

Communication 103, Oral Communication Fall 2008

COMM 103 Oral Communication combines instruction in public speaking with an overview of communication theory. The purpose of this combination is to equip you with the knowledge and skills to competently communicate in a variety of communication settings, including interpersonal, group, public, and mediated contexts.

The class is split into two parts, equally important. In the large lecture you'll get an overview of communication theories and concepts. You'll be tested on terms, theories, and concepts addressed in the large lecture. You'll be required to integrate your understanding of these concepts into your presentations. In your small section, you'll put those concepts into practice in presentations, activities, and group work. While the exams will be based on large lecture material, you will take exams and quizzes in your small section.

WHO IS MY INSTRUCTOR?

Important information related to your discussion section instructor may be found on your course Blackboard site. You will have one of two large lecture instructors, Dr. Kurt Lindemann *or* Michael Rapp, M.A. You will have a different instructor in your small section. You will not present your speeches in the large lecture, but will do all of your presentations and activities related to public speaking in your small section.

WHEN DOES MY CLASS MEET?

The schedule can be a bit confusing with the large lecture and small sections. Small sections will meet twice a week (MW, MF, or WF) and your lecture will meet the M, W, or F that you do not meet in your small section. Please write down your schedule below to avoid any confusion.

Small Section Meeting		Lecture Meeting	
Location: _____	Time: _____	Location: _____	Time: _____
Instructor: _____		Lecturer: _____	
Office Hours: _____		Office Hours: _____	
E-mail: _____		E-mail: _____	

WHAT ARE THE REQUIRED CLASS MATERIALS?

- **Textbook:** Morreale, S. P., Spitzberg, B.H., & Barge, J.K. (2006). *Human Communication: Motivation, Knowledge, & Skills* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- **E-instruction response pad** (CPS clicker): This should be purchased at the same time as your textbook, and the bookstore on campus should tell you this when you buy your textbook. See the CPS section in this syllabus for further instructions and information.
- Access to a **dependable computer** that runs a word processing program and is connected to a working printer. All course assignments must be typed, printed, and submitted electronically. Computers for student use are available at the library, but you must supply your own removable storage device (e.g., zip disc, USB drive, etc.).
- **Internet access** and current browser software. You will need to regularly access **Blackboard sites** (<http://blackboard.sdsu.edu>) for the large lecture and small sections to read assignment descriptions, download templates, review helpful resources, and print required forms.

- **Working e-mail address.** The address you supply to the university through the WebPortal site is the address to which you will receive all e-mails from your instructor and fellow students. If you choose to use a different e-mail address, **be sure your e-mail is correct in BlackBoard.** You will often receive messages from your instructors sent through BlackBoard, and if your e-mail address is incorrect you may miss important announcements. Please register for a free SDSU student e-mail account at the Student Computing Center in Love Library.

WHAT WILL I LEARN IN THIS CLASS?

This course seeks to foster competent communication in a diverse world, improve research skills, critical thinking, and presentation skills, increase your civic engagement, and encourage the practical application of communication theory across the major communication contexts of everyday life. By the end of this course, you should be able to do the following:

Research and Writing

- Conduct research on a topic and synthesize relevant information into an argument
- Create cohesive, coherent, and complete outlines for public presentations
- Demonstrate effective APA source citation skills
- Employ effective language choices in the construction of public presentations

Public Speaking

- Identify and analyze the components of effective public presentations
- Present credible, well-reasoned arguments in a public setting
- Employ competent listening as audience members of presentations
- Utilize effective and appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication skills

Communicating Competently in Contexts

- Identify competent communication in a variety of communication contexts
- Articulate class theories and concepts as they pertain to competent communication
- Apply communication concepts to everyday scenarios to increase communication competence

WHAT ASSIGNMENTS WILL I HAVE TO COMPLETE?

For complete details on assignments, see the assignment sheets and assessment forms located on Blackboard. All topics must be approved by the instructor before the presentation is given.

Speech of Introduction

For this assignment, you will be introducing yourself to classmates by speaking about a communication experience in which you learned something about yourself. Incorporating concepts from the large lecture dealing with self-perception, self-disclosure, or intercultural communication, you will present a narrative about a communication situation experienced that affected your self-perception. To better explain this to the class, you will apply one of three concepts from the textbook to your experience (see the assignment description). No research—other than incorporating class concepts—or outline is necessary for this speech.

