

**DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION
COMM 145 -
“FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC
SPEAKING AND
COMMUNICATION”**

WESTERN KENTUCKY
WINTER 2015 SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTOR :	
OFFICE: FAX: PHONE: E-MAIL: BLACKBOARD: D:	
OFFICE HOURS:	

COMM 145 – “Fundamentals of Public Speaking and Communication” is designed to increase your understanding of the principles and processes of communicating effectively in a variety of contexts and to facilitate development of your skills in public communication, listening, group communication, and interpersonal communication. This is done through a combination of speaking, listening, writing, and reading assignments. Specifically, you will outline, develop, and deliver extemporaneous speeches that incorporate relevant sources and that are appropriate and effective for the audience, purpose, and context. The assignments are designed to develop your understanding and skills progressively throughout the semester. When you leave the course, you should be sufficiently armed with a basic understanding of public speaking and an awareness of other important communication skills and concepts so that you can continue to develop effective communication behaviors throughout your life in a variety of contexts. COMM 145 is part of the Colonnade curriculum and fulfills the Human Communication requirement (Foundations category).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Colonnade learning objectives for Human Communication:

- Learning Objective 1:** Students will demonstrate the ability to listen and speak competently in a variety of communication contexts, which may include public, interpersonal, and/or small-group settings.
- Learning Objective 2:** Students will demonstrate the ability to find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare speeches and written texts.
- Learning Objective 3:** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
- Learning Objective 4:** Students will demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.

Students will also be able to:

- Design and deliver messages appropriate to various audiences and occasions.
- Communicate a clear thesis and purpose.
- Research, evaluate, and incorporate supporting material.
- Construct and deliver organized presentations with well-developed introductions, main points, conclusions, and transitions.
- Deliver speeches using appropriate and effective vocal and physical behaviors to enhance messages (e.g. vocal variety, articulation, and movements).
- Demonstrate understanding of the communication process.
- Acquire skills to communicate with others, both publicly and interpersonally.

- Understand and identify the basic principles of effective group communication and listening.

Required Text: Seiler, W. J., Beall, M. L., & Mazer, J. P. (2013). *Communication: Making Connections* (Revised 4th Ed., customized). Boston: Pearson. ISBN-13: 9781269910156

ATTENDANCE

Penalty for Nonattendance

We learn to communicate by communicating and by observing others; therefore, your attendance is absolutely essential. I expect you to be in class each day. The penalty guidelines are described below:

1. The final semester grade for a 3-day a week class will be reduced **10 points** (out of the 800 point scale) for each unexcused absence over 1.
2. The final semester grade for a 2-day a week class will be reduced **15 points** (out of the 800 point scale) for each unexcused absence over 1.
3. The final semester grade for a weekly class will be reduced **30 points** (out of the 800 point scale) for each unexcused absence over 1.

Penalty for Tardiness

Not only are you expected to be in class each day, but you also need to be on time. Tardiness is unprofessional and disruptive. Attendance is defined not only as being present in class, but being present within 5 minutes of the start of class through the completion of the class session. Unexcused tardiness may be penalized by not being allowed to make up work done in class prior to your arrival and may lead to the same point deduction as an unexcused absence. If you come to class after the roll has been taken, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor after class that you were present.

Excused Absence Policy

Speeches, homework, and in-class assignments cannot be made up unless your instructor officially excuses your absence, which means you **must provide proper documentation**. You are responsible for contacting your instructor regarding any excused absence. You must present written documentation **in advance** of an absence for a university-sponsored event and the day you return to class for any other absence or it will be counted as unexcused. Approved make-up work is due the **first class meeting** of your return. For presentations, the speech order is determined in advance; therefore, if you are traveling for a university related event, you must swap places with a speaker going on an earlier day.

An excused absence is defined as:

1. Illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student's family
2. The death of a member of the student's immediate family
3. Trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate academic or athletic events
4. Major religious holidays

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMPETENT COMMUNICATOR

In order to build an open, professional classroom atmosphere everyone should follow certain ground rules. These rules of civility include but are not limited to:

1. **Displaying respect** for all members of the classroom community, both your instructor and fellow students, and including their expression of ideas.
2. **Paying attention to and participating** in lectures, group activities, presentations, and other exercises.

