

Comm 8: Group Communication

Course Syllabus

**Course:** COMM-1-95030

**Instructor**: Ricardo Martinez

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**Preferred Method of Communication:** Canvas inbox

**Office Hours:** By appointment

| Graphical user interface  Description automatically generated | **Required Material**   1. Textbook: Rothwell, J. Dan. *In Mixed Company: Communicating in Small Groups and Teams*. 10th ed. Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0190919900. **Note**: The 9th and 8th edition will also be acceptable. Additional readings will be assigned and available on Canvas. 2. 3x5 or 4x6 note cards. 3. Reliable internet access. Smart phone, tablet, or laptop and a Zoom account to access to perform and record speeches remotely. If you need to borrow a laptop from the college, [visit this resource page](https://www.reedleycollege.edu/covid-19/online/additional-student-resources.html). 4. Mandatory Meetings: August 9, October 18-29, and November 19-December 10.   **Recommended Material**   1. Grammarly. This is an extension that checks grammar. You can download to your computer, and I believe other devices. The free version will benefit your speech outlines, papers, emails, and anything you write on your device. 2. Canvas Student App. Download this to your phone or tablet and turn on notifications for Grades and Announcements so you can be quickly notified of important information. |
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# Drop Dates

| **August 20** | If you are thinking about dropping the class, make sure you do so by August 20th for a full refund. |
| --- | --- |
| **August 27** | Last day students can add the course and the last day students may drop without receiving a “W.” |
| **October 8** | Last day students can drop and receive a “W.” |
| **Automatic drop policy** | If you fail to attend and participate within the first three weeks (August 27), I will drop you from the class. In other words, fail to submit any weekly post AND the pick-me speech on time, then you will be removed from the class as you will begin to fall behind. After that date, it is YOUR responsibility to remove yourself from the class. |

# Course Overview

Fundamentals of public speaking utilizing theories and techniques of communication enhance public speaking skills. Particular emphasis will be on the organization and criticism of public discourse. This will be achieved through research, reasoning, presentations, and the evaluation of various types of speeches which include informative and persuasive speeches.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and apply effective communication strategies that are grounded in group theories.
2. Construct and deliver dynamic and competent presentations that are adapted to the purpose and audience.
3. Utilize organizational patterns and research materials that incorporate sufficient, credible, relevant evidence.
4. Explain the principles of human communication by critically evaluating public speeches through constructive critique and self-analysis.

Course Objectives

In the process of completing this course, students will:

1. Identify roles individuals play in groups and understand how those roles to group goals.
2. Utilize team-building strategies to strengthen group dynamics, leadership skills, reasoned decision making.
3. Analyze and employ effective conflict management strategies that will assist with problem solving.
4. Identify barriers to listening and incorporate effective strategies.
5. Learn and apply key aspects of verbal and nonverbal communication to small group situations.
6. Learn how perceptions, values and culture can affect communication.
7. Incorporate goal setting, planning, decision making and implementation into group projects.
8. Develop skill in extemporaneous speaking for informative, and persuasive presentations (may also include ceremonial presentations)
9. Utilize practical assignments and exercises that will reinforce theoretical group concepts.
10. Present a variety of speeches and will be expected to present for approximately 25 minutes each during the course of the semester.

# Course Policies

## Attendance/Drops

Attendance is crucial in a communication course, but especially in an online course. Roll will be taken weekly through a poll or other assignment (every Friday). If you do not log in and complete this weekly poll/assignment, you will be marked absent.

You will also be **required to log in “live” for the first day of orientation** and to present the informative and persuasive speeches. These speeches will be presented “live” on Zoom and you will sign up for a time that works for your group members.

Absences will be excused for extenuating circumstances only. Please send me a message explaining the reason for your absence for the week and together we will determine the best course of action. Please plan in advance when you sign up for your speech date and choose a time you know you are able to attend. A grade “0” will be assigned if you miss a speech or quiz without an acceptable excuse (which may lead to you failing the class-see “Speeches” section).

