and final works will be written by students themselves, working individually or in groups as directed by assignment instructions. You may not use writing services, another's work, your work from other classes, or AI writers to write content for you. More detail on UTD's research policies can be found in the UTD Student Code of Conduct. More detail on the specific writing expectations for this class can be found in "Plagiarism Policy" at the course eLearning site
<p>Comet Creed</p>	<p><i>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:</i></p> <p><i>"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."</i></p>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	Please review the section within the UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures webpage.
Academic Support Resources	Please visit the Academic Support Resources page to view the University's academic support resources for all students.
UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures	<p>Please visit the Syllabus Policies page to view the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.</p> <p>Please review the catalog sections regarding the credit/no credit or pass/fail grading option and withdrawal from class.</p>
AI and Plagiarism Policy	All work will be written by students themselves, working individually or in groups as directed by assignment instructions. All cited work must be properly referenced in APA formatting with an in-sentence citation and end of work reference. You may not use writing services, another's work, or AI writers to write any assignment requiring text unless specifically indicated by the instructor. More detail on UTD's research policies can be found in the UTD Student Code of Conduct and Generative AI Use in Academic Work policies at UTD Academic AI Work Policy . The instructor gives a 0/F for the first instance of plagiarized or AI-generated material in the course. Evidence of a second instance of plagiarized or AI-generated work will result in an F for the course.

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