

## COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY (COM 110)

---

**Instructor:** Grace Pizzini (She/her)

**Office Hours:** M/W 2:00 PM to 2:45 PM

**Office:** Fell Hall 040

**Email:** [gepizzi@ilstu.edu](mailto:gepizzi@ilstu.edu)

**Section:** 37

**Classroom:** Schroeder 116

**Meeting time:** M/W/F 1:00 PM to 1:50 PM

---

### TEXTS

Simonds, C. J., Hunt, S. K., & Simonds, B. K. (2018). *Engaging communication*. (Top Hat eBook version). Fountainhead Press.

Simonds, C. J., Hunt, S. K., & Hooker, J.F. (2022). *Communication as critical inquiry: Student workbook*. Stipes Publishing.

### COURSE MATERIALS

**COM 110 Top Hat eBook.** You are required to have an eBook for COM 110, which you will access through the interactive platform Top Hat. This platform will allow you to engage with the textbook and complete assignments for the course. You will receive an invitation from Top Hat to register your book with your section of the course. You may purchase eBook access directly from Top Hat or at the bookstores.

**Workbook Purchasing Procedures.** Students will purchase the student workbook (Com 110 Communication as Critical Inquiry) from the publisher, Stipes, who will then mail the workbook directly to you. Please order at the following address:

<https://buy.stipes.com/products/isu-com-110-23fa>

The packet will cost \$39 plus tax and shipping. When you order, be sure to include the **billing address** for the credit card you are using and also the **shipping address** for where you want the workbook sent. If you have any issues with this process, please contact the publisher directly at [orders@stipes.com](mailto:orders@stipes.com)

### Communicating with me

**EMAILING:** Please contact me with any and all questions via my Illinois State e-mail address, [gepizzi@ilstu.edu](mailto:gepizzi@ilstu.edu). I expect you to use proper email etiquette; do not send me an email that reads like a text message. Emails should contain an appropriate subject line (Ex. Question on Informative Speech), a greeting (Hello Grace), a specific and spell checked/grammatically correct message, and a closing with your first and last name. Finally, **all emails must be sent through an ISU email address.**

## COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY (COM 110) COURSE GOALS

Communication as Critical Inquiry (COM 110) seeks to improve students' abilities to express themselves and to listen to others in a variety of communication settings. Effective oral communication is viewed as an essential life skill that every person must possess to function in today's society. The course emphasizes participation in a variety of communication processes to develop, reinforce, and evaluate communication skills appropriate for public, small group, and interpersonal settings. The course content and experiences will enable students to assume their responsibilities as speaker-listener-critic in a culturally diverse world. In short, the course is designed to make students competent, ethical, critical, confident, and information literate communicators.

*COM 110 addresses the following General Education outcomes:*

- II. intellectual and practical skills, allowing students to
  - a. make informed judgments
  - c. report information effectively and responsibly
  - e. deliver purposeful presentations that inform attitudes or behaviors
  
- III. personal and social responsibility, allowing them to
  - a. participate in activities that are both individually life-enriching and socially beneficial to a diverse community (civic knowledge and engagement)
  - b. demonstrate ethical decision making
  - c. demonstrate the ability to think reflectively
  
- IV. integrative and applied learning, allowing students to
  - a. identify and solve problems
  - b. transfer learning to novel situations
  - c. work effectively in teams

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Speeches.** Each student will present three major speeches:

- a. Informative speech (5-7 minutes, no more than 7:30; at least 4 sources must be cited in the presentation and in the references)
- b. Group presentation (25-35 minutes depending on the number of members, each member must speak at least 5 minutes consecutively, at least 10 sources must be cited in the presentation and in the references)
- c. Persuasive speech (5-7 minutes, no more than 7:30; at least 6 sources)

**All three major speeches must be completed to pass the course.** Each presentation will be evaluated on content and delivery. Specific details will be clearly outlined in class. Typed outlines and references are required for each (a sample will be provided). If you have any concerns about your ability to meet the requirements of this course, please come and see me to discuss your concerns. **(100 points each, 300 points total).**

**Participation (Daily Speaking Opportunities).** Because Communication as Critical Inquiry is a skills-based, developmental course, participation is essential. Participation is a function of having read the

material, offering insights that extend the thinking of the class and instructor, contributing relevant examples, and demonstrating respect for the contributions of classmates. Participation will be assessed by evaluating participation during class discussions, assignments, and activities. **90 points** of your total grade are allotted to participation and attendance.

