Syllabus: Communication for Technical Professions

Nancy Street
Office hours TR 8-10
Phone: instructors do not have telephones

Course Director: Inst. Prof. Nancy Street
Phone: 979-862-6968

Course Description
Design and presentation of oral reports for technical professions; incorporation of visual and graphic materials into presentation required; written reports required.

Learning Outcomes
The successful student will:
1. Deliver technical speeches for specified audiences.
2. Write technical information for specified audiences.
3. Work with a team to develop and deliver technical presentations.
4. Select appropriate topic and organizational pattern to meet given assignment
5. Research the topic and select information that best supports the purpose of the speech
6. Cite scholarly sources in oral and written communication
7. Deliver extemporaneous speeches within time constraints
8. Respond to questions from the audience
9. Produce and integrate visual and graphic materials sensory aids to support the message and with respect and sensity for the audience.
10. Critique his/her speeches and those speeches of others with respect to invention, arrangement, language, style, critical thinking and delivery

*Please see additional information about Core Curriculum Components of this course on page 5 of the syllabus.

Required Texts and Materials
Disanza and Legge AND Thill and Bovee Communication for the Technical Professions ebook available with code through local bookstores or available directly from pearson.com www.pearsoncustom.com/tamu/comm205
N. Street Packet for COMM 205, Spring 2013 posted on elearning.
Print this packet single-sided and bring to class each day throughout the semester.
All materials posted on elearning
USB stick

Grading
The course grade will be calculated from these assignments with these weights.
Project One 10%: Speech One/Outline & Bibliography
Project Two 25%: Speech Two/Outline & Bibliography 15% and FAQ paper 10%
Project Three 20%: Speech Three/Outline & Bibliography
Project Four 25%: Speech Four/Outline & Bibliography 15% and Group Wiki 10%
Homework 10%: 4 self-evals @15 pts. & 2 group pres. planning sheets @ 20 pts.
Quizzes10% : 4 @ 25 pts. 10%

The final course grade will be assigned like this:
A= 89.5-100+  B= 79.5-89.4  C=69.5-79.4  D=59.5-69.4  F=0-59.4

Students may rest assured that this scale will be applied uniformly. Please do not request that the scale be applied to your grade in a different manner.

Extra credit is never offered on an individual basis. If extra credit is offered, it will be offered to the entire course and only by the Course Director.
**Attendance**

Class is going to be so great that we think that you'll want to attend every session, however, **Attendance is required at each meeting of COMM 205.** Students shall arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. Attendance is documented by the student’s full signature on the daily sign-in sheet. Students may have three (3) unexcused absences however no make-up work is available for unexcused absences. Therefore, the student shall not have an unexcused absence on days the student is to deliver a speech, turn in homework or take an exam or quiz.

Make-up work is available for students with excused absences in accordance with Student Rules. Please see Student Rule [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07) To document an excused absence: We do NOT accept the *Texas A&M University Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class.* With the exception of religious observances, students must provide written documentation of an excused absence, from a healthcare provider for illnesses or injuries too severe or contagious for a student to attend class, or from the appropriate official able to document other University excused absences [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07).

Please note that job interviews are NOT excused absences. Student shall use their three unexcused absences for job interviews and schedule such interviews at times that do not conflict with class.

**Assignments**

**PROJECT ONE: Speech One-Career Aspirations (worth 10% of course grade)**

Deliver an informative presentation about a career or job within an industry associated with your present major. You have chosen your major for a reason and this presentation will give you the opportunity to articulate one possible career option. Not only will it help you think about what you want to do after college, it will help you learn how connect your expertise to serving society. In this speech you should:

- Describe the tasks of career/job and why it is important for society
- Describe knowledge & expertise required for the job
- Describe why you have personal interest in this job

**Speaker:** Individual  
**Audience:** Public/society  
**Purpose:** Informative  
**Presentation minimal requirements:**  
- Extemporaneous presentation  
- Full sentence outline & key word (speaking) outline  
- 3 sources required (oral citations, written outline citations, bibliography)  
- 4 minutes long (3-5 minutes allowed)

**PROJECT TWO: Speech Two-What’s it all About Symposium (worth 15% of course grade) and FAQ paper (worth 10% of course grade)**

Deliver: *An informative symposium about recent technical developments related to your field of study.*  
**Group presentation in symposium format**  
**Speaker:** Individual speaker as part of a team  
**Audience:** Public/society  
**Purpose:** Informative  
**Presentation minimum requirements:**  
- 5 minutes per speaker  
- 4 sources per speaker (oral citations, written outline citations, bibliography)  
- 2-3 main points per speaker  
- Full sentence outline per speaker  
- Powerpoint presentation by each speaker incorporating visual and graphic material  
- 15% of course grade (90% of the grade is derived from individual performance. 10% based on meeting group coordination. See elearning for rubric.)

