



**ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY**
Illinois' first public university

COM 110: COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY

“A good head and good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special.”

—Nelson Mandela

Instructor: Matthew Edor (He/Him)

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Office Hours: Fri. 9:00-11:50 AM

Section: 032

Classroom: Fell 152

Meeting Time: MWF 12:00-12:50 PM

I know this is the second semester for many of you and you have taken a couple of courses and already have a feel of it. College can be challenging; you don't need to do it alone. I aim to make this classroom as comfortable and accessible for students as possible. If you have any questions or concerns or want to talk about the course, please get in touch with me.

TEXTS:

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

Simonds, C. J., Hunt, S. K., & Hooker, J.F. (2023). *Communication as critical inquiry: Student workbook*. Champaign, IL: 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 course section. You may purchase eBook access directly from Top Hat or 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-110-24sp>

The workbook will cost \$39.50 plus tax and shipping. When you order, include the billing address for the credit card you are using and the shipping address for where you want the workbook sent (e.g., your dorm). If you have any issues with this process, please get in touch with the publisher directly at orders@stipes.com

COMMUNICATING WITH ME

This class is about becoming competent communicators; I want to help you develop skills you can use well beyond this class or this semester. I am a communication student, and now so are you – if you have questions, concerns, comments, or need help (in or outside of the classroom), please do not hesitate to contact me. *This is a class about communication, so communicate with me.*

Email Policy: *pls dont email like u txt.* Email is the best way to communicate with me. Please get in touch with me with all your questions via my ISU e-mail address, medor@ilstu.edu. Emails should be professional and contain the following:

- An appropriate subject line: “COM 110: Informative Speech.”
- A greeting (e.g., Hi Matthew)
- A specific and spell-checked/grammatically correct message.
- And closing with the student's first and last name: “Sincerely, Desmond Elliot” or “Thanks, Desmond Elliot.”

Please allow up to 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends for a response.

All emails must be sent through an ISU email address ONLY.

Office Hours: I will hold specific office hours (Fri. 9:00-10:30 AM) but am open to make myself available during a weekday at a mutually convenient time. Students are encouraged to come to my office to ask me questions about assignments, seek help, review their homework/grades, or visit. Please email me to schedule an appointment or talk to me after class.

WHAT ARE THE BIG TAKEAWAYS FOR YOU IN THIS COURSE?

Communication As Critical Inquiry (COM110) Course Goals:

1. Communication as Critical Inquiry (COM 110) seeks to improve students’ abilities to express themselves and listen to others in various communication settings. Effective oral communication is an essential life skill every person must possess to function today.
2. The course emphasizes participation in various 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.
3. the course is designed to make students competent, ethical, critical, confident, and information-literate communicators.

COM 110 addresses the following General Education outcomes:

- I. intellectual and practical skills, allowing students to
 - a. make informed judgments.
 - b. report information effectively and responsibly
 - c. deliver purposeful presentations that inform attitudes or behaviors.

- II. personal and social responsibility, allowing students to
- a. participate in activities that are both individually life-enriching and socially beneficial to a diverse community (civic knowledge and engagement).
 - b. interact competently in a variety of cultural contexts.

III. Integrative and applied learning, allowing students to

- a. identify and solve problems.
- b. transfer learning to novel situations
- c. work effectively in teams.

MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

- Trust and Respect are the two fundamental values that I believe are crucial to a healthy classroom. I aim to create a comfortable environment for all parties with a feeling of community instead of competition. You are working together, not against each other, in your learning experience. As students, the more comfortable you are with your classmates, the easier (and more fun!) the semester will be. We are a team and need to rely on each other to succeed.
- I am here to help you and make this class beneficial for all of us. Communication is vital in all classes, careers, and relationships. I want to communicate well with each of you, so please communicate with me as much as you 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. 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. Feel free to approach me with inquiries or requests for assistance, whether during or outside class time (Except in cases involving privacy concerns, addressing queries in class can often benefit everyone, as your peers might share similar questions or concerns, thus aiding them as well). Please let me know if you have any special needs; I should know. I truly enjoy teaching this course and look forward to what the Fall 2023 semester brings!

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

- You are expected to be in class every day. **There will be frequent in-class participation points you cannot make up**, so skipping class will affect your grade directly in the loss of attendance and participation points and indirectly in the loss of explanation of concepts that you must apply in assignments later.
- Tardiness will not be tolerated. **If you are late three times, you will lose 10 points and have to write a one-page essay on the assigned topic.** 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.