Time limit: *2-3 minutes*

Research: None required

Point values: *Speech, 25 points; no outline required*

Cultural Artifact Speech

Since communicating in a diverse world means familiarizing yourself with the customs, traditions, and rituals of other cultures, this assignment asks you to inform your class about an artifact of a culture or co-culture that is *not your own*. After conducting research, you will present on the significance of an artifact to a particular culture or co-culture. This artifact may be a material object, a person, an event, a place, or even a concept. See documents on BlackBoard. Outline with APA-style References page *due on date listed on schedule*. At least one visual aid required.

Time limit: *3 minutes*

Research: *At least 4 sources*

Point values: *Speech, 50 points; Outline, 25 points*

Communication Technology in Everyday Life Speech (with PowerPoint slides)

Technology has had a profound effect on the way we communicate. This assignment asks you to explore those effects in more depth. Incorporating concepts from the large lecture like media richness, communication competence, and message factors, and using PowerPoint slides as a visual aid, you will present a speech informing your audience about a particular communication technology used in everyday life. This technology should be something you think currently or potentially has an impact on the way people communicate. The more specific your topic, the better your speech will be. For example, rather than speaking about video games, you might instead speak about the use of video games to train military soldiers. Instead of informing your class about the World Wide Web, you might explain the use of the Second Life virtual world by politicians, or the use of Facebook or MySpace for social networking. See BlackBoard documents for more information. Outline with APA-style References page and a printout of the 4-5 PowerPoint slides used as visual aids *due on date listed on schedule*.

Time limit: *4-5 minutes*

Research: *At least 4 sources*

Point values: *Speech, 75 points; Outline, 50 points; PowerPoint slides, 25 points*

Civic Engagement Speech

Communicating in groups is or will be a part of our work and private lives. Likewise, the importance of becoming engaged in issues that affect us and the community in which we live is increasing as our communities become more diverse, more fractured, and more impacted by social, environmental, and economic issues. In this presentation, you and your group (yes, this is a group assignment) will compel your audience to take action on an issue that is significant to their lives. The topic for this speech will likely address a controversy of a political, social, economic, cultural, or religious nature. This speech is *not* simply a speech about your or your group's opinion on the topic; it will include researched sources that support your arguments. Outline with APA-style References page *due on date listed on schedule*. At least 5 visual aids are required.

Time limit: *10-15 minutes*

Research: *At least 10 sources*

Point values: *Speech, 100 points; Outline, 100 points*

Point value breakdown for speech:

75 points based on group presentation

15 points based on individual performance

10 points from evaluation by group members

Outside Communication Event Analysis

It is one thing to watch your peers give a presentation in a classroom, but you begin to appreciate the many facets of communication when start to examine communication events that take place outside the classroom. This assignment asks you to attend a communication event outside of your COMM 103 and other classes. After attending a public presentation that takes place on or off campus (*not* a presentation made in any of your classes), you will apply class concepts and evaluate the presentation in a 2 page paper. See the schedule for the due date. See BlackBoard course documents for more details. There is no research required other than incorporating concepts from the textbook.

Pages: 2

Research: 1 source—the textbook

HOW WILL I BE GRADED ON ASSIGNMENTS?

You will better understand your grades on speeches and outlines if you remember that an “A” is not average; average performance on class assignments is rewarded with a “C.” In other words, a “C” *means that you have simply met the minimum requirements for a particular assignment.*

The grade descriptions COMM 103 instructors abide by are as follows:

C = Satisfactory performance, the most common undergraduate grade. Average work in which the student has met the minimum requirements and expectations. Specifically, a “C” speech:

- Conforms to the type of speech assigned, fulfills all requirements of the speech (e.g., visual aids) and is ready for presentation on the assigned date.
- Includes a clear thesis and an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Illustrates a basic understanding of organization, language choice, nonverbal displays, and visual aid use.
- Contains disfluencies, verbal stumbles, and other characteristics that may be distracting to an audience.