You will be considered a **No-Show** day one, if you do complete the first check-in and **will be dropped from the course**.

You will be considered a **Non-Participant** if you fail to complete all the assignments in the first three weeks and **will be dropped from the course**. If there are extenuating circumstances for your nonparticipation, please contact me as soon as possible.

## Late Work

Assignment due dates are clearly indicated for each assignment. Late assignments will be accepted only for unavoidable circumstances, after being reviewed by the instructor and with up to a 20% reduction in points. Quizzes must be completed by the assigned due dates. If you do not take the quiz by the due date, you will forfeit your points. Group speeches cannot be individually recorded/made-up.

## Communicating With You

**Canvas inbox** – I will send you a direct message through Canvas often. Please make sure your Canvas notification settings are set to send an email to your school account.

**Announcements** – I will be posting Announcements on Canvas often. Announcements will remind you about major due dates and other important information. Make sure your settings are configured to notify you of new announcements.

**Course Modules** – There will be a course module for each week, which will contain a start here page (gives you a to-do list), lecture discussions, readings, and assignments/quizzes.

## Communicating With Me

**Canvas Inbox** – If you need to contact me directly, please use the inbox first. I will respond to your message within 24 hours during weekdays. If I fail to respond to you after 24 hours and it is not the weekend, feel free to send a follow-up message.

Canvas messages automatically forward to my email and will be notified when you sent a message; you do not need to send a message through both Canvas and Email. **When sending a message, clearly state your question, and include your name and class section (e.g., COMM-8-95030).**

**Email** – if Canvas is down, you may send me an email to [ricardo.martinez@reedleycollege.edu](mailto:ricardo.martinez@reedleycollege.edu). When sending an email, please use your school-assigned email only. Also, please remember to clearly state your question, and include your name and class section (COMM-8-95030).

**Canvas Café Q&A** – You may ask questions here that you think might be of interest to other students. All students are encouraged to respond if they know the answer and can be of assistance. If a student hasn’t responded to you in a week, I will reply here as well.

## Participation

Even though this class is not face-to-face, you are expected to actively participate in lecture discussions and speeches. You will also be asked to give peer evaluations on speech days; both oral and written. Therefore, **plan on arriving to your Zoom hour on time and remaining until all students have presented their part of the group speech**. If you have a job or other commitment that will regularly keep you from participating, please take this class at another time.

## Students with Disabilities

Reedley College recommends that students with disabilities discuss academic accommodations with their professors during the first two weeks of class. This syllabus and course handouts are available in alternate media upon request.

With the transition to an online format, I have made effort to make this course accessible to all students, including students with disabilities. If you encounter a problem accessing anything in this course, please contact me immediately by email so that I can support you. You may also contact Disability Resource Center at [dsps@reedleycollege.edu](mailto:dsps@reedleycollege.edu).

## Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Any act of cheating or plagiarism, whether large or small, will be treated the same. Students who are caught cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment, you will receive an “F” on the assignment in question and will be reported to the dean. Steps for reporting a student for plagiarism is detailed below.

1. Complete the Incident Report from promptly after discovering the academic dishonesty and submit directly to the Dean of Instruction. Do not copy other faculty members within the department.
2. The Dean of Instruction will review the incident for legitimacy and verify with repeat incident list.
3. The Dean of Instruction will meet with the student in person to discuss the charges.
4. If the student is found guilty of academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism, the Dean of Instruction will compose a letter of reprimand, one copy of which will be sent to the student’s permanent address, and one copy of which be filed in the student’s permanent file.

## Changes with the Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus throughout the course of the semester. Any changes made to the course syllabus will be done in the best interest of the students. Changes may be announced verbally or online. It is your responsibility to make sure you are informed about any changes that occur.

