COMM 101: Fundamentals of Communication
Department of Communication
Fall 2022

Lab Instructor: Juhee Park(she/her/hers), email: jpark264@gmu.edu, Horizon Hall 5220, office hours 9-10am on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays or by appointment. Students who want to join the meeting remotely can join through https://gmu.zoom.us/j/93130317143?pwd=T25kMU5WVEk0VjNoNWV2MzMwdVNVdz09.
Note: Office hours are times that I have set aside specially to meet with students. Please stop anytime by to talk about the course, ask questions, get feedback on drafts, and to get to know each other! If the times I have set aside already don't work for you, please email me to set an appointment for another time.
Online Lecture Instructor: Dr. Melissa Broeckelman-Post (she/her/hers), mbroecke@gmu.edu, Horizon Hall 5216, office hours 4-5pm on Tuesdays or by appointment
Lab meeting time: Mondays, 12:30-2:20pm
Lab meeting location: West Hall 1007

Required Texts

Ruiz-Mesa, K., & Broeckelman-Post, M. A. (2022). *Inclusive Public Speaking: Communicating in a Diverse World.* Customized for George Mason University, 2022-2023 Edition. Southlake, TX: Fountainhead. Available via Top Hat.

All readings for this course will be through the Top Hat digital learning platform, which hosts this semester's online textbook. Each chapter of the text has questions embedded throughout the text, which will be part of your grade for this course. Additionally, all course lectures will be built into the Top Hat textbook. The textbook can be purchased directly through Top Hat (less expensive) or through the GMU Bookstore, where you will purchase a code and then log in to Top Hat to join the course textbook.

Top Hat link: https://app.tophat.com/e/772270

If you are new to Top Hat and don't have an account, watch this orientation video to learn more: https://youtu.be/kKM34vlcCbQ. If you have any trouble signing into Top Hat or gaining access to the course, or find yourself in the wrong section in Top Hat, email support@Top Hat.com. Top Hat will give you a short free trial, but after that, you must purchase access to the textbook in order for your responses to be recorded for a grade.

We will also be using Blackboard in this class. For the best experience with Blackboard and Top Hat, please use Google Chrome as your primary browser.

Course Description

This is a comprehensive communication skills course that will equip you with the communication skills that you will need to be successful in your future courses, careers, and communities. In this course, you will learn how to conduct research for, organize, and deliver effective presentations that allow you to explain complex ideas, persuade, and advocate for change. You will learn how to build and sustain meaningful relationships as well as manage conflict in those relationships. You will also develop the small group and leadership skills that will help you work successfully on teams. All of these skills will be embedded within a diversity and equity context so that you can understand, analyze, adapt messages for, and demonstrate respect and consideration for the multitude of audiences with whom you will communicate in a range of intercultural, personal, and professional contexts.

Mason Core Outcomes for Oral Communication

Oral communication competency at George Mason University is defined as the ability to use oral communication as a way of thinking and learning as well as sharing ideas with others. The Mason Core program identifies numerous learning goals in oral communication, which are addressed in COMM 101: Fundamentals of Communication. The Mason Core outcomes for this course include the following:

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of and proficiency in constructing and delivering multiple message types.
2. Students will understand and practice effective elements of ethical verbal and nonverbal communication.
3. Students will develop analytical skills and critical listening skills.
4. Students will understand the influence of culture in communication and will know how to cope with cultural differences when presenting information to an audience.

Course Learning Objectives

It is important that you learn to develop your communication skills and that you learn how to present your findings to others. *This is both a theory and a skills course, and our primary goal is for you to gain competence in a variety of interpersonal, public speaking, and small group communication situations.* In order to achieve our goal, we will engage in various activities, assignments, etc. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Monitor your own verbal and nonverbal communication practices, understand the role of culture and perception in interactions, and communicate ethically and effectively in interpersonal, public speaking, and group communication interactions.
2. Identify and explain fundamental communication processes, including models of communication, language, nonverbal communication, and listening.
3. Practice effective listening in order to understand, evaluate, and respond to others' messages.
4. Understand how interpersonal relationships develop and are maintained, and analyze and manage interpersonal conflict situations.
5. Conduct research and evaluate the quality of support materials and their appropriateness for use when explaining complex ideas to non-expert audiences.
6. Prepare full-sentence outlines and deliver speeches that include appropriate organization, well-supported claims, reasoned arguments, effective delivery, presentation aids (including PowerPoint), and adaptation to a specific audience and rhetorical situation.
7. Participate effectively in a small group to accomplish a team-based problem-solving task and be able to analyze and utilize the most appropriate leadership styles, task roles, and maintenance roles for that specific small group situation.