Write: an FAQ document about technical aspects of your field of study related to Speech Two.  
**Individual paper—do NOT collaborate in any way**  
5 substantive and distinct questions related to the technical development featured in Speech Two. Each answer shall be supported by at least one source of information (scholarly paper, technical documentation, interview with expert) Sources may or may not be duplicative of sources for speech two.  
**Typed, double spaced**  
**Bibliography formatted to APA**
PROJECT THREE: Speech Three-Here’s What You Need (worth 20% of course grade)
Professionals in technical fields frequently sell products or services and/or propose projects. For this assignment, you will work as an individual to prepare either a sales presentation for a product or service OR to propose a project. Details of the assignment are posted on elearning.
Speaker: Individual
Audience: Well educated funding agents and/or executives who are not necessarily experts in your field.
Purpose: Persuasive
Presentation minimum requirements:
- Extemporaneous presentation
- Individual speech 7 minutes plus 2 minute Q&A
- Full sentence outline & key word (speaking) outline
- 5 sources required (oral citations, written outline citations, bibliography)
- PowerPoint slides as visual support by each speaker incorporating visual and graphic material

PROJECT FOUR: Speech Four-We Can Fix That (15% of course grade) and Group Wiki (10% of course grade)
Create: Group wiki (worth 10% of course grade): Collaborative social media tools are especially common to the technical professions, which is why we are creating wiki pages in this class. Our wiki project is in alignment with Speech #4, "We Can Fix That." For that project, each student will be assigned to a group. The group will select a controversial issue representing risk or crisis and relevant to her/his chosen field(s) and give a persuasive speech representing each side (see more on elearning). For the wiki, the five partners are to create a wiki page in order to research a problem (crisis or risk) that needs a solution within your chosen industry. The topic should be timely, or, should address a current problem. Each group’s wiki, when completed, will be between 2500-3000 words (the equivalent 8-10 double-spaced, Times New Roman printed pages.) While there are stringent academic guidelines to this project, you are encouraged to utilize the interactive features of the wiki. Feel free to post videos from YouTube or elsewhere, create a hyperlinked section for further reading, post pictures, graphs, FAQs, etc. The Wiki will include an Executive Summary (concise; bullets are acceptable) Have fun. This assignment is a challenge but isn’t nearly as complex or time-consuming as it may seem at first. The Wiki site I’ve chosen is simple to use (it’s designed for K-12...that’s right...K) and I’ll be prompt in answering questions. (Adapted with permission from "Wikis for Commies", unpublished by Lucas Logan, MA)
Deliver: Speech Four: “DON’T WORRY-WE CAN FIX THAT” (worth 15% of course grade) In groups (5 members) you will research a problem that needs a solution within your chosen industry. This problem may represent a risk or it may represent a crisis. The topic should be timely, or, should address a current problem. Students will work in teams assigned by the instructor.
- The organizational structure of the speech will be specified in documents posted on elearning.
- The assignment will be supported by the team's wiki.
- You will be trying to persuade a well educated but general audience of policy makers to adopt your policy/plan that will fix the problem identified.
- You will conduct library research but you will also be required to interview an expert to gain a better understanding of this problem and feasible solutions.
- Group members will be evaluated individually on their presentation of their aspect of the problem and/or solution, and the group will be graded as a whole on the Wiki.
- You will conduct library research, but you will also be required to interview an expert to gain a better understanding of this problem and feasible solutions.
Purpose: Persuasive
Presentation minimum requirements:
- Extemporaneous presentation
- Each member should speak for 5 minutes.
- Full sentence outline & key word (speaking) outline
- 4 sources required/per speaker (oral citations, written outline citations, bibliography, 1 mandatory interview with expert (professor or industry)
- PowerPoint slides as visual support by each speaker incorporating visual and graphic material
15% of course grade (90% of the grade is derived from individual performance. 10% based on meeting group coordination. See elearning for rubric.)

**Homework:** Students will complete a self-evaluation assignment following each speech. Forms provided in Packet for COMM 205 on elearning. Students will complete Group Presentation planning sheet prior to each of the two group presentations. Forms provided in Packet for COMM 205 on elearning.

