**COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY**

**(COM 110)**

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| **Instructor:** Kate Mueller | **Section:** COM 110 - 038 |
| **Email:** kgmuell@ilstu.edu | **Classroom:** Fell 148 |
| **Office:** Fell 048 | **Meeting Time:** MWF 1:00 – 1:50 PM |
| **Preferred Contact:** Email | **Office Hours:** M/W 2:00 – 3:00 PM |

**TEXTS**

­­­ Simonds, C. J., Hunt, S. K., & Simonds, B. K. (2018). *Engaging communication.* (Top Hat ebook 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. Purchase from Top Hat or book store.

**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 from the following link:

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

The packet will also cost $39.50. When you order, be sure to include the **billing address** for the credit card you are using as well as the shipping address for where you want the workbook sent. If you have issues with this process, please contact the publisher directly at [orders@stipes.com](mailto:orders@stipes.com).

**COM 110 COURSE GOALS**

Communication as Critical Inquiry (COM 110) seeks to improve students’ abilities to express themselves and 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 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

1. personal and social responsibility, allowing them to
2. participate in activities that are both individually life-enriching and socially beneficial to a diverse community (civic knowledge and engagement)
3. demonstrate ethical decision making
4. 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

1. **Informative Speech:** 5-7 minutes with at least 4 sources must be cited in the presentation and in the references
2. **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
3. **Persuasive Speech:** 5-7 minutes with at least 6 sources

**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. Your chosen topics will need to be approved before you may present; topic selection forms will be assigned for both the Informative Speech and the Persuasive Speech. Typed outlines and references are required for each (a template will be provided). If you do not turn in an outline, you are not allowed to present your speech. If you have any concerns about your ability to meet the requirements to pass this course, please come and see me to discuss your concerns.

\***Note: If your speech presentation involves visual aids, you will need to email them to me at least 24 hours before you present.**

**Any Old Bag Speech:** This speech will be the first you present in the course. You will bring in three items to represent yourself and then explain how they do so. These presentations will take place during the second class meeting.

**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. You will keep track of an attendance log, which you will fill out for lecture days. You will not need to fill this out for workshop days or speech days.\*

\***Note: Although you will not be *earning* points for workshop or speech days, you risk *losing* points for not attending these class periods.** Failure to attend workshop days (aside from *one* per speech) will result in the loss of 2 points per day missed from the corresponding speech. Failure to attend speech days (that are *not* your assigned presentation day) results in the loss of 5 points per day missed without an excused absence. Failure to attend *your own* assigned speech day without an excused absence results in the loss of 10 points from your speech. Making up speeches in the COM 110 Lab without an excused absence results in the stacking of lost points (an additional 10 points are taken off for each speech made up in the COM 110 Lab). For speech days, specifically, doctors’ notes or walk-out forms from Student Health are required to excuse an absence. Those who miss their assigned presentation day will be responsible for making up the speech in the COM 110 Lab before a week has passed the original date.

**Top Hat Assignments:** Our eBook, available on Top Hat, contains assignments for you to complete within each chapter. These assignments are called “Prepare to Participate,” or “P2Ps.” These assignments are due ten minutes before the start of each class period. The first half of each P2P is a knowledge-based question, the second half an application question. These assignments add up to be a significant portion of your grade, so do not neglect them. They will help you to participate in each class period.

**CIP Paper:** Toward the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned a Communication Improvement Profile paper. The purpose of this paper is to help you set goals for the course and reach them by the time you put together your Synthesis Speech for the final exam period.

**Milner Assignments:** There will be three small worksheet assignments that you will complete from the Workbook that encourage the use of Milner Library’s student resources. These assignments will essentially prepare you to find appropriate sources, cite them correctly, and apply them effectively to your course work. Each assignment will be due in accordance with a major speech.

**Final Portfolio:** You will be expected to keep a portfolio of materials/assignments from throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, your portfolio should consist of the following: your intact folder, your CIP paper, group speech contracts, peer evaluations, and your synthesis speech template. Since you will be turning in most of these items throughout the semester, your only job is to make sure they are all put together by our final regular class period (before the final exam period). Your synthesis speech template will not be finished by then, however; thus, you will be required to show me your completed template during the final exam period in order to receive those points. If you fail to have all the required materials in your folder by the final class period, you will lose up to 10% of the points. The portfolio you leave the course with will highlight the cumulative nature of the class, as it is a direct reflection of how far you have come throughout the semester.

