Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum

*Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum*

**Foundational Component Area: Communication**

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Communication. Courses in this category focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively. Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

COMM 203 Public Speaking requires the integration of intellectual, critical and performance capabilities in the pursuit of delivering speeches in the public realm. Students must select and focus 'assignment specific' topics, hone a thesis, employ research skills to locate, evaluate, select and cite appropriate supporting material, develop logical arguments and other forms of persuasion, design visual aids to illustrate points and to bolster arguments, deliver speeches orally and display visual aids appropriately. Formal, full-sentence written outlines with source citations and are required and support each speech. However, speeches are subsequently delivered extemporaneously to insure that the student is fully familiar with the speech topic, content and organization; and as a matter of audience adaptation to ensure that neither outlines nor manuscripts are ever read to the audience. Each message must be adjusted appropriately for the audience to maintain the face and line of the interaction with the goal of achieving communication competence in the public sphere. At least one of the major speeches is conducted in a group format. Therefore each of the aforementioned elements is achieved in a team environment as well. Students prepare and deliver four major speeches (at least one of which is in a group) and listen to and critique approximately 90 peer speeches per semester. Each student listens to and critiques his or her own speeches, too.

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**Core Objectives**

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

**Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):**

- **Learning Outcome 1:** Select speech topics and organizational patterns to satisfy the rhetorical situation as articulated in the speaking assignment. Students receive four distinct speaking assignments (to include at least one informative speech and one persuasive speech.) Students must analyze the requirements of the assignment and choose an assignment adjusted, audience adjusted, time adjusted topic to satisfy the elements of the rhetorical situation. Students engage variously in brainstorming, mind-mapping, social comparison, surveying, multiple drafting and negotiated adjustment to balance creativity and innovation with convergence. A grading rubric based on National Communication Association standards is used to assess the extent to which the topic is sufficiently focused as well as whether the most optimum organizational pattern was employed.

- **Learning Outcome 2:** Research, select, and develop appropriate background and supporting material to support and extend the purpose of the speech and with consideration for the audience. Students receive instruction on source credibility, question interrogation, evaluation of information and use of information to prove and to explain claims made in the speech. Students are instructed in the "COMMLab" computer room
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regarding the use and evaluation of searchable databases, ejournals and other quality secondary sources. Some attention is
given to the use of primary sources. Students receive reading assignments and lectures on proof vs explanations and an
evaluation of sources employed in a variety of speeches, both peer and public. A grading rubric based on National
Communication Association standards is used to assess the extent to which the supporting material is well researched,
appropriately selected and well developed and audience adjusted.

Learning Outcome 6: Respond to questions from the audience.

Students receive instruction on listening and responding to questions, and also to response strategies in 'hostile'
audience situations. Drawing from the “responsive classroom” and research on engagement strategies, students are taught
to ask for “questions or comments” and are informed of subtle wording differences that tend to cue an audience to be more
or less engaged in the ‘Q&A’ portion of a speech. At least two of the speeches include a required ‘Q&A’ portion.
Departmental rubric on responding to questions from the audience is used to assess this outcome.

Learning Outcome 7: Produce and integrate sensory aids (including computer generated visual aids) to support their
message and with respect and sensitivity for the audience.

Students receive instruction on the appropriate use of powerpoint and are required to display data in charts or
graphs, photos, embedded video clips as appropriate to the supporting material. The use of ‘bulleted-points’ is limited but
not prohibited. Instruction in color, font, animation (use rarely) with respect to effectiveness and choice of symbols with
respect to effectiveness and audience adaptation are discussed. Smooth integration of the powerpoint including
appropriate display times, orientation to the display and explanation of the display are taught, too. A grading rubric based
on National Communication Association standards is used to assess the extent to which sensory aids (mostly visual aids) are
displayed and integrated to support the speech goals.

Learning Outcome 8: Critique their own speeches and the speeches of others with respect to invention, arrangement,
language, style, critical thinking, and delivery

Students produce formal, full-sentence outlines for each of the four major, graded speeches. Through the use of
readings, lecture and outline templates, students are lead through the principles of balance and of subordination to and
outline that is both a planning and invention document as well as a document that is diagnostic in nature. The outline also
establishes a common vocabulary to use in criticism of invention, arrangement, language, style and critical thinking.
Students cite sources in the body of the outline using MLA or APA style and include a complete bibliography or works cited
page. Students are required also to cite sources orally during the delivery of their speeches. Students participate in peer
evaluation of speeches. Each student must complete a self-evaluation of each of his or her own speeches. These
evaluations include criticism of delivery, too. Outlines, peer-evaluations and self-evaluations are evaluated by criteria
articulated in chapters 9, 10 and 11 of Lucas’, The Art of Public Speaking.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and
visual communication):

Learning Outcome 3: Cite background and supporting material orally during the speech, in writing in the text of the full-
sentence outline and in the bibliography.

Students are referred to source citation guides posted on the library.tamu.edu website and on the Purdue
University OWL for standard forms of source citation. Students are provided a minimum number of sources they must cite
per speech. Source citation is evaluated by applying the citation guideline criteria to evaluation of the outlines and
bibliography. A tally of sources cited is made.

Learning Outcome 4: Deliver speeches extemporaneously from a set of limited notes and within the specified time frame.