Grades

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

A+	97-100 (970-1000)	B	83-86 (830-869)	D	60-69 (600-699)
A	93-96 (930-969)	B-	80-82 (800-829)	F	59 or less (0-599)
A-	90-92 (900-929)	C+	77-79 (770-799)		
B+	87-89 (870-899)	C	70-76 (700-769)		

Please note that the final grade will be based on the number of points earned, not the percentage, and final grades will not be rounded up.

Incomplete grades will not be given in this course except in rare cases in which students have completed the course but are prevented from submitting the final assignment due to a documented serious medical emergency or other excused absence that truly cannot be avoided. In these cases, students should contact their instructor immediately to make arrangements. Instructors may defer to the Basic Course Director to determine if an Incomplete is warranted.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Details about all assignments are included in this textbook (in Top Hat), and additional resources for completing the assignments and examples of these assignments are available in Blackboard. Grades will be posted on Blackboard and will be earned by completing and submitting the following assignments by their respective deadlines.

Assignment	Points Possible
Explanatory Speech	
Explanatory Speech Draft	10
Explanatory Final Outline & PowerPoint	25
Explanatory Speech	125
Exploring Positionalities and Relationships Assignment	
EPR Team Presentation Final Outline	25
EPR Team Presentation	125
Deliberative Dialogue	
Collaborative Annotated Bibliography	25
Group Proposal	25
Deliberative Dialogue Final Outline	25
Presentation & Q&A	125
Reflection Paper & Group Assessment	25
Content Assessment	
Units in Top Hat (13 units x 25 points/unit)	325
Participation	
Communication Center Visit	15
Research Credit (or 2nd Comm Center Visit)	15
Pre-Survey	15
Post-Survey	15
Attendance and Participation (includes workshops and other in-class activities)	80
Total Points Possible	**1000**

Tentative Schedule

Week	Do before class	Do during class	How attendance & participation points are earned
1 (AUG22)	**Do in Blackboard** • Read syllabus • Watch welcome video **Read in Top Hat** • Welcome to Inclusive Public Speaking (including Introduction to the Course) • Introductory Speech Assignment **Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 1- Why Communication Matters • Ch. 2- Understanding Communication	• Syllabus overview and introduction to the course • **In-class introductory speeches**	• Deliver introductory speech • Full participation in class activities and discussions
2 (AUG29)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 3- Understanding Public Speaking • Ch. 4- Finding and Using Evidence **Read in Top Hat** • Explanatory Speech Assignment **Do in Blackboard** • Complete pre-course survey	• Introduce the Explanatory Speech assignment • Source Evaluation Activity • **Pre-Course survey is due by 5pm on Friday, September 2**	• Full participation in class activities and discussions
3 (SEP12)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 5- Designing Messages and Organizing Ideas • Ch. 6- Explaining Concepts	• Explanatory Speech Plan	• Full participation in class activities and discussions • Completion of source evaluation activity and explanatory speech plan during class activities
4 (SEP19)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 7- Presenting Yourself as a Speaker **Read in Top Hat** • Giving Quality Feedback **Do in Blackboard** • Upload draft explanatory speech outline for instructor feedback	• In-class outline peer workshop—bring your laptops and hard copies of your outlines	• Full participation in class activities and discussions • Bring outline to class, participate in peer workshop, and provide feedback to classmates
5 (SEP26)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 8- Analyzing and Adapting to a Diverse Audience	• In-class delivery workshop	• Full participation in class activities and discussions • Participate in peer workshop, which includes both practicing your speech for feedback from others and giving feedback to others

