



ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY (COM 110)

Instructor: Ms. Makayla R. Roller (She/Her)

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Classroom: Fell Hall Room 162

Office Hours: T/Th 9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Section: 76

Meeting time: T/ Th 8 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

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.

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. 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 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 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

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

ABOUT ME

My Promise to You. As respected students in this classroom, communication will be open, honest, and often. I will help you succeed if you put in the work to do so. I will do my best to answer emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. I respect that you all have lives outside COM 110 and will treat you with grace; I do ask that you do the same for me, we all deserve balance and I hope that together we can achieve this.

Learning can only be facilitated if all participants feel welcome, included, and safe. Therefore, please advise me of any name change and your pronouns (e.g., he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, zie/zir/zirs) in any way that you are comfortable with, such as via email, meeting, or in class. I will try my best to learn your preferred name and pronouns as I hope you will learn mine. My classroom is a safe place for all identities to express themselves. Together, we will create and maintain a learning environment in which each and every one of us is respected and treated fairly and equally.

My Teaching Philosophy. It is my belief that the best learning happens in a collaborative and comfortable environment. I want this classroom to be that for all of you. This will require trust and

respect for myself and your peers, as well as my trust and respect for all of you. We will all work as a team every day and by doing so I hope you can all feel comfortable being active participants in class discussions and activities.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions or ask for help. If you have any accommodations that it would help for me to be aware of, please let me know. I truly am excited to teach this course and am looking forward to what the semester brings!

ATTENDANCE

1. Attendance is mandatory for this class. 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 the 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 (such as COVID). 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. 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. 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.

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. All I ask is that you discuss absences with me beforehand and we can work something out. This class is all about communicating so please communicate with me. I will not extend due dates or work with you if you do not meet me halfway.

ASSIGNMENTS

Speeches. Each student will present four speeches:

- a. Informative speech (p. 11-39 in your workbook for more details) (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 (p. 38-60 in your workbook for more details) (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 (p. 61-81 in your workbook for more details) (5-7 minutes, no more than 7:30; at least 6 sources)
- d. Any old bag (p. 91 in your workbook for more details) (1-2 minutes, no sources required)

All three of the main speeches (informative, group, and persuasive) must be completed to pass the course. Each presentation will be evaluated on content and delivery. Specific details will be clearly outlined in class. Outlines and references are required for each and will be turned in via Canvas (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.

Speeches: 320 points total

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)** (5 points per chapter/90 points total): Your participation in the course will, in part, be determined by your completion of “Preparing to Participate” (P2P) assignments. Each is worth five points. P2P’s are completed through the TopHat platform.
- **Attendance/Participation Logs** (4 points each day/128 points total): You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss course material and participate in activities. You are responsible for all materials distributed in your absence. If you are involved in university-sanctioned activities that will cause you to miss class, you must discuss these planned absences with me ahead of time, so that we may discuss arrangements. At the end of every class period, students will complete and turn in a participation log that states the points they feel they deserve for the class period and their level of participation.

Participation: 218 points total

Portfolio. Students will write one paper and one speech towards the “portfolio” in the course. The “portfolio” is a collection of your work in this course over the semester. It will represent your insights, observation, experiences, and reflections that illustrate course content. Detailed assignment guidelines will be provided on Canvas and in your workbook. The final product will consist of your Communication Improvement Profile (CIP), your speeches, evaluations from me, your peers, and yourself, and a final synthesis speech.

- **Communication Improvement Profile (CIP) Paper** (p. 83-86) in your workbook for more details): A paper assigned at the beginning of the semester in which you will discuss and reflect on your own communication habits and determine three specific communication improvement goals for the semester.
- **Synthesis Speech** (p. 88-90 in your workbook): You will complete a final speech that discusses how your communication has changed throughout the semester. You will use your previous assignments as evidence for how your communication has changed throughout the semester.

Portfolio: 57 points total

Other Assignments.

- Creating a Search Strategy (p. 33-34 in your workbook for more details): You will complete a worksheet that will help you find sources for your informative speech.
- Choosing Search Tools/Sources (p. 50 in your workbook for more details): You will complete a worksheet that will help you evaluate sources for your group speech.
- Annotated Bibliography (p. 81 in your workbook for more details): You will learn about and create an annotated bibliography for your persuasive speech.
- Syllabus Contract (p. 3 of the workbook): You will need to complete the syllabus contract to show that you understand and agree to the policies outlined in the syllabus.
- Group Contract (p. 46-47 of the workbook): You will need to complete a group contract that outlines the rules and stipulations within your group.
- COM 110 Lab Attendance: (You will need to attend the COM 110 lab once before your Group Speech. Proper documentation will need to be provided to receive credit; this is pages 5-8 in your workbook)

Other Assignments: 50 points total

EVALUATION

Category	Assignment	Point Value
Speeches	Any Old Bag Speech	10
Speeches	Informative Speech	100
Speeches	Group Speech	100
Speeches	Persuasive Speech	100
Peer Evals	Informative (Peer)	5
Peer Evals	Persuasive (Peer)	5
Portfolio	CIP Paper	32
Portfolio	Synthesis Presentation	25
Participation	P2Ps	90
Participation	Attendance/Participation Log	128
Other Assignments	Creating a Search Strategy	9
Other Assignments	Choosing Search Tools/Sources	8
Other Assignments	Annotated Bibliography	8
Other Assignments	Syllabus Contract	10
Other Assignments	Group Contract	5
Other Assignments	COM 110 Lab Attendance	10

Total: 645 points

There will be no exams in this class; however, there is a lot of busy work that is often needed to be completed before coming to class. Please keep this in mind and plan accordingly.

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

COURSE & UNIVERSITY 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 being marked absent. 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. With all this being said I understand emergencies happen, so know you will not be penalized for emergency phone calls or text messages. Once again, please communicate with me after class so I know what is happening. 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.

Late Work Policy: 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 assignments will NOT be accepted – you will receive a ZERO. 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. I want to help you in any way possible but I want all of you to walk away from this class with the proper skills needed to succeed in life outside college. Like most instructors, I am more understanding if you keep me informed. If you encounter problems, please let me know right away.

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 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 (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.**

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.

Accommodations. 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. If you are reading this, email me your favorite hobby. If you do not have a hobby, email me your favorite music genre to earn 2 points of extra credit; must be done before the first day of class!

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 of failing the course.

Hate Speech. 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.

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.