**COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY (COM 110) SYLLABUS**

**Instructor:** Isaac Asare Kwakye **Office Hours:** Tuesday 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

**Office:** Fell Hall 048 **Classroom:** Fell 180

**Email:** [**iasarek@ilstu.edu**](mailto:iasarek@ilstu.edu) [**S**](mailto:oblasis@ilstu.edu)**ection:** 008

**Meeting time:** 08:00 am – 09:15am

**TEXTS**

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

Simonds, C. J., & Hooker, J. F. (2023). *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](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbuy.stipes.com%2Fproducts%2Fisu-com-110-23sp&data=05%7C01%7Cjfhooke%40ilstu.edu%7C699d7d55324845a5e02708db7d8f9c34%7C085f983a0b694270b71d10695076bafe%7C1%7C0%7C638241827986967764%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dFVYm%2BdPN3BPktQZurtIcHsavwzYtUjU%2BFy3tvTK42k%3D&reserved=0)

The workbook will cost $39.50 plus tax and shipping. When you order, be sure to include the **billing address** for the credit card you are using and 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)

**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 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)

**Note: All three 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.

**Participation (Daily Speaking Opportunities).** Because Communication as Critical Inquiry is a skills-based, developmental course, participation is essential. It is important that you get these daily speaking opportunities to increase your confidence with your classroom audience. **Participation is a function of attendance, demonstration of having read the material, asking questions that extend the thinking of the class and instructor, contributing relevant examples, and demonstrating respect for the contributions of classmates.**

**Preparing to Participate (P2Ps)**. Your participation in the course will, in part, be determined by your completion of “Preparing to Participate” (P2P) assignments. Each P2P is worth five points. The other part is determined by attendance in class and the participation log. Attendance is worth 25 points while the participation log is worth 65 points.

**Paper Typing Guidelines.** All papers should be typed, double-spaced, with Times New Roman

12pt. font. Headers should be left-aligned and should include ONLY the following: Name, Date, Class, and Title/Assignment. The header should be singled spaced but should be no more than four lines. All pages should have a page number on the bottom right corner of the page. All papers need to be proofread for grammatical errors and faulty sentence structures.

**EVALUATION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Speeches** |  |  |
|  | Informative Speech Group Speech Persuasive Speech | 100pts  100pts  100pts |
| **Participation/P2P’s** |  |  |
|  | P2P’s (18ch. x 5pts) Participation Log & Attendance | 90pts  90pts |
| **Portfolio** |  |  |
|  | CIP  Synthesis Speech  Speech Evaluations/Rubrics COM 110 Lab Requirement Portfolio Folders | 30pts  40pts  15pts  10pts  5pts |
| **Other** |  |  |
|  | Syllabus Contract (Digital + Physical Copy) Any Old Bag Speech  Impromptu Speech Milner Research Strategy (x3) Speech Drafts (x3) | 5pts  10pts  10 pts  30pts  15pts |

**650pts Total**

At least 50% of the participation grade will be based on daily speaking opportunities (participation in class) 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%-89.9% = B; 70%-79.9% = C; 60-69.9% = D; below 60% = F

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

I always see myself as a student thus, I am not here to trick you or to make you look foolish. 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. I am here to help you and make this class beneficial for all of us. Communication is key in all classes, careers, and relationships. I want to communicate well with each of you, so please be sure to communicate with me as much as you may need. I am very excited about this class and will come prepared and excited to teach. I ask that you bring your best attitude and desire to learn to this class as well. Together, we will make this class beneficial and have a good time doing it. Please do not hesitate to ask questions, 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.) If you have any special needs that I should be aware of, please let me know, and I will make accommodations as necessary. I truly enjoy teaching this course and I am looking forward to what the semester brings!

**COURSE POLICIES**

**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.

**Assignment Due Dates.** All work is expected on the date it is due. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** However, I will work with you if you have a legitimate reason for late work (determined by me or other professionals) and arrangements have been made with me prior to the class meeting. 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. Late work will obviously be accepted if your absence is excused through the University or by a doctor ’s note.

**Com 110 Lab.** You are encouraged to visit the Com 110 lab at least **once** during the semester to practice your speech. For this course, visiting the Com 110 lab for the Group speech is **compulsory**. 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 a time in the Com 110 lab, call (309) 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 (309) 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.**

When you schedule a speech lab appointment, the speech lab attendant will ask which speech you are preparing for (Informative/Group/Persuasive), your ULID (aka the start of your ilstu email), your last name, and for my last name: Asare Kwakye. You will also need to take the corresponding Workbook Page with you to your appointment to get class credit. If you have any issues making an appointment – please feel free to ask me!

**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.

**P.S. Not submitting an outline and an APA reference page counts as intentional plagiarism and** **has serious consequences, including not receiving any points for that speech.**

**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.

**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 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.

**Electronics Policy**

Please bring a computer or smart device (e.g., phone) with you to class, as there will be several times throughout the semester when you are asked to use technology for class-related purposes. However, technology (e.g., phones, computers, etc.) must be put away when not explicitly required during class. Failure to do so will result in you being marked as “absent” for the class period. I understand that there is a difference between sending a quick text and scrolling on your phone. If your attention in class is distracted by your device, that is when you will be marked as absent and need to come speak to me during my office hours about how to resolve this misbehavior. Additionally, please make sure to remove your headphones, earbuds, etc. prior to the start of class. Failure to do so will result in you being marked “absent” for the class period. There is a valuable caveat here: if you are on your phone at all during another student’s speech presentation, you will automatically lose 10% of your own speech grade. If there is an extenuating circumstance, you **must** come to speak to me about it beforehand. Speaking to an audience is intimidating, and it is necessary to be an attentive, supportive audience member.