**Communication Improvement Profile (CIP).** This is a short paper (**2-4 pages double-spaced**) in which you will analyze your own communication style, strengths and weaknesses. You will also discuss what your goals and expectations are for your improvement in this course and include a plan of action that you will use to achieve those goals. I expect formal, college-level writing and reasoning in this paper. This is worth **35 points**.

**Final Synthesis Speech.** In this speech (**3-4 minutes**), you will reflect on your progress over this semester in COM 110. Identify at least three skills you think you improved on, and three skills you can continue to improve on. Your speeches will serve as the evidence of the claims you are making and you are to reference them in your speech. This is worth **35 points**.

**P2Ps.** Via your virtual eBook (TopHat), students will read through each assigned chapter and complete assigned "Preparing to Participate (P2P) questions (knowledge AND application) with insight and depth. P2Ps are worth **90 points** of your total grade.

**Milner Library Assignments** These (**two**) assignments are designed to familiarize students with Milner Library's academic resources. They also help develop students' research abilities through interactive worksheets. The activities are worth a combined **40 points**.

**Impromptu Speeches.** In addition to our three major speeches, there will be a total of **three impromptu speeches** over the course of the semester. You will be given your topic during class and will give a **1-2 minute speech** on that topic. The goal is to get you comfortable speaking in front of the group. No citations are necessary. These speeches are worth a combined **45 points**.

## EVALUATION

Syllabus Contract (p. 3)	5 pts.
Introduction Speech	10 pts.
Informative Speech (p. 11-37)	100 pts.
Group Speech (p. 38-60)	100 pts.
Persuasive Speech (p. 61-81)	100 pts.
Com 110 Lab Visit (p. 6, 7, 8)	20 pts.
CIP Paper (p. 83-87)	35 pts.
Synthesis Speech (p. 88-90)	35 pts.
Impromptu Speeches	45 pts. total
Sales Pitch	15 pts.
Adopt this Pet	15 pts.
Topic Generator	15 pts.
Participation	90 pts.
P2Ps (ReggieNet / TopHat)	90 pts.
Milner library activities	40 pts. total
Informative Worksheet (33)	10 pts
Annotated Bibliography (81)	30 pts

**Total of 670 possible points.**

At least 50% of the participation grade will be based on daily speaking opportunities (participation in class or online forums) for each student. The combination of the portfolio and participation grade will not exceed 100 pts. without an additional, graded speaking opportunity. Assigned grades for speeches must comprise at least 50% of the overall grade.

The grading scale is a standard ten percentage point scale:

90-100% = A; 80%-89% = B; 70%-79% = C; 60-69% = D; below 60% = F

## COURSE POLICIES

**Teaching philosophy.** Education is about growth. I am not here to trick you or make you feel as if you cannot succeed. Rather, I am here to support and challenge you as you begin your journey as a college student. We all bring knowledge and experience to this classroom, and our time together will be about embracing our strengths and improving our weaknesses. I strive to create an environment of respect, positivity, and learning where everyone is welcome. My goal is to create the kind of environment that helps cultivate a lifelong love of learning, even after your college career comes to a close! I want you to ask questions and/or ask for help, in or out of class (Unless there is a privacy issue at stake, in-class is often best, since your classmates may have the same questions or concerns that you do, and then you are helping them, too.) I want to help you in any way possible to learn the material presented in class and to teach you the basic research skills necessary for those studying communication. If you have any special needs that I should be aware of, please let me know, and I will make accommodations as necessary.

### Course Policies: Attendance.

1. You are expected to be in class every day. There will be frequent in-class participation points that you will not be able to make up, so skipping class will affect your grade directly in loss of participation points and indirectly in the loss of explanation of concepts that you will need to apply in assignments later. **If you are absent on a speech day that is not your own, you will have 10% deducted from your own speech.** If you interrupt another student's speech by walking in late while they are presenting you will lose an automatic 10% off your speech grade.
2. There are three reasons for excused absences approved by Illinois State: University-sponsored activities (such as athletics or forensics), bereavement (see policy below), and communicable diseases. If you have a legitimate reason for not being in class, you must tell me as far as possible in advance by ReggieNet messages or bring a doctor's note in case of illness. If you are involved in university activities that will cause you to miss class such as athletics or the forensics team, I need a schedule of classes that you will miss and a note from your coach or sponsor verifying that you are on the team.
3. If you talk to me in advance about missing or have an emergency that you let me know about with proper documentation as soon as possible, I will make sure that you are able to turn in assignments for full credit. However, if you don't attend or haven't completed your P2Ps you are not able to participate in class. My job is to prepare students for work after college, and part of that is holding them accountable for attendance because there is no employer that will keep workers that miss work on a consistent basis. I EXPECT THE SAME LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM FROM YOU THAT YOU WOULD GIVE TO AN EMPLOYER.