# Course Grades

Your grade in this class will be based on the points that you earn in the following activities/assignments.

| **Assignment Name** | **Points Possible** | **My Score** | **Due Date (TENTATIVE)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pick-Me Speech | 5 |  | August 20 |
| Quiz 1 | 7.5 |  | September 17 |
| Group Identity Speech | 7 |  | September 24 |
| Quiz 2 | 7.5 |  | October 15 |
| Group Informative Speech | 15  (5 individual /10 group) |  | October 18-25 |
| …Proposal | 2 (one per group) |  | October 8 |
| …Outline/Bibliography | 5.5 (one per group) |  | October 18-25 |
| …Peer Evaluation | 2 |  | October 18-25 |
| …Reflection Paper | 2 |  | October 31 |
| Group Persuasive Speech | 20  (10 individual /10 group) |  | November 29-December 10 |
| …Proposal | 2 (one per group) |  | November 19 |
| …Outline/Bibliography | 5.5 (one per group) |  | November 29-December 10 |
| …Peer Evaluation | 2 |  | November 29-December 10 |
| …Reflection Paper | 2 |  | December 10 |
| Quiz 3/Final | 10 |  | December 10 |
| Participation | 5 |  | Throughout |
| \*Extra Credit Opportunities | \*5 Max |  | TBA |
| Total Points Possible | 100 |  |

## Assignments by Percentage

| **Assignment Name** | **Percentage** |
| --- | --- |
| Speeches (4) | 45% |
| Speech Attachments (9) | 25% |
| Quizzes (3) | 25% |
| Participation | 5% |
| Total Percentage | 100% |

## Grade Scale

| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage** | **Points** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | 90 – 100% | 90 – 100 |
| B | 80 – 89% | 80 – 89 |
| C | 70 – 79% | 70 – 79 |
| D | 60 – 69% | 60 – 69 |
| F | 0 – 59% | 0 – 59 |

# Course Assignment Descriptions

## Speeches

All speeches will be done remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions. There will be a total of four presentations. The first two speeches will be recorded and posted on Canvas, while the latter two speeches (informative and persuasive) will all be performed live via Zoom with your group. I want to make this absolutely clear; you cannot make up a speech you miss. You cannot pre-record your portion of your speech for your group. You cannot complete an alternative assignment in place of missing the group presentation. If you are not ready to work as a group member, I suggest taking this class at a different time.

1. **Pick-Me Speech** – You will introduce yourself to the class in a fun way. You will record this speech and submit by 11:59 pm August 20. This is a credit/no credit assignment. Presentations should be 1-2 minutes in length. There are NO Make-Ups.
2. **Group Identity Speech** – As a group, you will establish an identity and begin with a small group task that will prepare you for working in groups for major tasks (informative and persuasive speeches). This assignment will ask you to write a code of conduct contract and prepare a group speech on how to present on Zoom. Presentations should be 3-5 minutes in length (each member will speak for 30-60 seconds for their part of the speech).
3. **Group Informative Speech** – As a group, you will create a survival guide for maintaining academic success during remote learning. Presentations should be 20-25 minutes in length (4-5 minutes per person for their part in the body of the speech, plus an intro and conclusion).
4. **Group Persuasive Speech** – Each group will be a business/company pitching a product, service, or company idea. Presentations should be 20-25 minutes in length (4-5 minutes per person for their part in the body of the speech, plus an intro and conclusion).

In total, **speeches will be worth 45% of your grade**. Also, if you read this far, you will receive an award. Email the professor by August 13, 2021, 11:59 pm for extra credit using the phrase “speech extra credit.”

## Speech Attachments

The informative and persuasive speeches will require more than simply the performance that will be presented live on Zoom. You will be responsible for submitting an accompanying proposal, outline, peer evaluation, and a reflection paper.

