

## COMM 145 Proposal

The Colonnade Implementation Committee will spend the fall semester reviewing courses to be included in the Foundations Category. Your department offers COMM 145 which will be included in that category. Please review your existing course in light of the learning outcomes listed in the Colonnade Plan (see below).

The implementation committee asks that you send me the following material by October 12, 2012:

1. A sample syllabus for this course. This should contain course description, student learning outcomes, goals of the course, and types of assignments. You do not need to send us a course schedule of topics, exams, etc. [**Attached**]

2. Statement of how your course meets the Colonnade Plan's learning objectives.

COMM 145: Fundamentals of Public Speaking and Communication (3 hours) meets the four learning objectives included in the Human Communication section of the Colonnade Plan. As documented in this section, COMM 145 develops foundational skills of critical listening, speaking, and presentation in a variety of social and cultural contexts. Further, students will learn to analyze arguments and to communicate ideas clearly and effectively in oral and written formats. Below, I specifically detail how COMM 145 meets each of the four learning objectives.

**Learning Objective 1:** Students will demonstrate the ability to listen and speak competently in a variety of communication contexts, which may include public, interpersonal, and/or small-group settings.

Students in COMM 145 will demonstrate the ability to listen and speak competently in a variety of communication contexts, including public, interpersonal, and small-group settings. First, with respect to competent speaking in the public context, students give three speeches aimed at developing the ability to design and deliver messages appropriate to various audiences and occasions. Students are taught to communicate a clear thesis and purpose to their audience. Further, by the end of the course, the goal is for students to be able to demonstrate their ability to construct and deliver organized presentations with well-developed introductions, main points, conclusions, and transitions. Students are also expected to deliver speeches using appropriate and effective vocal and physical behaviors to enhance messages such as vocal variety, articulation, and movement.

Second, students acquire skills to communicate with others interpersonally, including being introduced to interpersonal communication theories which give students a broader and more complex understanding of how to communicate with others interpersonally. Course readings, discussion, and activities focusing on interpersonal communication assist students in acquiring skills and theoretical understanding that assist them in speaking with others in the interpersonal context. This also includes students being introduced to a variety of listening skills

and strategies relevant to interpersonal as well as public and small group settings. Students have the opportunity to focus their theory/context paper on any of these areas.

Third, students will be exposed to reading, discussion, and activities related to small group communication. Students will not only learn how to communicate more effectively in the small-group setting, but also learn key elements of group decision making as well as specific skills and communication strategies related to effective group processes. Students who take COMM 145 should be able to demonstrate understanding and be able to identify the basic principles of effective group communication and listening.

**Learning Objective 2:** Students will demonstrate the ability to find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare speeches and written texts.

Students in COMM 145 will demonstrate the ability to find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare speeches and written texts. These elements are prominent in both the three speeches in the course and the theory/context paper. In COMM 145, students are taught to research, evaluate, and incorporate supporting material in both speeches and in their writing. Students are required to use the academic databases and are trained to use different academic databases for their speeches and papers. In their speeches, students learn how to use the academic databases available through the library system to locate primarily books, magazines, and newspapers and are also taught how to find and use credible internet sources. Students are required to cite at least three different sources in their informative and persuasive speeches, which must come primarily from the academic databases found within the WKU library system (they are restricted to using only one internet source). For the theory/context paper, students learn how to use the academic databases to find journal articles as well as how to analyze and cite these sources in their paper. Students are required to include a minimum of three primary and/or secondary sources cited within the text of their paper (primarily communication journals and books located within the academic databases).

**Learning Objective 3:** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.

Students in COMM 145 will demonstrate the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response in the Speech of Information and Diversity. In this informative speech, students must take a multicultural perspective, comparing and/or contrasting an aspect of two cultural groups or discussing an aspect of one cultural group in detail. This requires students to step outside of their own cultural perspective in some way and demonstrate ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate assumptions, ideas, and cultural practices and construct ethical arguments to present to their audience for the speech. Students must ethically incorporate primary and secondary sources as part of the supporting materials used in the speech.

**Learning Objective 4:** Students will demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.

Students in COMM 145 will demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas primarily through their three speeches. Students are required to complete outlines to demonstrate their planning and organizational structure for their speeches. The outline includes a specific purpose, central idea, a sentence outline of the speech, as well as a list of sources used in the preparation of the speech. For each speech, students are required to turn in their outlines two class periods before they give their speeches. This allows students to receive feedback from their instructor in order to revise/edit their speeches to more clearly communicate their ideas, incorporating the suggestions as they practice for the presentation of their speech. Students are expected to create longer speeches with more sources as the speeches progress throughout the semester.

While students do not go through the same planning and revision process for their papers as they do for the speeches, students are expected to include an introduction, clearly organized and supported paragraphs in the body of the paper (incorporating topic sentences), a conclusion, and source citation along with a bibliography in APA format. Academic writing is expected and the paper is graded on content, organization, and writing. Thus, proofreading, editing, and revision are expected and evaluated.