4. Tardiness will not be tolerated. If you are late three times, you will have to write a one-page paper detailing why you can't make it here on time. If you feel you have a legitimate reason that will keep you from being on time, please discuss it with me during the first week of class.

**ABSENCE DUE TO COVID:** If you are absent due to a required self-isolation or quarantine, you will need to provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office for your absence to be excused. The Dean of Students Office will notify your instructors, and they will make reasonable modifications/extensions to any assignments missed during this time. The full policy can be found at this link: <https://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-30.shtml>

**Course Policies: Electronics Policy.** During class time, students will be allowed to use a laptop or phone to access TopHat and P2P answers. This is the only permitted use of phones or laptops in this course. Anytime the class is working on any material or activity besides P2Ps, laptops should be shut, and phones put away. The use of laptops or phones for non-class material will result in loss of participation points for that day for every offense. After three offenses, you will no longer be allowed a laptop or phone in the class and will be required to print and bring physical copies of the P2P answers to class. **Any use of cell phones or laptops while your classmates are giving speeches or presenting information of any kind will result in an immediate 10% deduction off your speech grade.** If your phone rings during class, I reserve the right to answer it. If I see you texting during class, I will have you put your phone on the table in the front of the classroom. Also, if you are not paying attention, you are demonstrating to me that you already know the material I'm presenting, so I will have you come up front and teach.

**Course Policies: Problems.** Any work worth points is expected at the beginning of the class period in which it is due (or at the assigned time it is due in the case of online assignments).

**Late work: All work is expected on the date it is due.** Late work including missed speeches are subject to a minimum 10%-point deduction. I will work with you if you have an excused absence (determined by me) AND arrangements have been made with me prior to the class meeting. However, all late work including missed speeches has a maximum late period of one week from the due date, once it is past the one-week period no credit will be given for the assignment. If you have a legitimate reason for not submitting an assignment on time, please get in touch with me **before** the due date so adjustments can be made, and I will evaluate these situations on a case-by-case basis.

I want to help you in any way possible but will not accept less than your full effort. Like most instructors, I am more understanding if you keep me informed. If you encounter problems, please let me know right away. Make sure to anticipate those predictable problems so that you can prevent them. For example, running out of paper or printer ink, or losing something on a computer that you did not back up are problems that need not occur if you are looking ahead. (Supplies only run out when you need them, because that is the only time you use them!)

**Illinois Articulation Initiative.** The Illinois Articulation Initiative is designed to allow students to transfer course credit between institutions. The IAI requires that all COM 110 students present at least three speaking opportunities that include research and are five minutes, or longer, in

duration. Additionally, these presentations and speaking opportunities (participation) must comprise at least 50% of the overall grade.

**COM 110 Lab. You must visit the Com 110 lab at least once during the semester to practice one of the three major speeches (this is worth 20 points).** It is also recommended that you plan a visit to the com 110 lab at least one week before your speech so you have enough time to synthesize the feedback received from the attendant and incorporate it into your speech. Ultimately, the com 110 lab can be a useful tool in improving the quality of your speech and public speaking skills. To schedule time in the com 110 lab, call 438-4566 or come to Fell 032 and schedule an appointment in person. **You can only make an appointment during com 110 lab open hours over the phone or in person.** If you wish to video-record your presentation, please tell the attendant when booking your appointment. Remember to book your appointment early, as there are a great number of students trying to make appointments. You must bring a completed outline to the appointment. **You must also schedule an appointment at least 24 hours before the date you are scheduled to deliver your speech in class, or you will not be able to use the com 110 lab. If you need to change or cancel your appointment, you will need to call the Com 110 Lab at 438-4566 or stop by in person (Fell Hall 032) 24 hours in advance. If you fail to cancel your appointment 24 hours in advance you will not be allowed to use the com 110 lab again.**

**Com 110 Lab Hours-** (To view most accurate lab hours, see the sign posted in front of Fell 032) M- 9 AM to 7 PM, T- 9 AM to 6 PM, W- 9 AM to 7 PM, TH- 1 PM to 6 PM, F- 9 AM to 12 PM.

