

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION****COMM 145 -"FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING & COMMUNICATION"**

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY  
FALL 2021 SYLLABUS

<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	Gail McCrady, Instructor, WKU
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<b>Office Hours::</b>	Home phone: 1-270-879-4512 (3:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.) Google/Zoom Meets by appointment
<b>Tuition</b>	2021 WKU tuition, plus e- book @ \$60

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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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 WKU Colonnade Program curriculum and fulfills the Human Communication requirement within the “Foundations: Intellectual and Practical Skills” category.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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Students will 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.



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- Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view; and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.

**Required eText:** DeVito, J.A. (2018). Human Communication: The Basic Course (14th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Pearson. This online eText comes with your WKU DC digital fee, so you do not need to purchase a print copy unless desired

## **ATTENDANCE**

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**Penalty for Non-Attendance: Students are expected to attend/participate online every day.**

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 weekly class will be reduced **30 points** for each unexcused absence over 1.

### **Excused Absence Policy**

Speeches, homework, and in-class assignments cannot be made up unless I officially excuse your absence, which means you **must provide me with proper documentation, even for online classes**. You are responsible for contacting me regarding any excused absence. You must present written documentation **in advance** of an absence for a school-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 school 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:**

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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 discussions, group activities, speeches, evaluations, and other exercises.
3. **Avoiding unnecessary disruptions** such as cell phones, private conversations, reading newspapers, and doing work for other classes while online.
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.



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5. **In references to speeches, reading a speech does not constitute delivering a speech; therefore, a 30 point deduction will be assessed, the instructor could also assign a zero, or the speech may have to be re-done.**

**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. Any student with a cell phone in hand will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for that day. This policy applies during student presentations as well as during lectures and discussion. Any student using a cell phone during an exam or a speech will receive a zero on that exam and may be subject to other school discipline.

**Recorded Speeches**

Students will be required to use a screen recorder, such as Screencast O'Matic, Screencastify, or another of your choice in submitting speeches online. Students will also be required to meet and follow the time requirements, as well as the requirements for the PowerPoint or Prezi. No masks will be worn during speeches since this class is online.

**ACADEMIC OFFENSES: PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

I expect 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/>). 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. Students are expected to follow the proper Speech styles of MLA and APA.

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

1. directly quoting from a source. Can't use .com's as a spoken source; say According to the Better Business Bureau.
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 we 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. I will provide specific instructions in class on how to submit your speech outlines for electronic plagiarism review. A Plagiarism match of 30% or higher will result in a letter grade off and/or a revision of the assignment.

**Penalty for Academic Dishonesty**



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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 will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and potentially in the course, and will 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. Copied assignments will result in the failure of the class. As you can see, these are extreme measures for academic offenses that we believe are serious. If you have any questions about whether you may be plagiarizing in your work, please be sure to contact me well in advance of the due date for your assignment.

### **IF YOU NEED HELP**

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#### **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 DSU 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. Accommodations for 504's must also be requested.

### **SPEECH DAY DRESS**

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Speech attire should be Sunday best, within school dress codes. Males should wear buttoned or collared shirts with Khakis or dress slacks, and females should wear church attire, either slacks, dresses, or skirts. No speech should be given in jeans, T-shirts, leggings, or sweats. Ties are optional. Forgotten dress codes equal a 20 point deduction, the speech will not be given, or the speech will not be graded without proper dress.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

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

**IF YOU ARE ABSENT WITH AN EXCUSED ABSENCE, YOU WILL GIVE YOUR SPEECH ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE SLOT, POSSIBLY UPON YOUR RETURN.**

**NOT PRESENTING ALL SPEECHES AND THE FINAL WILL RESULT IN AN F FOR THE CLASS.**

- **Basic Requirements:** This semester there will be four graded and recorded speech assignments. You are expected to use topics of your own choice from Blackboard, 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



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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. The first speech is the Introduction, second is Informative, and third is Problem-Solution. The last speech is in reference to your APA theory paper and is part of your final.

- **Outlines:** Three Outlines are required for each of the graded speeches in either APA or MLA format. **Late outlines will receive comments from your instructor and will receive a 20 point deduction.** 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 will be retained by the instructor for departmental course assessment purposes.)**
- **Evaluations:** Evaluations are conducted for every speech by your instructor and your peers. Comments should be helpful, not arrogantly critical. Weaknesses and strengths should be the focus for improvement for Instant Feedback and Self-Evaluations.

