



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Communication and Performance

COMM 2025-915
Fundamentals of Communication
Fall 2021

Syllabus

Contact Information

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Office: Campus Center Building, Room 104

Instructor Availability

As with almost all things, COVID-19 has altered how we conduct ourselves in professional settings. Some of my work will be from home and some will be in my office in the Campus Center Building, room 104. In order to accommodate your time and comfort level with COVID, I will be asking that all office hours be on request through Zoom. Anyone that wishes to meet will need to make a request through my official ETSU email. I will reply and coordinate a date and time to meet on zoom. As an alternative, you are also welcome to email me with any issues you may be having and we can discuss it that way as well.

Meetings and Location

This is an online, asynchronous class, meaning that there will not be scheduled meetings. Instead, the lectures and power points for the classes will be recorded and posted on D2L for you. You will be expected to login and keep up with the postings.

Online Course Information

All material will be presented and turned in using the D2L platform.

All material will be available on a week-to-week basis. The course is **not** self-paced, and assignments will be due on designated dates.

Mission Statement

The Department of Communication and Performance advances the understanding of communication by focusing on the ways people communicate with each other personally and

professionally, embracing the complexity of human diversity, and examining the ways in which identity and meaning are created through the stories we tell and are told.

Line of Reporting

If you have concerns about this course or the instructor, you should take the following steps.

1. Discuss the matter *first* with the course instructor.

Talk with your course instructor about your concern. If your concern is unsatisfactorily addressed with your instructor, you can then take your concern to Step 2 below.

2. Discuss the matter with the Department Chair.

After you have attempted to work with your instructor on the matter, if a satisfactory resolution is not found, you can then contact Dr. Amber Kinser, Chair of the Department of Communication and Performance kinsera@etsu.edu. Be prepared to discuss what steps you have taken with the instructor. Except in confidential matters, the Chair will confer with the faculty member and review the course policies as stated in the syllabus to determine an appropriate response. If your concern is unsatisfactorily addressed with the Department Chair, you may then take your concern to next step, which the chair can identify for you.

Course Information

Credit Hours

This course is worth 3 credit hours.

Course Description and Purpose

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to communication theory and practice in various contexts, as well as developing presentation skills. Please note, this is *not* a public speaking course.

Course Goals

This course aims to teach you how to do the following things: (1) Recognize communication as a science, a process, and the foundation for all learning; (2) Prepare and deliver effective oral presentations; (3) Learn and apply research skills; (4) Demonstrate verbal and nonverbal competencies; (5) Display and understanding, appreciation, and application of fundamental communication principles.

Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to:

- a. familiarize students with communication studies as a discipline
- b. explore communication in contexts, including interpersonal, group, intercultural, and public communication
- c. enhance students listening skills
- d. develop research skills for presentations
- e. provide opportunities to prepare and give presentations
- f. explore how to communicate mindful of diversity

Course Requirements

Textbooks and Materials

The textbook for this class is **FREE!** It is an Open Educational Resource (OER), called “Communication in the Real World- An Introduction to Communication Studies.” It can be accessed at [this link](#). I would recommend that you bookmark this link in a way that will be easy to access the rest of the semester. There is also an option at that link for you to download the book as a pdf that you can access when needed.

We will also be using supplemental readings and videos during the semester. All materials will be provided to you on D2L.

Technical Requirements

You will need regular computer access to Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and an Adobe PDF program to view some documents. You should also have access to a webcam and microphone, as well as a video player such as Quicktime, and speakers. You will also be accessing your ETSU email and D2L regularly and will need know how to work your Zoom account.

Course Assignments, Policies, and Expectations

Classroom and Communication Policies

Email Communication

All emails should be sent from your ETSU email address, as stated in ETSU policy. Emails should be professional. They need to include a greeting, your course and section number, and a signature. Please check spelling and grammar prior to sending your message. Give me 24 hours to respond to your original email. If I have not responded after that time frame, please email me again. **I check email from 8:15 AM-4:30 PM during the work week and periodically on the weekends.** Emails sent outside of that time frame will be tended to the next business day.

Diversity in the Classroom

I and this class environment recognize and affirm the importance of diversity. You will be interacting with people who have different thoughts, beliefs, and backgrounds than you. It is expected that you be respectful of these differences and that you truly listen to your classmates. Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other identities **will not be tolerated.**

If you experience any discrimination in this class at the hands of a classmate, please let me know. I am here to listen to and support you.