**Cheating/Plagiarism.** Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on speech topics and/or the presentation of someone else's work warrants plagiarism.

Students found to inadvertently commit acts of dishonesty will receive appropriate penalties specific to the assignment in question. Students found to commit intentional acts of dishonesty will receive a failing grade in the course and will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action through Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office.

**Special Needs.** Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at [StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu](http://StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu).

**Mental Health Resources.** Life at college can get very complicated. According to recent research, nearly 40% of college students are at-risk for developing generalized anxiety disorder and are less likely to seek help for it compared to other mental health issues. Students also sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience depression, and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are

FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at [Counseling.IllinoisState.edu](http://Counseling.IllinoisState.edu) or by calling (309) 438-3655.

**Illinois State University Bereavement Policy.** If a student experiences a death of an immediate family member or relative as defined below, the student will be excused from class for funeral leave, subsequent bereavement, and/or travel considerations. The student will provide appropriate documentation and arrange to complete missed classroom work as soon as possible according to the process outlined below.

Upon notification of the absence and proper documentation, each faculty member shall excuse the student from class according to this policy and provide an opportunity to complete missed exams, quizzes, and other required work. Ultimately, the student is responsible for all material covered in class and must work with each individual professor as soon as they return to complete any required work. Details can be found at the following website:  
<http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-27.shtml>

## **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS POLICIES**

**Professional Courtesy.** Professional courtesy includes respecting others' opinions, not interrupting in class, being respectful to those who are speaking, and working together in a spirit of cooperation. I expect you to demonstrate these behaviors at all times in this class. With that in mind, sleeping, reading materials irrelevant to class purposes, texting, or disrupting the class will not be tolerated and will result in the student being considered absent for that particular class period.

**Presentation Etiquette.** On presentation days, you have dual responsibilities as a speaker and an audience member. When you are presenting, you will dress appropriately. When you are an audience member, you will be attentive and ask challenging but constructive questions when the presentation is finished. Because most people are nervous when they present, you will be supportive both verbally and nonverbally. You will never enter or leave the room while a presentation is in progress.

**Behavioral Expectation Policy.** Should any student violate the expectations of appropriate classroom behavior (as mentioned in the professional courtesy and presentation etiquette policies above), the instructor will schedule a meeting to discuss these expectations and develop a behavioral modification plan. If these behaviors persist, you will be at-risk for failing the course.

**Hate Speech.** To foster a safe and comfortable learning environment, I ask that you refrain from using racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or other negative language intended to exclude members of our campus community and/or classroom. I expect all communications in this class to remain respectful and considerate of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. Violations of this expectation will result in an open constructive class discussion or a one-on-one discussion with me or a communication course director outside of class. If you are actually reading this, send me an email telling me your favorite album or music artist. You'll get 2 points of extra credit if you do this by the first day of class.

## **SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH POOL WEBPAGE**

Additionally, there will be a few extra credit opportunities for research participation. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade and may not necessarily appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and it is each student's responsibility to be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any of the studies in the School of Communication's Research Pool. The Research Pool is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Pool and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Pool can be accessed via:

<https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/>

In general, each 30 minutes of participation in an extra credit study will earn you .5 Research Credits. Each project listed on the Research Pool site will indicate the specific number of Research Credits associated with the project. I will get evidence of participation and the time of participation from the researcher(s) who administer the research studies at the conclusion of the semester; however, it is *your* responsibility to make sure that the researchers have the necessary evidence of your participation at the time of the study. Before participating in a study, **please be sure to have your name, ULID** (i.e., the part of your email before @ilstu.edu), **instructor name, and course and section number ready**, as you will need to provide these to receive credit. Research Credit can only be applied to one course for each study, unless specified otherwise in the Research Pool. A maximum of 5% of your final course grade can be earned from extra credit opportunities via the Research Pool. After the final exam there will be no further opportunities for extra credit or to otherwise improve your grade.

Please also be aware that federal guidelines indicate that instructors offering extra credit for research participation must offer a reasonable alternative (such as a research paper) for students who want to earn extra credit but do not want to participate in a study.