6 (OCT3)	Practice your speech. This is a great time to visit the Communication Center! **Do in Blackboard** • Upload Explanatory Speech Final Outline and PowerPoint	**Explanatory Speeches**	• Complete peer-evaluations of other speakers, participate as audience member when not speaking
7 (OCT11*)	Practice your speech. This is a great time to visit the Communication Center! If you are speaking on this day and have updated your PPt, please upload the updated version to Blackboard before class.	**Explanatory Speeches**	• Complete peer-evaluations of other speakers, participate as audience member when not speaking
8 (OCT17)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 9- Building and Sustaining Relationships • Ch. 10- Being a Critical Consumer of Messages **Read in Top Hat** • Exploring Positionalities and Relationships Speech Assignment	• Talk about EPR assignment & choose partners. Set a time to meet with your partner in-person or online to conduct your EPR Interview during the upcoming week.	• Full participation in class activities and discussions • Work with partner to identify meeting time
9 (OCT24)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 11- Expressing Disagreement and Managing Conflict in Relationships		• Full participation in class activities and discussions
10 (OCT31)	Practice your speech with your partner. This is a great time to visit the Communication Center! **Do in Blackboard** • Upload EPR Speech Final Outline and interview questionnaire	**Exploring Positionalities and Relationships Presentations**	• Complete peer-evaluations of other speakers, participate as audience member when not speaking
11 (NOV7)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 12- Communicating Successfully in Teams **Read in Top Hat** • Deliberative Dialogue Capstone Assignment	• Introduce and explain Deliberative Dialogue (DD) Assignment • Assign groups for DD	• Full participation in class activities and discussions
12 (NOV14)	**Units to complete in Top Hat** • Ch. 13- Advocating and Persuading	**Deliberative Dialogue Day 1:** Select and explore the problem that your group will address. Decide how you will collaborate with one another (e.g.: work in Blackboard discussion board, use a Google doc, etc.) as you work on this assignment together. Begin developing Collaborative Annotated Bibliography.	• Full participation in class activities and discussions • Participate with group on Deliberative Dialogue activities
13 (NOV21)	**Do in Blackboard** • Complete the Collaborative Annotated Bibliography. • Do the Post-Course Survey, save your submission screen as a pdf, and upload the pdf to Blackboard	**Deliberative Dialogue Day 2:** Decide on a solution to the problem you will address and draft your group proposal and presentation. Work carefully through the Group Decision Making Process.	• Participate with group on Deliberative Dialogue activities

14 (NOV28)	**Due before class in Blackboard:** - Submit Deliberative Dialogue Group Annotated Bibliography (one per group). - Submit Deliberative Dialogue Group Proposal (one per group) - Submit Deliberative Dialogue Final Outline (one per group) - Practice your Deliberative Dialogue Presentation with your teammates. This would be a great time to meet with a coach in the Communication Center!	**Deliberative Dialogue Day 3** **Deliberative Dialogue Presentations** will be given in class **The post-course survey, Communication Center visit, and research credit assignments are due by **5pm on Friday, December 2****	Complete peer-evaluations of other speakers, participate as audience member when not speaking
Finals week	**Finals week:** Write your Deliberative Dialogue Reflection Paper and Group Assessment. This paper is due by 5pm on **Thursday, December 8.**		

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if I need to miss a class?

You will learn best in this class when you attend and participate in every class session, and you are expected to attend every class during the semester. However, we also understand that you have other important commitments or emergencies that might occasionally prevent you from coming to class, and if you communicate about those situations as early as possible, we will work with you to ensure that you have an opportunity to complete all of your work.

If you know in advance that you will need to miss class for a university-sponsored activity (e.g., debate tournament or basketball game in which you are competing as a university representative) or an important religious observance, please let your instructor know as early in the semester as possible. Your instructor will work with you to make arrangements to complete your work, typically by asking you to turn in work in advance or arranging for you to give presentations on days that you do not need to miss class for these important commitments.

If you have an emergency that will prevent you from coming to class or doing online work for this class (illness, death of a loved one, car accident, power or internet outage, etc.), please email your instructor to let them know about your emergency as soon as possible. If you communicate about your emergency in a reasonable time frame (in advance if possible, or as soon as practical when prior communication is impossible), your absence will be excused, and you will be given an opportunity to make up missed work. If you do not reach out to you instructor about your emergency, your absence will be unexcused, and you will not earn participation credit for that day's class.