3. **Avoiding unnecessary disruptions** during class such as ringing cell phones (turn them off before class), text messaging, private conversations, reading newspapers, or doing work for other classes.
4. **Avoiding negative, disrespectful or derogatory language** on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status that may unnecessarily exclude or negatively affect members of our campus and classroom community.

Cell Phone Policy

Due to recent advances in technology, cell phones, iPods, pagers, etc. will not be allowed out during class time. Cell phones shall not be used for any purpose during class time. Any student with a cell phone in hand or on his or her desk during class time will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for that day. This policy applies during student presentations as well as during lecture and discussion. Any student using a cell phone during an exam will receive a zero on that exam and may be subject to other university discipline.

Laptop/Tablet Policy

Using a laptop or tablet to take notes during class can be very effective when properly used. However, when students use their laptop or tablet to check their e-mail, check their social networking account, instant message, surf the web, and/or play games during class, it becomes a distraction to classmates and hinders the note-taking process. Recent studies have discovered that those who engage in such activities during class time is linking to lower semester grade point averages than those who do not engage in these activities. Therefore, students who choose to use a laptop or tablet to take notes will be required to sit in the front row of the classroom and expected to stay on task and engaged in class discussion and activities.

ACADEMIC OFFENSES: PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

It is expected that all of the individual assignments you complete for COMM 145 (and in all of your other courses) are always your own work. However, many students are not sure exactly what “your own work” means, so, please read again the information on plagiarism and cheating from your student handbook (<http://www.wku.edu/handbook/>, p. 32). Aside from copying work, **plagiarism includes incorrectly citing sources or presenting someone’s information as your own**, without crediting the source. To avoid this, you should carefully make notes to keep track of where you obtained your information. In written form, you must use quotation marks when referring to another’s work. In a speech where you are paraphrasing, you can say “According to... (give name)...” It does not take much effort to make sure you follow the rules for using another’s thoughts.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for letting your audience or reader know whether you are:

1. directly quoting from a source.
2. paraphrasing closely from a source, which means using significant portions of another source’s sentences or language.
3. using the ideas advanced by a different source.

Plagiarism Detection

In this course you will be using an electronic plagiarism detection tool (SafeAssign within BlackBoard) to confirm that you have used sources accurately in your speeches and outlines. All assignments are subject to submission for text similarity review to one of these plagiarism detection tools. Assignments submitted to SafeAssign will be included as source documents in SafeAssign’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Specific instructions will be provided in class or online on how to submit your speech outlines for electronic plagiarism review.

Penalty for Academic Dishonesty

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments may immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and potentially in the course, and may be reported for disciplinary action. **Falsified medical excuses** and presenting another student’s work as your own fall within the guidelines of this academic integrity policy.

As you can see, these are extreme measures for academic offenses that the Department of Communication and the University believe are serious. If you have any questions about whether you may be plagiarizing in your work, please be sure to contact your instructor well in advance of the due date for your assignment.

IF YOU NEED HELP

Student Disability Services

If you have questions or concerns or find certain materials or assignments difficult please contact me by e-mail or come by during my office hours. If you are unable to come during my scheduled times, call me to arrange an appointment. **NOTE:** Students with disabilities that require accommodations (academic, adjustments and or auxiliary aids or services for this course) must contact the Office for Student Disability Services DUC A200. Telephone number is 270-745-5004 (TDD: 270-745-3030). Please **DO NOT** request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

The Learning Center

Should you require academic assistance with your WKU courses, The Learning Center (located in the Downing Student Union, A330) provides free supplemental education programs for all currently enrolled WKU students. TLC @ Downing Student Union offers certified, one-on-one tutoring in by appointment or walk in. TLC is also a quiet study area (with side rooms designated for peer-to-peer tutoring) and offers a thirty-two machine Dell computer lab to complete academic coursework. Additionally, TLC has satellite locations. Each satellite location is a quiet study center and is equipped with a small computer lab. These satellite locations are located in Douglas Keen Hall, McCormack Hall, and Pearce Ford Tower. Please contact TLC @ Downing Student Union for more information or to schedule a tutoring appointment.