- If you are **absent on a speech day** that is not your own, you will have **10 points** deducted from your speech for every day you miss. If you are late on a speech day or misbehave (e.g., interrupt a speaker, use your phone, or have Air Pods in your ears, you will lose also lose 10 points off your speech grade.
- 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 email and provide documentation. 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 you will miss and a note from your coach or sponsor verifying that you are on the team.
- **ABSENCE DUE TO COVID (Spring 2024):** If you are absent due to required self-isolation or quarantine, you must 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. Find the full policy at <http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-30.shtml>

If you talk to me in advance about missing class or have an emergency with the proper documentation, let me know with the appropriate documentation as soon as possible, and I will ensure that you can turn in assignments for full credit. However, you cannot participate in class if you don't attend or complete your P2Ps. My job is to prepare students for work after college, and part of that is holding them accountable for attendance because no employer will keep workers who miss work consistently. Reminder: *This is a class about communication, so communicate with me.*

Electronics Policy

Students can use a laptop/phone to access TopHat and P2P answers during class. This is the only permitted use of phones or laptops during class. Anytime the class is working on any material or activity besides P2Ps, laptops should be shut down and phones put away.

Using laptops or phones for non-class material will result in losing participation points for that day for every offense. Air pods or earbuds are not allowed in the class. Keep them away in your bags. After three violations, 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 the class. Any use of cell phones, Air Pods, or laptops while your classmates are giving

speeches or presenting information will result in an immediate **10-point** deduction from your speech grade.

Assignment Policies

Formal Assignment Format. All papers and assignments should be typed, double-spaced, with Times New Roman 12 pt. font and 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 single-spaced and should not be more than four lines.

Late Work. All work is expected on the date it is due. I will work with you if you have a legitimate reason/if arrangements have been made with me before 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 immediately if you encounter any problems.

Cheating/Plagiarism. Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy 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 the presentation of someone else's work warrants plagiarism.

Students found to commit acts of dishonesty inadvertently will receive appropriate penalties specific to the assignment in question (the absence of a reference page also counts as unintentional plagiarism). Students found to commit intentional and inadvertent acts of dishonesty will receive appropriate penalties and will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action through the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office. Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content) without proper attribution or authorization would also be a form of plagiarism. If you are unsure whether something may be plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty, please contact me to discuss it as soon as possible.

Illinois Articulation Initiative (C2900: Oral Communication): 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.

ASSIGNMENTS

I. **Speeches.** Each student will present three speeches. **Each speech will be worth 100**

points.

- a. **Informative speech** (5-7 minutes, no more than 7:30; at least four sources must be cited in the presentation and the references)
- b. **Group presentation** (15-17 minutes depending on the number of members; each member must speak at least 3 minutes consecutively, and at least ten sources must be cited in the presentation and the references)
- c. **Persuasive speech** (5-7 minutes, no more than 7:30; at least six new sources must be cited in the presentation and the references)

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 this course's requirements, please contact me to discuss your concerns.

- IV. **Communication Improvement Profile (CIP).** This is a short paper (**2-4 pages, double-spaced**) in which you will analyze your communication style, strengths, and weaknesses. You will also discuss your goals and expectations 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. Details will be posted on Canvas. This is worth **40 points**.
- V. **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 you can continue improving on. Your speeches will serve as evidence of your claims, and you are to reference them in your speech. This is worth **40 points**.
- VI. **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.
- VII. **Milner Library Assignments** These (**three**) 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 **30 points**.
- VIII. **Attention & Participation.** Participation is essential because Communication as Critical Inquiry is a skills-based developmental course. Participation is a function of reading the material, offering insights that extend the thinking of the class and instructor, contributing relevant examples, and demonstrating respect for classmates' contributions. Participation will be assessed during class discussions, assignments, and

activities. **90 Points** of your total grade are allotted to participation and attendance.