Can I turn in late work?

All assignments are due before the beginning of class on the day that they are due, unless noted otherwise in the syllabus. Late work will not be accepted unless you communicate with your instructor about your extenuating circumstance (e.g., illness, injury, accident, funeral, power or internet outage, childcare emergency, etc.) in advance, or as soon as is practical in emergencies, and request an extension at that time. In such cases, you may be given a new deadline by which make-up work must be submitted and instructions for doing so, usually within one week of the missed deadline. Please note that these extensions are generally only given for true emergencies, not for situations in which you plan poorly and run out of time to complete your assignment.

Can I use my electronic devices in class?

Because we are using an online textbook for this class and will be using our electronic devices to conduct research and complete other activities in class, it will be helpful to bring your electronic devices (laptop, tablet, phone, etc.) with you to class. However, these devices can also be a powerful distraction from learning, and we ask that you be judicious with your technology use. When you are using your electronic device for a class purpose (accessing textbook, working on outlines, doing research, etc.), please use your technological resources for class work. However, please put your device away when you are not using it specifically for class purposes or if you find that you are too easily distracted by other activities on your device.

What should I do if my instructor does not come to class?

If your instructor is not present at the start of class, please check your email and the Blackboard Announcements area for updates. If there is not an email from your instructor with instructions, wait until 5 minutes after the start of class. Coordinate with your classmates so that one person in the class calls the Communication Department office at 703.993.1090, and another emails the Basic Course Director at bcd@gmu.edu to let them know that your instructor is missing. If your instructor has not arrived and you have not received alternate instructions for the

course, you are free to leave class after 15 minutes. Check your emails regularly over the next 24 hours for updates.

What happens to this class is campus is closed (snow days, power outages, etc.)?

If you would like to receive direct notifications about campus closures and emergencies, please visit https://alert.gmu.edu to sign up for emergency alerts (also known as Mason Alerts).

If campus is closed for any reason (power outage, snow, etc.), do not assume that class activities are cancelled. In the event of a snow day or other campus closure that prevents in-person classes from meeting in their normal classrooms, synchronous and asynchronous online classes will continue as planned unless you hear otherwise from your instructor. Classes that were scheduled to meet in the classroom on campus will move to a fully asynchronous format for the day. Watch your email for messages from your instructor that provide instructions about how the class will proceed.

What resources are available to help me?

There are numerous campus resources that are available to help students succeed in their classes, academic careers, and in their professions after they leave GMU, and to manage the many other challenges that we all face at some point. For more details, review the full list of resources online at https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/knowing-mason-students/student-support-resources-on-campus/. A few of these include:

- Communication Center
- The Writing Center
- Learning Services
- Academic Advising
- Student Success Coaching
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Student Health Services
- Assistive Technology Initiative
- Disability Services
- Updating Your Chosen Name & Pronouns

- University Career Services
- Military Services
- Student Support and Advocacy Center
- Center for Culture, Equity, and Empowerment
- Mason Families
- First-Gen+ Center
- LGBTQ+ Resources Center
- International Programs and Services
- Student Services Center

There are also two new services that are available if you need immediate support:
- Emotional Support Line, (703) 215-1898, available 8:30am-8:30pm seven days a week
- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org, available 24/7

If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to furnish appropriate documentation to Disability Services (DS) so that they can recommend appropriate accommodations. You can contact DS at https://ds.gmu.edu/, 703.993.2474, or stop by SUB I Room 4205. If you qualify for an accommodation, the DS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. Please give this form to your instructor(s) and meet with them to talk about how your accommodations will be implemented. This course is already designed to be accessible for everyone, so the most common accommodations are already built directly into the class for everyone, but we want to make sure that we are meeting all of your specific needs.

How can I appeal my grade on a specific assignment?

If you believe that you earned a different grade than you received on a specific assignment, you should begin by communicating with your instructor about your grade concern. Before beginning a formal appeals process, meet with your instructor during office hours or by setting an appointment to discuss the grade and feedback on your assignment.