www.wku.edu/tlc

(270) 745-6254

TLC @ DSU

Sunday	4:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Monday – Thursday	8:00 am – 9:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am – 4:00 pm

TLC @ Keen, McCormack & PFT (PFT residents and their guests only)

Sunday – Thursday	6:00 pm – 11:00 pm
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Research Appointments with your Personal Librarian

At WKU Libraries, your Personal Librarians are always ready to help! We have librarians for every program on campus, plus Special Collection librarians and archivists. Their goal is to save you time and help you be successful on term papers and other projects by showing you what you need to know to get started and be successful. Start your research by scheduling an appointment with your Personal Librarian. Find them at

http://www.wku.edu/library/dlps/subj_lib_subject.php, call Helm-Cravens Reference Desk at 270-745-6125, or email web.reference@wku.edu.

ASSIGNMENTS

YOU MUST PRESENT YOUR SPEECH ON THE DAY ASSIGNED. IF YOU MISS CLASS FOR AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE OR ARE NOT PREPARED TO SPEAK ON YOUR SPEECH DAY AND DO NOT PRESENT AS SCHEDULED, YOU WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF “0” FOR THAT SPEECH ASSIGNMENT.

- **Basic Requirements:** This semester there will be three graded speech assignments. You are expected to

use topics of your own choice, which meet the guidelines for the specific speech assignment. Each speech has a time limit allowing all class speakers to complete the assignment on schedule and to give you practice in fitting materials into a given time allotment. Speaking too long or not long enough means your speech does not meet the requirements of the assignment. As you prepare your speech, please allow enough time to practice orally so that you can meet these time limits.

- **Outlines:** Outlines are required for each of the graded speeches. **Late outlines will receive comments from your instructor but will not be assigned points.** The outline should include: specific purpose, central idea, a sentence outline of the speech, a list of sources (bibliography) you used in the preparation of the speech, & any other form your instructor may assign. **(NOTE: A copy of the Information and Diversity Speech outline may be retained by the instructor for departmental course assessment purposes.)**

Speech 1: Introduction Speech (2-3 minutes)

You will do one of two possible types of an introduction speech described below based on teacher preference.

Classmate interview speech—The speech serves a number of purposes. It is designed to get to know the rest of the class and for them to learn something about you, to practice organizing a speech, and to get you up on your feet and speaking. Each student will introduce someone else in the class. Tell us what makes the person interesting, what their future goals are, etc. Each student will interview another member of the class, organize, and present a 2-3 minute speech. Each student must complete an outline. You may use no more than one single-sided index card. The speech must contain an introduction, body, and conclusion. The most effective speeches will center around a theme with two or three main points to support the theme rather than listing random details about the person's life.

OR

“Just Bag It” Speech—This introductory speech gives you the opportunity to start speaking right away and gives your classmates an opportunity to learn a little about you. Select three items, place them in the bag, and be prepared to explain how the three items describe you. For example, you might include a symbol of your place of employment, an item indicating an interest of yours (e.g. a tennis ball if you play tennis), or an item that symbolizes your career interest (e.g. an apple for an education major). Make sure your visuals are larger than a driver's license or small photo so that everyone in class can see. In additions to the items you bring consider using quotations, stories, and examples. No sources, other than *you*, are required. You must demonstrate that effort went into the assignment. In other words, someone pulling 3 textbooks out of a backpack and telling the class which courses they are enrolled in will not receive full credit. This first speech should include the most basic components of any speech—an introduction, main points, and conclusion. You are required to use extemporaneous delivery, speaking from a brief outline, using no more than one single-sided index card.

Speech 2: Speech of Information and Diversity (4-6 minutes)

This is a 4-6 minute informative speech, which must take a multicultural perspective. You may elect to compare and/or contrast an aspect of two cultural groups or discuss an aspect of one cultural group in detail. Other possible topics include social customs, family traditions, holidays, clothing, food, religious traditions, sports, etc. You must step outside of your own cultural perspective in some way. Focus on presenting information relevant to your audience. You are required to present within the time limit, using a speaking outline of no more than five note cards (one side only). You are to cite no fewer than three different sources and use three or more types of amplification or supporting materials. Visual aids are required for this speech (PowerPoint, poster board, video/DVD etc.).