B = Praiseworthy performance; Above average work demonstrating an understanding of skills and material that exceeds the minimum requirements. Specifically, a “B” speech is one that satisfies the requirements of a “C” speech *and*:

- Supports main points with evidence that is accurate, relevant to the topic, and sufficient to aid in the audience’s understanding of that topic.
- Is delivered in a way that does not distract attention from the speaker’s message.
- Illustrates proficiency in organization, language choice, nonverbal displays, and visual aid use.

A = Outstanding achievement; Outstanding work demonstrating an in-depth understanding of skills and material that far surpasses the minimum expectations of a student in the class. Specifically, an “A” speech is one that satisfies all the requirements of a “B” speech *and*:

- Constitutes a genuine contribution to the knowledge and thinking of the audience.
- Is delivered in a fluent, polished manner that strengthens the impact of the speaker’s message.
- Illustrates a mastery of organization, language choice, nonverbal displays, and visual aid use.

D = Minimally passing; Below average work in which the student does not meet the minimum expectations for a given assignment.

F = Failing; Below average work in which little or no effort seems to have been expended by the student.

Details on university course grading policies (e.g., failing grades, incomplete grade, course withdrawal, etc.) may be found in the current SDSU official course catalog, or in the official SDSU Senate Academic Policy document: http://senate.sdsu.edu/policy/policy_file.pdf.

WHAT’S THE GRADING SCALE FOR THIS CLASS?

This course uses a total point grading system, in which your final letter grade is based on your total points earned in the class over the course of the semester. The grading scale for this class is as follows:

930-1000	=	A	730-769	=	C
900-929	=	A-	700-729	=	C-
870-899	=	B+	670-699	=	D+
830-869	=	B	630-669	=	D
800-829	=	B-	600-629	=	D-
770-799	=	C+	< 599	=	F

DO YOU CURVE GRADES OR BUMP UP TO THE NEXT GRADE?

Final grades are just that: *final*. Please do not ask your instructor to “bump” you up, regardless of how close you are to the next grades. Grades are *not* curved for any assignments. You may look at your final grade and see that you’re 1% away from the next highest grade. In this grading scale, however, 1% equals 10 points, which could be the entire value of one quiz or activity. So, no, you will not get bumped up even if you’re 1% or 2% away from the next highest grade.

HOW MANY POINTS IS EACH ASSIGNMENT WORTH?

Assignment	Point Values	My Score
<i>Presentations</i>	250 points (25% of grade)	
Speech of Introduction	25 points	
Cultural Artifact Speech	50 points	
Communication Technology in Everyday Life	75 points	
Civic Engagement Speech (Group Presentation)	100 points—See breakdown below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 points group presentation • 15 points for individual performance • 10 points based on other group members’ evaluation of you 	
<i>Written Assignments</i>	225 points (22.5 % of grade)	
Cultural Artifact Speech Outline	25 points	
Communication Technology in Everyday Life Outline	50 points	
Communication Technology in Everyday Life PP slides	25 points	
Civic Engagement Speech Outline	100 points	
Outside Communication Event Analysis	25 points	
<i>Participation</i>	200 points (20 % of grade)	
Large Lecture Participation (CPS Responses—“clickers”)	100 points	
<i>Small Section Participation (see below)</i>	100 points—See breakdown below	
Peer Evaluations on Presentations	• 5 points x 4 presentations = 20 points	
Self-Evaluations on Presentations	• 5 points x 4 presentations = 20 points	
In-Class Activities	• 5 points x 10 activities = 50 points	
Class Discussion	• 10 points	
<i>Exams and Quizzes</i>	325 points (32.5 % of grade)	
Quizzes (given in small section)	25 points	
Exam #1 (50 multiple choice questions x 3 points each)	150 points	
Exam #2 (50 multiple choice questions x 3 points each)	150 points	
<i>Total Points</i>	1000 points	

WHAT IS THE ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR THE LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SECTION?

Large Lectures

It is essential that you attend lecture and discussion sessions for this course every week. In **large lecture**, you will learn about communication theory, communication contexts, and competent communication in a variety of contexts. You’ll be asked to apply in your presentations certain

concepts addressed in the large lectures. Additionally, midterm and final exams will be primarily comprised of lecture material. Some of the topics covered in lecture are not in the textbook nor addressed in your discussion section, so you must attend lecture to know the material. If you do not attend large lecture, you will also miss participation points garnered through the use of the Classroom Performance System (“clickers”). NOTE: We will offer more than 100 possible points to ensure that students who experience technical glitches with their clickers get ample opportunities to get the full participation points.