Attendance and Participation

As this is an asynchronous class, there is not a “regularly” scheduled class for you to attend. What you will need to attend to, however, is the class postings and assignments that will be taken care of on D2L. You will need to make it a habit to check in several times a week to make sure you are keeping up to date with postings and assignments. The freedom of online courses can be amazing but be careful not to fall behind. The best way to prevent falling behind is to attend to things as they come available. I am going to have over 70 students this semester. I will do my best to stay vigilant

of your performance in this class, but you can help me greatly by staying on top of things on your end. If I notice you falling behind, you can expect an e-mail from me asking to meet with me to figure out what we need to do to get you caught back up.

Departmental Presentation Day Policy

It is always preferred that arrangements are made in advance if you will not be in class for a presentation. That said, you will only be allowed to make up a missed presentation if the absence was unforeseeable, unpreventable, and urgent in nature. You must document the absence with the instructor within {24} hours of the absence.

This includes virtual attendance. You will be assigned a day to attend a Zoom meeting and perform your speech. If you aren't able to attend that meeting due to the above unforeseen circumstances, you will need to follow the above policy.

Group Work Policy

When working with a group for the group project, it is critical that you participate so you and the group can be successful. If you are experiencing difficulties with a member of your group (i.e. not hearing back from them, no effort in helping create the speeches/projects, etc.), **your team may choose to fire the problematic team member at least 4 full days before your assignment is due.** Telling me about difficulties later than that or after the assignment has been done is not helpful and will not result in any action being taken.

If you decide to fire a team member, the following action must be taken:

- (1) You must provide me with evidence of the team member's lack of participation (i.e. unanswered emails, text messages, group chats, etc.). Evidence should come from a series of events (i.e. missing one meeting, not responding to one message, having a circumstance that limits participation such as illness/death in the family/etc. is not sufficient enough for firing someone). You must document what events have happened leading to the group's decision to fire the team member (i.e. meetings unattended, unanswered emails and other communications, etc.) and turn that into me.
- (2) If I deem the evidence to be sufficient for firing, you will contact the team member (copy me on the email), present the evidence to them, and let them know the group has chosen to fire them.
- (3) Any fired team members will have to coordinate with me with how they intend to complete the assignment. It is the fired team member's responsibility to set up this alternative. I will not reach out/contact them to set it up. Long story short, be a good team member and work well together.

Testing Policy

All tests will be taken on D2L. They will be open for the duration of the week (Monday-Sunday) and will close at 11:59 PM on the Sunday they are due. Once opened, you will have one hour to complete the test. You will have one attempt to complete the test. Being that the tests will be open for such a long period of time, there will be no excuses accepted for not completing them in the time given. If you wait until the last minute to perform the test and run into issues, there will be nothing I can do for you. My suggestion is to take the tests early enough that you can respond to any issues that could come up.

Late and Missing Submission Policy

As a student, one of your primary responsibilities is to make sure you are handing your work in on time. As an online class, this responsibility is amplified, meaning that it will be even more important to stay aware of due dates and getting your work submitted on time. As a result, no late work is accepted in this class.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism, misrepresentation, fabrication, and/or cheating are not tolerated at any academic institution. This class is no exception. Any such infraction will result in an automatic 0/F on the assignment, as well as a report to the Dean's Office. You can read more about ETSU's Academic Misconduct Policy [here](#).

Assignments and Submission Guidelines

- a. The Course Contract. Must be signed/put into D2L Dropbox after reading the syllabus. (15 points)
- b. Syllabus Quiz. You'll be taking this multiple choice quiz to help reinforce for you the objectives, the goals, assignments, etc. for the course. (10 points)
- c. Informative Presentation. A 4-5 minute presentation on a topic chosen in coordination with your instructor. There is a three source requirement (sources must be credible) for this presentation. Sources must be verbally cited throughout the presentation (author, title, date). Please note: All outlines are due on the same date, no matter what day you upload your recorded presentation. (Outlines worth 50 points. Presentation worth 75 points.)
- d. Elevator Pitch #1. This 30 second assignment is to help you pitch yourself, your talents, and skills to a potential employer. (25 points)
- e. Elevator Pitch #2. Same as Elevator Pitch #1, expanded to 1 minute. (50 points)
- f. Presentation Critiques. Being a competent communicator includes the ability to listen and observe. Using the information you have learned so far from the Presentation Evaluation Form (PEF) Lecture – and utilizing the PEFs provided to you on D2L–critique the presentations. Submit completed PEFs into D2L's Dropbox. (Each is worth 10 points)
- g. LinkedIn Project. LinkedIn has become the #1 site for job hunters and for businesses. Your job is to create as complete a profile as possible, including Intro, About, Experience, Education, and Skills sections. *You must connect with your instructor.* (50 points)