**Synthesis Speech**: This speech is separate from the three main speeches, but is still very important. It will act as a reflection of what you learn throughout the semester. Think of it as a bookend along with the CIP paper. This speech will be presented in our final exam class period.

**EVALUATION**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Speeches |  |  |
|  | Informative Speech  Group Speech  Persuasive Speech | 100  100  100 |
| Participation/P2Ps |  |  |
|  | P2Ps (17 ch. x 5 pts)  Participation Logs (18 lect. x 5 pts) | 85  90 |
| Portfolio |  |  |
|  | CIP Paper  Synthesis Speech  Final Portfolios | 30  40  25 |
| Other |  |  |
|  | Syllabus Contract  Introduction Speech (AOB)  Topic Selection Forms (2)  Milner Assignments (3) | 15  15  10  30 |

**Total: 640 pts**

At least 50% of the participation grade will be based on daily speaking opportunities (participation in class or in 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

**Assignment Due Dates:** All paper-copy assignments (everything done outside of Top Hat) are due in physical form at the beginning of class on the date they are due. All electronic-submission assignments must be submitted to me ten minutes prior to the start of class on the date they are due.\* If you cannot make it to class, it is your responsibility to reach out to me regarding how and when you should submit assignments. Note, however, that your participation grade will be affected as P2Ps and Class Discussion are graded separately.

**\*Note: All submission deadlines are subject to change as the semester progresses. You will be informed of changes as soon as they are made.**

**Late Work:** All work is expected on the date it is due. I will work with you if you have a legitimate reason and/or if arrangements have been made with me prior to the class meeting. I want to help you in any way possible, but I will not accept less than your best effort. Like most instructors, I am more understanding if you keep me informed, so let me know right away if you encounter any problems. In other words, *communicate with me*!

**Formal Assignment Format:** All papers and assignments should be typed, double spaced, with Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Extra spacing between paragraphs should be removed. Headers should be left aligned and should include ONLY the following: Name, Date, Class, and Title/Assignment. The header should be singled spaced and should not be more than four lines. **All online assignment submissions must be turned in as either a PDF or Word Document!**

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance:** 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. **Once again, if you are absent on a speech day that is not your own, you will lose 5 points from your own speech (unless the absence is excused). If you are absent on your own speech day, you will lose a minimum of 10 points from your speech (unless the absence is excused). Finally, if you are late to any speech day and/or enter the classroom during a classmate’s presentation, you will lose up to 5 points on your own speech.**

**Excused Absences:** There are only three reasons for excused absences approved by Illinois State University: University-sponsored activities (such as athletics or forensics), bereavement (see policy below), and communicable diseases (see COVID policies). If you have a legitimate reason for not being in class, you must tell me as far as possible in advance through email and provide documentation.

**Participation Policy for Excused Absences:** If you miss a day of class for an excused absence, you will need to gain your participation points for the day you miss by emailing me one thing about the material you prepared/read for that day of class. This email should be 1-3 sentences, labeled as “Participation Make-Up,” and should consist of one thing that either surprised you, helped you learn, or that you simply enjoyed about the material. This email should be sent to me within 24 hours of the beginning of the class you miss (before 1:00 pm the next day).

**Absence Due to COVID-19:** 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: <http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-30.shtml>

**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.

**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.

**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>

**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 sue technology for class-related purposes. However, technology (e.g., phones, computers, headphones, ect.) 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 may result in a discussion being held with me during my office hours about how to resolve this misbehavior. Additionally, please make sure to remove your headphones, earbuds, ect. 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 during another students’ speech presentation, you will automatically lose 10% from your own speech grade. If there is an extenuating circumstance, you must come speak to me about it beforehand. Speaking to an audience is intimidating, and it is necessary to be an attentive, supportive audience member.

**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.

**Expected Discussion Etiquette (Hate Speech Policy):** 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.

**COM 110 LAB**

You are encouraged to visit the COM 110 Lab at least once during the semester to practice your speech. 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.**

When you schedule a COM 110 Lab appointment, the COM 110 Lab attendant will ask which speech you are preparing for (Informative/Group/Persuasive), your ULID (i.e., the part of your email before @ilstu.edu), your last name, and your instructor’s last name (Limbach). You will also need to take the corresponding Workbook Page with you to your appointment. If you have any issues making an appointment, please feel free to ask me!

**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. Ask me about other opportunities!