EVALUATION

Assignment	Point Value	Page Number in Workbook
Syllabus Contract	10 pts.	3
Introduction Speech (AOB)	10 pts.	94
Informative Speech	100 pts.	10-44
Group Speech	100 pts.	45-62
Persuasive Speech	100 pts.	63-86
CIP Paper	40 pts.	86-89
Synthesis Speech	40 pts.	91-93
Milner Library Assignments	30 pts.	35, 52, 84
COM 110 Lab Visit	10 pts.	N/A
P2Ps	90 pts.	TopHat Textbook
Attendance & Participation	90 pts.	N/A
TOTAL POINTS	620 POINTS	

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.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS POLICIES

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

Hate Speech. To foster a safe and comfortable learning environment, I ask that you refrain from using racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language to exclude our campus community and classroom members. I expect all communications in this class to remain respectful and considerate of students, faculty, and staff's rights, opportunities, and welfare. Violations of this expectation will likely result in an open, constructive class discussion or a one-on-one discussion with me outside of class. If you are reading this, email me your favorite movie to earn extra credit (5 points); it must be done before the first day of class.

Presentation Etiquette. You have dual responsibilities as a speaker and audience member on presentation days. When you are presenting, you will dress appropriately. As 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 verbally and nonverbally supportive. You will never enter or leave the room while a

presentation progresses.

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 of failing the course.

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH POOL WEBPAGE.

Additionally, there will be a few extra credit opportunities for research participation. These different credit points will be added to your final grade and will not appear in the grade book immediately upon completing the opportunity. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and each student must be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any 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/>

Every 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 after the semester; however, it is *your* responsibility to ensure that the researchers have the necessary evidence of your participation at the time of the survey. Before participating in a study, **please 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.

Federal guidelines indicate that instructors offering extra credit for research participation must provide 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.

For each .5-credit research study you participate in, I will award 2 extra credit points (up to 8 total points).

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS RESOURCES

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. These presentations (participation) must comprise 50% of the overall grade.

COM 110 LAB. You are required to visit the COM 110 Lab at least once during the semester to practice your speech. **The visit is worth 10 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 help improve your speech and public speaking skills.

To schedule a time in the COM 110 Lab, call 438-4566 or come to Fell 032 and schedule an in-person appointment. **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 many students are trying to make appointments. You must bring a complete outline to the appointment. **You must also schedule an appointment at least 24 hours before the date you are expected 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 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 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. **You must also take the corresponding Workbook Page to your appointment to get class credit.** If you have any issues making an appointment, please ask me!

Special Needs and Accommodations: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and 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. College – and life in general – can get very overwhelming at times. According to recent research, nearly 40% of college students are at risk of developing a generalized anxiety disorder and are less likely to seek help for it than other mental health issues. Students also sometimes feel overwhelmed and lost, experience depression, and struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and 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 call (309) 438-3655. If there is any way I can support you, please let me know.

Illinois State University Bereavement Policy. Suppose a student experiences a death of an immediate family member or relative, as defined below. In that case, the student will be excused from class for funeral leave, subsequent bereavement, and travel considerations. According to the process outlined below, the student will arrange to complete missed classroom work as soon as possible.

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 professor as soon as they return to complete any needed work.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Speaking in front of people scares me, and I'm worried about this class; what can I do about it?

A: We will review several strategies to minimize communication apprehension in this class (and discuss how nervousness can be a helpful tool). You can also speak to me during my office hours or schedule a meeting via Zoom. We can brainstorm strategies and plans specifically for you.

Q: How many speeches are in this class?

A: Three formal speeches: an informative speech, a multiple perspectives speech, and a persuasive speech. Presenting each speech is required to pass the course. You will also have several non-formal speaking opportunities.

Q: What is the best way to get in contact with you?

A: Email! Please include a subject line, a greeting, complete sentences, and your name. I am always happy to answer questions but will refer you to the syllabus if the question can be answered there (so it's a good idea to check here first).

Q: Do you accept late work or allow us to redo assignments?

A: Life happens. Sometimes things are late. Please communicate with me if something is happening in your life. I take 10% off per day that the assignment is late, so turning assignments in as soon as possible is beneficial. Please check out the Late Work portion of the syllabus above to review the requirements for submitting late work.

Q: What materials do I need for this class?

A: We have an online textbook and a physical workbook. I also weekly communicate with the class through Canvas, so checking our Canvas page and your email frequently is a good idea.

Q: What should I be aware of if I have a Zoom meeting with you?

A: Please come to a Zoom meeting like any in-person meeting. I will have to end the call if you cannot do this. Please have your screen set up so that I can see your face. Please wear appropriate clothing. Please do not lie down. Please do not order Chicken McNuggets in a drive-thru. (It's happened!) Please come prepared. Please feel free to ask any questions you have. Please Zoom often!

Q: Do you like teaching?

A: Absolutely :)