Discussion Sections

Since you’ll be presenting your speeches in the small section, attendance is mandatory. In **discussion section** meetings you will receive important instructions about assignments and work closely with your instructor and classmates to increase your communication skills.

No more than three absences from your discussion section are permitted during the semester. In other words, you can miss three discussion classes without penalty. After three unexcused absences, *your final letter grade for the course will drop one step with EACH subsequent absence.* For example, a course grade of B- will become a C+, then a C, then a C-, etc. Note: It is possible for an “A” student to fail this course due to absences.

Attendance on speech days is mandatory. Failure to attend a scheduled speech day—even if you are not presenting that day—results in *two* unexcused absences. If you are unable to attend class due to a serious illness or emergency, you must provide official documentation to your instructor, who may excuse your absence.

Please arrive to lecture and discussion on time. If you are late to large lecture, you may miss participation points. *If you are late to your discussion section three times, it will result in one unexcused absence.*

WHAT ABOUT CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR? WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME?

Respect is an integral aspect of this course. You must demonstrate respect for your instructor and classmates at all times. Degrading, offensive, disruptive, and disrespectful language and behavior will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior includes the use of cell phones and mp3 players during class, so please turn off your cell phones and remove any unrelated reading material from your desk.

IS LATE WORK ACCEPTED?

There are no make-ups for speeches or written work unless the student provides *documented proof* of an emergency or illness, or participation in a university-sponsored activity. A doctor’s notes must include a phone number. Don’t be surprised if your instructor calls this number to verify your absence. *Late work will NOT be accepted if turned in to the School of Communication office.*

Speeches

Failure to give your presentation on the day assigned to you without proper documentation or a university-sanctioned absence will result in a dramatically reduced grade for the assignment (see below). The speeches are scheduled to provide each student with a reasonable amount of time to speak, including the set-up of visual aids and debriefing or discussion time. As such, it’s important that you not only stay within the time limits for each speech but that you speak on the day to which you are assigned.

For unexcused absences on speech days, your instructor will deduct 10% from the total possible points for that speech for *each day* the speech is late. If you miss your speech day, it is your responsibility to approach your instructor to request a possible makeup date. Trading speech days with a classmate requires instructor approval in advance.

Written Work

It is your responsibility to complete and submit all written work, typed and according to assignment guidelines at the beginning of the specified class period. Late work will be marked down 25% and will *not* be accepted after the next discussion section meeting subsequent to the deadline.

WHAT ARE THE POLICIES AND PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM?

To prepare students for their college careers, the instructors of COMM 103 make concerted efforts to prevent plagiarism by teaching students competent research techniques and the proper citation of scholarly assignments.

That said, plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is not tolerated in coursework. The instructors in this course apply the SDSU plagiarism policy in its strictest form. If plagiarism is detected and confirmed, the result will be a zero for the assignment and may result in failure of the course, as well as academic sanctions that include probation, suspension, or expulsion from the university. For details see the section on Cheating and Plagiarism in the SDSU Academic Senate policy (http://senate.sdsu.edu/policy/policy_file.pdf). Also read the separate COMM 103 plagiarism document for details on what might constitute plagiarism, and how to best avoid it.

WHAT IS TURNITIN.COM? DO I HAVE TO USE IT?

Your COMM 103 instructors aren't simply out to catch students plagiarizing. We'd rather help you prevent it before it happens. As part of our effort to prevent plagiarism, all written assignments are subject to submission for review of textual similarity at Turnitin.com. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Students may submit papers in such a way that no identifying information is included.

Students may request, in writing, that a paper not be submitted to Turnitin.com. However, this option will require you to provide documentation to substantiate that the paper is the original work of the student.

MY PARENTS WANT TO BUY MY PLANE TICKET TO GO HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS. CAN I TAKE THE FINAL EXAM AHEAD OF TIME? CAN I MAKE-UP THE EXAM I'M GOING TO MISS?