If, after discussing your assignment with your instructor, you still believe that you were not graded fairly on your assignment, you can begin the grade appeal process by sending an email to your instructor in which you clearly state that you are appealing your grade and identify the specific assignment you are appealing. This email should be sent no later than one week after the assignment grade was submitted in Blackboard. In your email, you should clearly identify which parts of the assignment you believe should have been graded differently and provide evidence or documentation for your claim. For example, if you did not earn credit for citing three sources during a presentation, you might provide the video recording of your speech and identify the time stamps when you cited your sources out loud during your speech.

If your instructor has denied your appeal and you still believe that you were not graded fairly, the second step is to appeal your assignment grade to the Basic Course Director within one week of your instructor's decision about your grade appeal. Send an email to the Basic Course Director at bcd@gmu.edu in which you explain your grade appeal and provide the appropriate evidence and documentation for the assignment being appealed. You should also forward the email correspondence about your appeal with your instructor to bcd@gmu.edu. The BCD will review the evidence and will either uphold or deny your appeal.

If, after your appeal has been denied by both your instructor and the Basic Course Director, you still believe that your assignment grade is unfair, you may file an appeal with the Communication Department by contacting the Associate Chair, Dr. Xiaomei Cai (xcai@gmu.edu). You should send Dr. Cai an email outlining your appeal, as well as provide all documentation, evidence, and emails with your instructor and the Basic Course Director from the earlier stages of your appeal. The Associate Chair will then guide you through the department's appeal process.

How can I appeal my final grade in the course?

There are only three reasons that you can appeal your overall final grade in a course after final grades have been submitted:

1. A change from a temporary to a final grade either before or after a University deadline (such as an "Incomplete" to an "A")
2. A computational or technical error (such as an issue with an auto calculation)
3. A recording error (such as a professor recording an "18" instead of an "81").

If you believe there is an error in your final semester grade, you should first email your instructor with clear and concrete justification and evidence to support your appeal in one of the categories above. If you are not able to resolve the issue with your instructor, then you may bring your appeal and justification to the Basic Course Director (bcd@gmu.edu) within one week of final grades being posted.

Is there extra credit available?

There are no extra credit opportunities in this class. Extra credit is extra work, and students who are having difficulty completing the required coursework seldom have the time to complete additional assignments. Please

focus on completed the work that is assigned in this class on time, and reach out to your instructor if you are having difficulty in this course.

What other campus policies should I know about?

You can find a full listing of academic policies online at https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/ and student conduct policies online at https://studentconduct.gmu.edu/, but there are a few policies that we would like to draw your attention to as we begin our work together in this class:

Academic Integrity
The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own and developed by you specifically for that assignment during the current semester; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask your instructor for clarification. Under no circumstances is it permissible to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters relating to academic work. Moreover, all work completed in this class should be original work. Using assignments from other classes or recycling speeches and outlines from previous classes is unacceptable. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct; cases of academic misconduct will be treated seriously and will most likely result in a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Academic misconduct cases will be reported to the Mason Honor Committee (OAI). Another important aspect of academic integrity includes the free exchange of ideas, and often there will be a vigorous discussion in this class. It is fully expected that all aspects of this class will be conducted dialogically with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. For more information, visit: http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/.
Instructors use Blackboard SafeAssign to check for plagiarism.

Diversity and Inclusion
George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis on diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieving these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected.

The reflection of Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

Privacy
Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of any course. Instructors cannot discuss any student's educational record with their parents, friends, or anyone

except with the student or appropriate university representative. Because GMU email is the only one that can be explicitly identified as belonging to you, your instructor will only communicate with you via email using your GMU address, and your instructor will not discuss grades via email. Students must use their GMU email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class.

Religious Observances
We recognize that the university does not cancel class for all important religious holidays and religious observances. If a class or assignment deadline falls on one of your important religious holidays or observances, please reach out to your instructor at the beginning of the semester to request an accommodation for those holidays and observances. See the FAQ above, "What should I do if I need to miss a class?) for more information.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence
George Mason University is committed to a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and incidents of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. Faculty members are required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, complicity, and retaliation to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.