- h. Discussion Board Post Participation. About midpoint in the semester, we will utilize D2L's discussion boards to communicate with each other on various topics throughout the semester. At points during the semester on Monday mornings I will post a discussion board prompt on D2L in the form of a quote from the text or a question regarding the readings or lecture. Each student must post a response to this prompt, as well as one reply to posts by other students. (10 points each)
- i. Online Quizzes: These online multiple choice quizzes will cover all the readings and the lectures in our course. They are timed at 120 minutes. Remember to save after you answer every question. Incomplete exams get a 0. Technical difficulties are NOT the responsibility of the professor or instructors. If you don't like a grade you received on your quiz don't freak out. You have the option to take the quiz an unlimited number of times and we will record only the highest grade you received. There are no make-ups of online quiz – at all. Why? Because they will be open for three days, so you have plenty of time to take them. (Each is worth 20 points)
- j. Motivational Presentation. A 6-7 minute presentation on a topic chosen in coordination with your breakout instructor. There is a 4 source requirement (sources must be credible) for this presentation. Sources must be verbally cited throughout the presentation (author, title, date). Please note: All presentation outlines are due on the same date. No matter what day your presentation is assigned, you *must* submit your sentence outline in the Dropbox by the due date. (Outlines worth 50 points. Presentation worth 100 points.)

Extra Credit

Extra credit may or may not be offered over the course of the semester. Any extra credit opportunities will have deadlines and will add points to your final point total, not your final average.

Grading Policy

A = 93-100; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 65-66; F = 0-64

Student Services and Technical Resources

Student Services

The [ETSU Services webpage](#) includes a comprehensive list of services available to all ETSU students.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

It is the [policy](#) of ETSU to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law and the University's commitment to equal educational access. Any student with a disability who needs accommodations, for example arrangement for examinations or seating placement, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Faculty accommodation forms are provided to students through Disability Services in the D.P. Culp Center, Room 326, telephone 423-439-8346.

[Visit the Disability Services webpage for more information.](#)

Counseling Services

If you find yourself feeling weary, anxious, overwhelmed, or depressed during the semester, I highly encourage you to contact the Counseling Center. They can provide you with a variety of helpful options. Call them at (423)-439-3333, or [visit their website](#).

Undergraduate Student Success Specialist

The USSS office can assist you in many of the stresses of being a student. They can direct you to many of our campus resources. Call them at (423)-439-5641, or [visit their website](#) for more information.

Technical Resources

Help Desk

The Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk is the best resource for most technical problems. Find answers to common questions on the [Help Desk website](#), call, email, or stop in to see them on the first floor of the Sherrod Library. Phone: 423-439-4648 Email: itshelp@etsu.edu

Desire2Learn (D2L) Online Help

Many answers to D2L related questions can be found on the [D2L Help Student Home](#). If you are still having trouble finding what you need, contact the Help Desk.

Microsoft Office Software

Microsoft Office productivity applications, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, and more, are available free for students through the University's Office 365 campus agreement. For instructions on how to obtain the software, see the [Office 365 page of the ITS Help Desk website](#).

Turnitin Plagiarism Detection

Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service available to students and faculty at ETSU. This tool compares student written work against a comprehensive database of other work as well as various internet sources. Faculty may employ this service for some or all written assignments, in order to help students learn to cite sources accurately and to ensure academic integrity. Learn more on the [Turnitin home page](#).

ETSU Technical Resources

Many other technical resources can be found on the [Online Help webpage](#).

University Information

Syllabus Attachment

The [ETSU syllabus attachment](#) includes important material such as permits and overrides, advisement, hours, dates and other ETSU information.

ETSU Catalogs

[Current Undergraduate Catalog](#)

[Current Graduate Catalog](#)

Inclement Weather Policy

In the instance of inclement weather, we [will follow university protocol](#). I will email you to let you know our class plans. You are responsible for checking your ETSU email and following through with those plans. In the case of snow days, I may upload an audio/video lecture to D2L to avoid changing our class schedule. You are responsible for listening to the content of that lecture.