Speech 3: Problem-Solution Speech (5-6 minutes)

This is a 5-6 minute action-oriented persuasive speech. The purpose of the problem-solution speech is to influence the

audience's beliefs or actions. The speech should contain a problem and solutions to the problem, including action steps the audience can take. Possible topics include influencing classmates to donate blood, start/increase flossing, exercise more or eat healthier, sponsor a child, get involved with a charity, adopt a pet etc. You are required to present within the time limit, using a speaking outline of no more than five note cards (one side only). You are to cite no fewer than four different sources (only two may be from the internet) and use three or more types of amplification or supporting materials. No visual aid is required, but please keep in mind that a visual aid can be a very effective way to persuade your audience to act on your topic.

Communication Theory/Context Paper

Based on the chapters in the textbook, select a communication context (interpersonal, group, team, the workplace or another organization) or communication theory (dialectics, communication privacy management etc.) you are interested in and write a 3-4 page paper (double spaced). Explain why you selected this context or theory and why this context represents an important area in which to study/learn about communication and/or why this theory is important to the study of communication. Include a minimum of three sources cited within the text of your paper (preferably communication journals or books; the textbook does not count as one of your 3 sources). Discuss what Communication scholars have learned about your topic that could be relevant to your own experiences (give examples). Also discuss what you learned about communication from your research (how this will be useful in your life, career etc). The paper will be graded on content, organization, and writing. Please include an introduction, clearly organized and supported paragraphs in the body of the paper (please use topic sentences), a conclusion, and source citation along with a bibliography in APA format. You will be presenting your paper informally to the class so that everyone can learn about the theory/concept. Please include relevant/interesting information about your topic from your research as well as how your topic contributes to the study of communication. The presentations should be 3-4 minutes.

Self Evaluation:

Each student will complete at least one self-evaluation which is to be printed and submitted to your instructor. This evaluation will at least be done for the problem-solution speech and may also be done for prior speeches.

Written work/homework

In addition to the speeches, you will be graded on several in class activities and written assignments required by your instructor.

Examinations

Exams and/or quizzes will be used to gauge your understanding of the course material. The testing (exams and quizzes) schedule is located on the tentative daily schedule, but unscheduled quizzes may be given to assess your understanding of the chapter materials. Please come to class having read the chapter we are covering. Exams and quizzes may include various question formats.

GRADING POLICY

Speech One: Introductory/Interview	50 pts.	
Speech Two: Speech of Information and Diversity	100 pts.	
Speech Three: Problem-solution speech	100 pts.	
Outlines: 25 pts. each	75 pts.	
Communication Theory/Context Paper	100 pts.	
Theory/Context Paper Presentation	50 pts.	
Participation/activities	100 pts.	
In-class Speaking Assignments		
Communication Activities		
End of Chapter Exercises		
Participation in Departmental Research		
Self-evaluation (CommuniCoach program)	25 pts.	
Exams (3 exams) test # 1 = 50 pts	200 pts.	Total: 800 pts.
test #2 & #3 = 75 pts each		

FINAL GRADE SCALE

A = 800—720 pts	(90% – 100%)
B = 719—640 pts	(80% – 89%)
C = 639—560 pts	(70% – 79%)
D = 559—480 pts	(60% – 69%)
F = Below 479	(Below 60%)

(Print this page, sign, and give to your instructor.)

Discussing Grades

You may be able to check your grades in an online grade book on BlackBoard if your instructor uses the BlackBoard course management system. Of course, you can ask your instructor about grades via e-mail, but your instructor is not allowed by law to reply in any detail using e-mail, unless he/she has your written signature. This is to protect your privacy. E-mail is not a secured/private form of communication. Therefore, please print this form, complete it below, and submit it to your instructor for her/his records.

Read and initial EITHER A or B:

A. "I give my consent to the instructor to discuss my course grades with me via e-mail." ____ (Initial)

OR

B. "I prefer the following method for discussing course grades (e.g., phone call, wait for registrar's notice at end of term; Choice is subject to negotiation of a mutually acceptable method)." ____ (Initial)

Method: _____

"I will promptly notify the instructor in writing (via signed written notice AND receipted e-mail) of any change in my wishes."

Signature

Date

Your Name Printed