**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, electronics, 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.

**CLASS ETIQUETTE POLICIES**

**Attendance:** You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss course material and participate in activities associated with the readings. I will not lecture over the materials you have read, rather, we will synthesize the material into discussion and activities in which your preparedness will play a large role. Attendance is required for this course; however, I understand that sometimes life happens. There might be a day when you just need a break and cannot come to class. Therefore, you are allowed two “unexcused absence days” throughout the semester that will not affect your attendance grade **(however, you will need to ensure that you are in an academic position where you can afford to miss the in-class participation points for the day.**

Attendance is worth 25 points. After the second absence, I will deduct three points per absent day. 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. You are responsible for all materials distributed in your absence and should *ask your peers for notes and other assignments from missed class periods.* If you are involved in university-sanctioned activities that will cause you to miss class, such as athletics or debate team, you must discuss these planned absences with me ahead of time, so that we may discuss alternative assignments and arrangements. Absences made through the Dean of Students (e.g., medical/illness leave, family emergency/bereavement, etc.) or absences for university-related activities (e.g., sports events where I receive a notification) are, of course, excused and will not negatively affect your grade. Additionally, please always reach out to me in advance if you have something happening in your life. Like most teachers, I am more than willing to work with you if you communicate with me in advance. The chart below provides an example of how unexcused absences may affect your grade:

Number of Absences Points Deducted from Attendance Grade

3 -3

4 -5

5 -7

6 -9

7 -11

8 -13

9 -15

10 -17

11 -20

12 -23

Please note that coming to class on time is also imperative. If you arrive after attendance is taken, you will be marked as late. If you are late three times, that will count as an absence.

**Illness:** As responsible adults investing in their future, Illinois State University students are encouraged to take control of their own education, especially when life and health challenges interfere with the planned process. When students need to have an extension, break from class, etc. due to illness, they must be swift and proactive in working with their instructors to take advantage of learning opportunities, develop mastery of course materials, meet the learning objectives as outlined in the course, and prepare themselves for more advanced learning. Essentially, as an adult learner, you are responsible for reaching out to me immediately if an illness interferes with your participation in the course. I want to work with you to ensure that you are successful as a student. Concerns will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Absences 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 student office f](https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/contact/dean/)or 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.

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.

**Expected Discussion Etiquette:** In order to foster a safe and comfortable learning environment, I ask that you refrain from using racist, sexist, homophobic, 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 most likely result in an open constructive class discussion or a one-on-one discussion with me outside of class.

**EXTRA CREDIT**

**Extra Credit #1:** Critical Evaluation of a Speech/Performance follow

Throughout the course you will have at least two extra credit opportunities, worth 10 points each. For example, you will listen to a speech from a Youtube playlist that I will provide in class and write two to three paragraphs on the improvements the speaker could make. For instance, you can state that the speaker could have used better body language. Then explain what kind of body language the speaker should have used and justify your answer. The answers should be at least 150 words and should follow the Paper Typing Format listed above.

**Extra Credit #2:** 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/](https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/%20)

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](about:blank))**, 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.

**CONTACTING ME**

**Office Hours:** I will be holding office hours in Fell 048 every Tuesday from 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm. During this time students are encouraged to come to my office and ask me questions about assignments, seek help, review homework/grades, or even just to visit. I am always happy to meet with students. If you are unavailable during my office hours, please feel free to email me to schedule a Zoom meeting. Please come to a Zoom meeting like you would have come in an in-person meeting. Please have your screen set up so that I can see your face. Please wear appropriate clothing. Please you should not be laying down. Please do not be ordering Chicken McNuggets in a drive-thru. (It’s happened!) Please come prepared. Please feel free to ask any questions you have. Please Zoom often!

**Contacting by Email.** I expect that all email communication be professional. In the subject line of your email, please list your last name, course (COM 110) and section number, and a general subject of your inquiry. Emails should contain a greeting (Hello Isaac), a specific and

spell-checked/grammar-checked message, and a closing with your name. Finally, all emails must be sent through an ISU email address. I will not respond to any emails from students who use alternate email addresses. If you choose to contact me through email, please be patient and allow 24 hours for a response during the week (Monday-Thursday) and 48 hours on weekends (Friday-Sunday). If an email is sent an hour before class, it should not be expected that I will respond within the hour. Also, please do not send me emails which look like this:

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated

**Syllabus Contract**

I have read the syllabus for Isaac’s COM 110 and agree to the terms for required coursework and acceptable classroom behavior.

Name and preferred pronouns (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Major(s)/Minor(s):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Please list any previous public speaking experience, if any:

If you could have dinner with a famous person, dead or alive, who would it be and what would you eat?

If you were to live in any city in the world for the rest of your life, where would that be? Who makes the best pizza in your hometown? Explain why.

What is your favorite TV show?

What is something you would like your instructor to know? What questions do you have for me?

Favorite Song/Artist (currently): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Food: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Restaurant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Movie (currently): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_