1. **Proposal** – As a group, you will submit a proposal to seek approval for your upcoming presentation. The proposal should be approximately 250 words. Examples will be given on Canvas.
2. **Outline/Bibliography** – As a group, you will submit one outline with a bibliography page attached in APA format. An outline is a prepared document that is written in list format as opposed to essay or script format. Examples will be given on Canvas.
3. **Peer evaluation** – Each member must submit an individual peer evaluation sheet. This will discuss how each group member participated. Examples will be given on Canvas.
4. **Reflection paper** – After the informative and persuasive speeches, you (as an individual) will spend some time reflecting on both content and delivery of your performance. Then, you will type a 1-page self-evaluation discussing what you did well, what you could improve upon, and how you can make improvements. Examples will be given on Canvas.

## Quizzes

There will be 3 scheduled quizzes in this class. The quizzes will be based on the readings from the textbook. The quizzes will be multiple-choice and true-false questions. The third quiz will take place of your final exam. Each exam will be based on the previous scheduled readings rather than a culminative exam.

# GROUP RESPONSIBILITY

It is essential that each group member take his or her responsibility seriously. **Groups will create rules early on and group members will have the right to remove another group member for not adhering to the rules**. Problems must be documented, and both the group member and instructor must be informed of the problem. Procedures will be discussed as to how a group member can be “voted off the island” – everyone needs to be aware that a student cannot pass this class without a group. It is imperative that you follow the rules and do your share to avoid losing your group. Any group member who does have their work completed when an assignment is due will be dismissed from the group by the instructor.

# Keys to Success in College

1. **Develop good daily habits**. Winners and losers have the same goals. The real separation between the two is who has the daily habits that yields the desired results. The following list provides you with good habits to have as a student.
2. **Good notes = Good grades**. Write down (do not type) the key points of the lecture or your textbook without writing down too much extraneous information.
3. **Stay organized**. Keep a detailed calendar with all your commitments, including classwork, social events, and extracurricular activities. This way, you can block out time each day to study.
4. **Set boundaries**. Block out time to focus on school, while also giving yourself time for hobbies and outside interests. Find a place/time to study. Also, find a place/time to take a break.
5. **Study smarter, not harder**. Do not cram for a test. Pace yourself and find time to study a little each day. Do not overstudy. Focus more on key ideas rather than nonessential ones.
6. **Take responsibility for your learning**. Ask questions in class. Be self-sufficient by trying to find the answers yourself in your notes, textbook, online, the syllabus, or the class material provided on Canvas. Check your grades regularly. Check and apply feedback from your professor.

# Keys to Success in This Course

1. **Prep Time**. Public speaking is annoyingly time consuming, much more than you expect, if you want to be even remotely good at it. Most problems can be avoided with earlier and more thorough prep and more…
2. **Rehearsal**. It takes an average of 8-10 complete rehearsals to be fully prepared for a presentation. And when you’re prepared and confident you won’t have a problem with…
3. **Timing**. You have to time your speech when you rehearse. Learning to fit your presentation into a given time frame can be a challenge but a necessary evil. Going overtime not only gives the impression that you’re unprepared, but it also makes you appear inconsiderate of your listeners and their time.
4. **Follow Guidelines/Directions**. Use the assignment descriptions, outline format description and samples, and the critique sheets. The critique sheets are designed to also function as checklists, so you can be sure your speech includes all the necessary elements and smaller requirements. This means you have to…
5. **Check Canvas Regularly**. Canvas will have all of the assignment requirements and explanations and useful and practical information that I expect you to be familiar with and to utilize, even though you may not be tested over the material. The “test” is how well you actually incorporate the material into your speeches. If you’re having trouble accessing any online material, please let me know and I will email you a copy. I suggest checking Canvas at least twice a week.
6. **Critiques/Feedback**. Please use the comments and feedback that I give you on your rubrics as specific suggestions as to what and how to improve on future speeches. I also want my critiques to show you why the speech received the grade it did. Please see me to discuss your critiques if you have any questions about them. Also, utilize the ’24-hour rule’ before disputing any grade. Finally, if you read this far, you will receive an award. Email the professor by August 13, 2021, 11:59 pm for extra credit using the phrase “keys to success extra credit.”