As per university policy, the final exam *must* be administered on the official final exam date for the discussion section. This date is determined by the university and based on the meeting time of the discussion section; see the online SDSU final exam schedule for details. Make-up exams are permitted only for reasons recognized by the university, such as participation in a university-sponsored activity, a documented illness, or serious emergency. Previously purchased airline tickets or family vacations/gatherings do *NOT* meet these standards.

HOW WILL I KNOW HOW I'M DOING IN CLASS? CAN I PERIODICALLY CHECK MY GRADE?

All assignment scores will be posted on your small section BlackBoard site. You can keep track of your large lecture participation on the large lecture BlackBoard site. You will also receive your graded assignments handed back to you in a timely manner. But it is your responsibility to keep track of grades and to be sure that your scores have been posted correctly. Students should retain all graded assignments until the final, official course grade has been posted. If you have questions or concerns about your grading, feel free to contact your instructor during office hours.

WHAT THIS CLICKER FOR? DO I NEED IT? HOW WILL WE BE USING IT IN CLASS?

See <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/its/blackboard/student/resources/clickers.html> for instructions on getting started.

What is a "clicker"?*

"Clickers," keypads which wirelessly transmit student input to a receiver connected to a computer, enable more interaction between students and faculty in classroom learning situations.

In Summer 2006, SDSU standardized the eInstruction CPS radio frequency (RF) response system after a selection process which included input from SDSU faculty and students, as well as from other universities with more experience with response systems. Students can purchase clickers in the bookstore and use them in any class where a response system is used.

I'm in a class which uses clickers. What should I do?

1. Buy a clicker in the bookstore, if you haven't already. A clicker should show up on the class materials list if an instructor requires you to use a clicker. When you purchase your clicker, you will also receive a slip of paper with an enrollment/registration code. Be sure to keep this safe!
2. Follow the appropriate set of directions below to register your clicker.
3. Bring your clicker to class and be ready to use it!
4. NOTE: Batteries are supposed to last at least a year, but do make sure to change them when the battery meter indicates that they are low.

Where do I get technical support for registering or using my clicker?

eInstruction provides free technical support for students. See <http://www.einstruction.com> for information on the hours of support and different means of support, which include:

- Live Chat (see link on their [technical support website](#))
- Toll-free phone (1-888-333-4988)
- Email (techsupp@einstruction.com, or use the [form](#) linked to the tech support website)
- Searchable [knowledge base](#) with answers to questions

How do I register my clicker through Blackboard?

Note: Follow this process if your instructor told you to register through Blackboard. If you are unsure, check with your instructor first.

1. Log on to your [Blackboard](#) account.
2. Enter the course in which you will be using your clicker.

* (Adapted from <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/its/blackboard/student/resources/clickers.html>)

3. Find and click the CPS Connection button. This may be a main button on the left, or you may first need to click the Tools button to find it.
4. Click Register Clicker OR Update your serial number.
5. Enter your keypad serial number in the space provided. You can find your serial number on your LCD screen when you turn on your clicker (press and hold the power button when the clicker is off in order to keep your serial number on the screen).
6. **CRITICAL:** Unless you already have a CPSONline username and password, enter the enrollment/registration code you got packaged with your clicker. If you do not enter this code, you will be asked to pay additional fees, **UNLESS** you have already registered your clicker for another class, in which case you do not need to re-enter this code (and doing so will probably result in an error message that the code is already in use).
7. Read the student refund policy, and check the box indicating that you have done so.
8. If you already have a CPSONline Username and Password (because you already registered your clicker in a different class), enter it in the space provided. If you've never registered your clicker before, create a CPSONline Username and Password. Click Submit.
9. On the next screen, you will see a message about needing to continue to register your clicker for the class. Click Continue to Register Pad For This Class.
10. You may see a couple of messages and have to click buttons a couple of times. (If you are asked to pay more, **DO NOT!** Go back to step 6 and be sure to enter this registration code.) The last message you see regarding your pad number may be useful to you in class, depending on how your instructor runs the clicker sessions. It's a good idea to keep track of it for now.
11. If at the end of the process you get a "Bad Request" error message, you may safely ignore it.