**Quizzes:** Four quizzes over the readings for the course will be given online through elearning on the day specified in the calendar. Quizzes will be multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank and/or brief essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues, Jan 15</td>
<td>Intro to course and speech warm-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs, Jan 17</td>
<td>Topic selection and audience</td>
<td>EBC Chap 11</td>
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<td>Tues, Jan 22</td>
<td>Organization and outlining</td>
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<td>Thurs, Jan 24</td>
<td>Introduction and conclusions</td>
<td>EBC Chap 12</td>
<td>Quiz I</td>
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<td>Tues, Jan 29</td>
<td>Speech I (speakers 1-6) Ethics</td>
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<td>Thurs, Jan 31</td>
<td>Speech I (speakers 7-12) Listening</td>
<td>EBC Chap 14</td>
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<td>Tues, Feb 5</td>
<td>Speech I (speakers 13-18) Language</td>
<td>EBC Chap 13</td>
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<td>Tues, Feb 7</td>
<td>Speech I (speakers 19-25) Summary</td>
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<td>Tues, Feb 12</td>
<td>COMMLab Day</td>
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<td>Library Resources</td>
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<td>Evaluating Sources</td>
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<td>Thurs, Feb 14</td>
<td>Speaking in Teams and Groups</td>
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<td>Groups assigned</td>
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<td>Team Wiki assigned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues, Feb 19</td>
<td>Writing FAQ's for a lay audience</td>
<td>BPC Chap 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs, Feb 21</td>
<td>Visual Aids, graphs, graphics, charts,</td>
<td>BPC 10 and 11</td>
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<td>Tues, Feb 26</td>
<td>Proposal Presentations</td>
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<td>Thurs, Feb 28</td>
<td>Speech II (Groups I and II)</td>
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<td>Tues, Mar 5</td>
<td>Speech II (Groups III and IV)</td>
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<td>Thurs, Mar 7</td>
<td>Speech II (Group V)</td>
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<td><strong>Spring Break!!</strong></td>
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<td>Tues, Mar 19</td>
<td>Persuasion: Assign Projects III and IV.</td>
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<td>Thurs, Mar 21</td>
<td>Persuasion</td>
<td>Quiz III</td>
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<td>Tues, Mar 26</td>
<td>Persuasion</td>
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<td>Thurs, Mar 28</td>
<td>Speech III (speakers 1-6)</td>
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<td>Tues, Apr 2</td>
<td>Speech III (speakers 7-12)</td>
<td>BPC 12</td>
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<td>Thurs, Apr 4</td>
<td>Speech III (speakers 13-18)</td>
<td>BPC 13</td>
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<td>Tues, Apr 9</td>
<td>Speech III (speakers 19-25)</td>
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<td>Thurs, Apr 11</td>
<td>Risk Communication</td>
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<td>Tues, Apr 16</td>
<td>Crisis Communication</td>
<td>Quiz IV</td>
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<td>Thurs, Apr 18</td>
<td>Speech IV (Groups III and IV)</td>
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<td>Tues, Apr 23</td>
<td>Speech IV (Groups V and I)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs, Apr 25</td>
<td>Speech IV (Group II) and course wrap-up.</td>
<td>Bring laptop, smart phones, etc. to class today.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit http://disability.tamu.edu.

**Academic Integrity Statement and Policy**
Do not cheat in this course. Do not commit scholastic dishonesty of any kind. **Students who commit scholastic dishonesty will earn an F** on the transcript for this course. See the Aggie Honor System website for additional information on Scholastic Dishonesty and the Honor Council Rules and Procedures http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

*This course addresses the core curriculum at Texas A&M for Communication through these foundational components:

**Critical Thinking** which includes creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information. While the course works together as a whole to nurture critical thinking, Learning Outcomes 3,4,5,8,9 and 10, support especially the tenets of critical thinking.

**Communication** which includes effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, aural and visual communication. While the course works together as a whole to develop communication, Learning Outcomes 1,2,6,7,8,9 and 10, support especially the tenets of communication.

**Teamwork** which includes the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal. Learning Outcome 3 supports especially the tenets of teamwork, however, each of the other Learning Outcomes is addressed in the context of team presentations.

**Personal Responsibility** which includes the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision making. While the course works together as a whole to nurture personal responsibility, Learning Outcomes 6,7 and 8 support especially the tenets of personal responsibility.