**Speech 1: Introduction Speech (2-3 minutes)**

You will do one introduction speech described below.

**“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/box (be creative), 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 addition to the items you present, consider using quotations, stories, and examples. No sources, other than *you*, are required. You must demonstrate the effort that 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 5-7 one sided index cards. PowerPoints or Prezis and videos are required in the background, but the teacher must see both you and your slides.

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

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 required to

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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, Prezi, etc. and up to 1 minute of a video clip is also required).

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

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 (diagram, pie chart, line graph) for supporting materials. Visual aids are required (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) and can be a very effective way to persuade your audience to act on your topic. Up to 1 minute of video is also required.

**Communication Theory/Context Paper-APA**

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 APA 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 counts as one of your 3 sources; two others could be from ESPCOHOST database on the WKU Library page). 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. Suggestions for format would include: introduction regarding why communication is important, body (definition of theory), book examples, then real world examples of how we use the theory, and the conclusion. You will be presenting your paper formally 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. Speech 4 should be 3-4 minutes with a PowerPoint or Prezi and up to 1 minute in video is required. This paper is part of your final and must be completed in order to receive credit for the course.

**Self Evaluation:**

Each student will complete a self-evaluation which is to be printed and submitted to your instructor. This evaluation will be done for each of the speeches, and will be due on the date of the speech after the speech has been given in addition to three Instant Feedback responses to classmates per speech.

**Examinations**



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

**GRADING POLICY**

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**REQUIRED WORK:**

Speech 1 Speech of Introduction Outline	100 pts.	TOTAL POINTS = 4,160
Speech 1 Speech of Introduction	100 pts.	
Speech 1 Self-Evaluation	100 pts.	
Speech 1 Instant Feedback	50 pts.	
Speech 2 Speech of Information/Diversity Outline	100 pts.	
Speech 2 Speech of Information/Diversity	100 pts.	
Speech 2 Self-Evaluation	100 pts.	
Speech 2 Instant Feedback	50 pts.	
Speech 3 Problem-Solution Speech Outline	100 pts.	
Speech 3 Problem-Solution Speech	100 pts.	
Speech 3 Self-Evaluation	100 pts.	
Speech 3 Instant Feedback	50 pts.	
Speech 4 Communication Theory Speech	100 pts.	
Communication Theory Paper	100 pts.	
18 Blackboard Chapter Quizzes	180 pts.	
Syllabus Quiz	100 pts.	
Syllabus Acknowledgement	50 pts.	
3 Units of Revel Bookwork		
Unit 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3	465 pts.	
Chapters 4 & 17	325 pts.	
Unit 2: Chapters 5, 14, 15	465 pts.	
Chapters 16 & 18	340 pts.	
Unit 3: Chapters 6, 7, 8	435 pts.	
Chapters 10, 11, 13	450 pts.	
*These units take the place of exams		





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Participation/activities 100 pts.

In-class Speaking Assignments/Practices

Communication Activities: 18 quizzes

Research 60%

Online Behavior

TOTAL POINTS 4,160

**FINAL GRADE SCALE**

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**NOTE:** All 4 Speeches & the Final (APA paper) must be completed in order to pass the class. The instructor reserves the right to include additional exercises based on student needs, at which time the point and percentage scales will be adjusted if necessary.

**A = (90% – 100%)**

**B = (80% – 89%)**

**C = (70% – 79%)**

**D = (60% -- 69%)**

**F = (Below 60%)**

**Discussing Grades**

You will be able to check your grades in an online grade book on BlackBoard. 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 private form of communication. Therefore, please print this form, complete it below, and submit it to your instructor for her/his records.

**Read: (You will need to acknowledge this on the Syllabus Quiz) for points. No need to send this to me.**

- A. "I give my consent to the instructor to discuss my course grades with me personally, via e-mail, or Blackboard." \_\_\_\_ (Initial)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name Printed





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VIDEO RELEASE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby agree to allow recording/video-taping/sharing of my speeches for self-evaluation process.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name Printed

\*Note: These granted permissions will be assigned in the Syllabus Acknowledgement.