Students view example speeches of extemporaneous delivery. Additionally, models of converting a full-sentence
outline to a limited set of notes are provided in class and in the textbook for the course. Practice is encouraged to bring the
speech in within the generous 2 minute time variation. Finally, justification and explanations are offered through lecture
and reading for the reasons that extemporaneous, timed delivery are important. Extemporaneous delivery and timed speaking are evaluated through direct observation of the ‘limited set of note’ and through the use of a stopwatch.
Additionally, each speech is recorded digitally and time can be double checked from that source, too.
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Learning Outcome 5: Express ideas artfully, both verbally and nonverbally, with respect and sensitivity for themselves and their audience.

Students receive instruction regarding the power of language and the use of nonverbal communication as a means of influence, both intentional and unintentional. The artful use of linguistic devices, both common (simile, metaphor, antithesis, for example) and less well known (antistrophe, scala, chiasmus, for example) is discussed and practiced during in-class activities. Cultural awareness and rhetorical sensitivity are discussed in lecture and readings. A grading rubric based on National Communication Association standards is used to assess the use of language and of delivery in speeches.

Learning Outcome 6: Respond to questions from the audience.

Students receive instruction on listening and responding to questions, and also to response strategies in ‘hostile’ audience situations. Drawing from the “responsive classroom” and research on engagement strategies, students are taught to ask for “questions or comments” and are informed of subtle wording differences that tend to cue an audience to be more or less engaged in the ‘Q&A’ portion of a speech. At least two of the speeches include a required ‘Q&A’ portion. Departmental rubric on responding to questions from the audience is used to assess this outcome.

Learning Outcome 7: Produce and integrate sensory aids (including computer generated visual aids) to support their message and with respect and sensitivity for the audience.

Students receive instruction on the appropriate use of powerpoint and are required to display data in charts or graphs, photos, embedded video clips as appropriate to the supporting material. The use of ‘bulleted points’ is limited but not prohibited. Instruction in color, font, animation (use rarely) with respect to effectiveness and choice of symbols with respect to effectiveness and audience adaptation are discussed. Smooth integration of the powerpoint including appropriate display times, orientation to the display and explanation of the display are taught, too. A grading rubric based on National Communication Association standards is used to assess the extent to which sensory aids (mostly visual aids) are displayed and integrated to support the speech goals.

Learning Outcome 8: Critique their own speeches and the speeches of others with respect to invention, arrangement, language, style, critical thinking, and delivery

Students produce formal, full-sentence outlines for each of the four major, graded speeches. Through the use of readings, lecture and outline templates, students are lead thorough the principles of balance and of subordination to and outline that is both a planning and invention document as well as a document that is diagnostic in nature. The outline also establishes a common vocabulary to use in criticism of invention, arrangement, language, style and critical thinking. Students cite sources in the body of the outline using MLA or APA style and include a complete bibliography or works cited page. Students are required also to cite sources orally during the delivery of their speeches. Students participate in peer evaluation of speeches. Each student must complete a self-evaluation of each of his or her own speeches. These evaluations include criticism of delivery, too. Outlines, peer-evaluations and self-evaluations are evaluated by criteria articulated in chapters 9, 10 and 11 of Lucas’, The Art of Public Speaking.

Teamwork (to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal):

Learning Outcome 9: Work with a team to develop and deliver a speech.

Students are introduced to the format for group presentations through lecture and readings. Each team works with its members to accomplish Learning Outcomes 1 thru 8 (described in other sections of this document) from a team perspective. Teams work through the process of joint decision making for topic selection, research, audience adaptation, visual aids selection and construction, language choices, delivery coaching, etc. Each member of the team receives the same grade based on National Communication Association standards and departmental rubric with up to a letter grade earned based on individual performance of appropriate transitions.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making):

Learning Outcome 3: Cite background and supporting material orally during the speech, in writing in the text of the full-sentence outline and in the bibliography.
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Students are referred to source citation guides posted at library.tamu.edu and on the Purdue University OWL for standard forms of source citation. Students are provided a minimum number of sources they must cite per speech. Source citation is evaluated by applying the citation guideline criteria to evaluation of the outlines and bibliography. A tally of sources cited is made.

Learning Outcome 5: Express ideas artfully, both verbally and nonverbally, with respect and sensitivity for themselves and their audience.

Students receive instruction regarding the power of language and the use of nonverbal communication as a means of influence, both intentional and unintentional. The artful use of linguistic devices, both common (simile, metaphor, antithesis, for example) and less well known (antistrope, scala, chiasmus, for example) is discussed and practiced during in-class activities. Cultural awareness and rhetorical sensitivity are discussed in lecture and readings. A grading rubric based on National Communication Association standards is used to assess the use of language and of delivery in speeches.

Learning Outcome 6: Respond to questions from the audience.

Students receive instruction on listening and responding to questions, and also to response strategies in ‘hostile’ audience situations. Drawing from the “responsive classroom” and research on engagement strategies, students are taught to ask for “questions or comments” and are informed of subtle wording differences that tend to cue an audience to be more or less engaged in the ‘Q&A’ portion of a speech. At least two of the speeches include a required ‘Q&A’ portion. Departmental rubric on responding to questions from the audience is used to assess this outcome.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.