# Additional Policies

1. The instructor reserves the right to rearrange any or all parts of the scheduled activities and/or work identified in this listing. The rights extend to assignments, evaluation, and all other aspects of the course.
2. **All work, oral or written, MUST be completed on the assigned day**. Late work will not be accepted and will result in a grade zero. Medical excuses and/or excruciating circumstances are up to the discretion of the instructor. See “Late Work Policy” at the end of the syllabus for more detail.
3. **Cameras on during Zoom**. Over 90% of communication is non-verbal, so it is key for social learning for you to have your cameras on during these class sessions. This is especially true during break-out rooms and during speeches (regardless of who is speaking). You may use a virtual background for privacy concerns. If you still have concerns over this, feel free to let me know in advance and we could work something out.
4. **It is the responsibility of the student to formerly withdraw from this course** with the admissions office by the drop date should they feel it’s necessary. Do not assume that the instructor will drop you should you decide to stop showing up to class and stop submitting homework at some point throughout the semester. Failure to do so will result in receiving an “F” in this course at the end of the semester.
5. **Students with disabilities that may require assistance are reminded that it is your responsibility to identify yourself to the Disability Resource Center** and to your instructor so reasonable accommodations for learning and evaluation within the course can be made.
6. **Cheating and Plagiarism will not be tolerated**. Plagiarism is lazy, unoriginal, and has no place in academia. I will enforce the college policy on cheating and plagiarism.
7. I highly encourage you to reach out to me if you have any questions throughout the semester. **I literally get paid to help you to learn**.
8. **It is your responsibility to monitor your progress in this class**. I do not search out students to inform them of their grades. I expect you to keep track of your score as the semester progresses. I would strongly suggest you keep every assignment/work that you do in this class as proof of your status at least until the end of the semester.

# Tentative Course Schedule

The readings refer to chapters in the text and/or articles that should be read BEFORE you attend class. Whenever there is assigned reading, there are reading quizzes that will be available and due on the corresponding day. **Please note that presentation days, due dates, and holidays are in bold type.** Also note that days in highlight are required meeting days on Zoom.

| **Dates** | **Topics** | **Assignments** | **Readings** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| August 9 - 13 | Course orientation |  | Course syllabus |
| **August 16 - 20** | Anxiety management  **Pick-Me Speeches** | **Speeches due** |  |
| August 23 - 27 | Communication competence  Virtual groups and social media |  | Chapter 1 and 12 |
| August 30 - September 3 | Group systems  Group development |  | Chapter 2 and 3 |
| September 6 - 10 | Group climate  Group roles |  | Chapter 4 and 5 |
| **September 13 - 17** | **Quiz 1** |  |  |
| **September 20 - 24** | **Group Identity Speeches** | **House Rules and speeches due** |  |
| September 27 - October 1 | Leadership  Developing effective teams |  | Chapter 6 and 7 |
| October 4 - 8 | Decision Making/Problem Solving part 1 and 2 | **Proposal due** | Chapter 8 and 9 |
| **October 11 - October 15** | **Quiz 2** |  |  |
| **October 18 - 22** | **Informative Speeches** | **Peer evaluations, outlines, and speeches due** |  |
| **October 25 - 29** | **Informative Speeches** | **Peer evaluations, outlines, and speeches due** |  |
| November 1 - 5 | Power in groups  Conflict management |  | Chapter 10 and 11 |
| November 8 - 12 | Persuasive Strategies |  |  |
| November 15 - 19 | Work in groups | **Proposal due** |  |
| **November 22 - 26** | **Holiday – No class** |  |  |
| November 29 - December 3 | **Persuasive Speeches** | **Peer evaluations, outlines, and speeches due** |  |
| December 6 - 10 | **Persuasive Speeches**  **Quiz 3** | **Peer evaluations, outlines, and speeches due** |  |