### 3. Brief description of how your department will assess this course's effectiveness.

For COMM 145, assessment will occur on three levels. First, to assess the speeches, an assessment team comprised of department faculty members will rate the problem-solution (persuasive) speech (students' final speech assignment) using the National Communication Association's Competent Speaker Speech Evaluation Form. The raters will view randomly selected recorded speeches via the Communicoach recording system adopted by the Department of Communication. This process enables us to assess eight public speaking competencies and compare the means across calendar years in order to continually improve our students' oral communication competencies related to topic selection, content, supporting material, organization, as well as vocal, verbal, and physical delivery. The eight public speaking competencies assessed correspond directly with the four learning objectives with respect to public speaking by addressing students' ability to demonstrate competent public speaking through delivery, organization, argument construction, development of clear ideas, and use of sources (including source citation). Approximately 100 speeches will be assessed per calendar year.

Second, to assess the course objectives related to listening, interpersonal, and small group settings (learning objective 1) we will use standardized testing. These objectives will be assessed using standardized test questions (10 questions per context: listening, interpersonal, and small group communication) across the sections of COMM 145. This process has already been implemented and used for the first three years of the revised COMM 145 hybrid course; we have also assessed students' understanding of the communication process. Based on the results of the

initial test assessment, changes were made to the test assessment questions for the 2010 calendar year. These changes included adaptations to both the teaching strategies and test questions (primarily wording of the questions) in order to help students' scores and overall comprehension of the objectives improve.

The Basic Course Director will randomly collect 100 tests per calendar year across designated sections of COMM 145 to help assess students understanding of listening, interpersonal, and group communication, scoring the questions in conjunction with each of these areas. These ten questions for each respective area are included on the test that covers the course readings and discussion of that specified area. The following criterion will be used to assess student learning outcomes for listening, interpersonal, and small group communication:

Excellent = at least 70% of students answer 9 out of the 10 the question correctly

Satisfactory = at least 70% of students answered 7 out of the 10 questions correctly

Unsatisfactory = under 70% of students answered 7 out of the 10 the question correctly

For example, in our most recent round of test assessment, students scored at the satisfactory level (at least 7 of the 10 questions for the objective were answered correctly by 70% of students) on the listening, interpersonal, and group objectives. This represented an improvement in students' scores on these learning objectives as compared to the previous year.

Third, the theory/context papers will be assessed to measure learning objective 2. 50 papers will randomly collected from across sections of COMM 145. The papers will be assessed by an assessment team using a rubric which assesses organization, writing (grammar, clarity, and effectiveness), research (incorporation of supporting materials, quality and quantity of primary and secondary sources, APA format (in-text citations)), and explanation of the theory/context. Each area will be scored on a 5 point scale (5 -Excellent ; 4 - Good; 3 - Satisfactory; 2 - Poor; 1-Fail). The scores will be assessed on the following scale (all four areas assessed on 5 point scale): 20-18 Excellent, 17-16 Good, 15-12 Satisfactory, 11-8 Poor, 7 or less Fail. The goals will be as follows:

70% of students will score at the satisfactory level or better.

50% of students will score at the "good" level or better.

These three forms of assessment represent a comprehensive approach to evaluating the effectiveness of COMM 145 across the learning objectives.

4. If necessary, a list of any proposed revisions needed to bring you course in line with the Colonnade Plan.

Overall, very little needs to be done in terms of revisions for the course to bring the course in line with the Colonnade Plan. COMM 145 was revised three years ago, changing it from a purely public speaking course to a course that covers communication more broadly adding interpersonal, listening, and small group communication skills and theory to the course. At that time, a written paper was added to the course as well as objectives assessed through standardized

test questions. This move, as outlined above, has allowed us to develop COMM 145 into a course that already meets the learning objectives in the Colonnade Plan. The only minor changes involve the additions of the language used in the objectives regarding the use of primary and secondary sources and academic databases as part of learning objective 2. These elements were already addressed within the course; they just needed to be specified more directly in the syllabus.

**Colonnade Implementation Committee**

**Approved: 27 September 2012**

**University Senate**

**DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNICATION  
COMM 145  
FUNDAMENTALS OF  
PUBLIC SPEAKING AND  
COMMUNICATION**

WESTERN KENTUCKY  
Fall 2012 SYLLABUS

<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	
<b>OFFICE:</b> <b>FAX:</b> <b>PHONE:</b> <b>E-MAIL:</b> <b>BLACKBOARD:</b>	
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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COMM 145 – The goals of Fundamentals of Public Speaking and Communication are to increase your understanding of the principles and processes of communicating effectively in a variety of contexts and to facilitate development of your skills in public communication, listening, group communication, and interpersonal communication. This is done through a combination of speaking, listening, writing, and reading assignments. Specifically, you will outline, develop, and deliver extemporaneous speeches incorporating relevant primary and secondary sources. You will learn how to develop and deliver messages that are appropriate and effective for the audience, purpose, and context. The assignments are designed to develop your understanding and skills progressively throughout the semester. When you leave the course, you should be sufficiently armed with a basic understanding of public speaking and with an awareness of other important communication skills so that you can continue to develop effective communication behaviors throughout your life in a variety of contexts. COMM 145 is part of the General Education Colonnade Plan and fulfills the Human Communication category.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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Students will be able to:

- Listen and speak competently in a variety of communication contexts, which include public, interpersonal, and/or small-group settings.
- Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare speeches and written texts.

- Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
- Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.
- Communicate a clear thesis and purpose.
- Construct and deliver organized presentations with well-developed introductions, main points, conclusions, and transitions.
- Deliver speeches using appropriate and effective vocal and physical behaviors to enhance messages such as vocal variety, articulation, and movement.
- Demonstrate understanding of the communication process.
- Acquire skills and be introduced to theories to assist in communicating with others interpersonally.
- Understand and identify the basic principles of effective group communication and listening.

**Required Text:** Seiler, W. J., & Beall, M. L. (2011). *Communication: Making Connections* (Revised 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (customized)). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

## ATTENDANCE

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### Penalty for Nonattendance

We learn to communicate by communicating and by observing others; therefore, your attendance is absolutely essential. I expect you to be in class each day. The penalty guidelines are described below:

1. The final semester grade for a 3-day a week class will be reduced **10 points** (out of the 800 point scale) for each unexcused absence over 1.
2. The final semester grade for a 2-day a week class will be reduced **15 points** (out of the 800 point scale) for each unexcused absence over 1.
3. The final semester grade for a weekly class will be reduced **20 points** (out of the 800 point scale) for each unexcused absence over 1.

### Penalty for Tardiness

Not only are you expected to be in class each day, but you also need to be on time. Tardiness is unprofessional and disruptive. Attendance is defined not only as being present in class, but being present within 5 minutes of the start of class through the completion of the class session. Unexcused tardiness may be penalized by not being allowed to make up work done in class prior to your arrival and may lead to the same point deduction as an unexcused absence. If you come to class after the roll has been taken, it is your responsibility to notify me after class that you were present.

### Excused Absence Policy

Speeches, homework, and in-class assignments cannot be made up unless I officially excuse your absence, which means you **must provide me with proper documentation**. You are responsible for contacting me regarding any excused absence. You must present written documentation **in advance** of an absence for a university-sponsored event and the day you return to class for any other absence or it will be counted as unexcused. Approved make-up work is due the **first class meeting** of your return. For presentations, the speech order is determined in advance; therefore, if you are traveling for a university related event, you must swap places with a speaker going on an earlier day.

An excused absence is defined as:

1. Illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student's family
2. The death of a member of the student's immediate family
3. Trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for University classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate academic or athletic events
4. Major religious holidays

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMPETENT COMMUNICATOR

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In order to build an open, professional classroom atmosphere everyone should follow certain ground rules. These rules of civility include but are not limited to:

1. **Displaying respect** for all members of the classroom community, both your instructor and fellow students.
2. **Paying attention to and participating** in lectures, group activities, presentations, and other exercises.
3. **Avoiding unnecessary disruptions** during class such as ringing cell phones (turn them off before class), **text messaging**, private conversations, reading newspapers, and doing work for other classes.
4. **Avoiding racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language** that may unnecessarily exclude or affect members of our campus and classroom community.

### Cell Phone Policy

Due to recent advances in technology, cell phones, ipods, pagers, etc. will not be allowed out during class time. Cell phones shall not be used for any purpose during class time. Any student with a cell phone in hand or on his or her desk during class time will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for that day. This policy applies during student presentations as well as during lecture and discussion. Any student using a cell phone during an exam will receive a zero on that exam and may be subject to other university discipline.

### Laptop Policy

Using a laptop to take notes during class can be very effective. However, when students use their laptop to check their e-mail, instant message, and/or play games during class it can be distracting to classmates and hinder the

note-taking process. Therefore, students who choose to use a laptop to take notes will be required to sit in the front row of the classroom.

## **ACADEMIC OFFENSES: PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

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I expect that all of the individual assignments you complete for COMM 145 (and in all of your other courses) are always your own work. However, many students are not sure exactly what “your own work” means, so, please read again the information on plagiarism and cheating from your student handbook. Aside from copying work, **plagiarism includes incorrectly citing sources or presenting someone’s information as your own**, without crediting the source. To avoid this, you should carefully make notes to keep track of where your information came from. In written form, you must use quotation marks when referring to another’s work. In a speech where you are paraphrasing, you can say “According to.....(give name).....”. It does not take much effort to make sure you follow the rules for using another’s thoughts.

**YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE** for telling your audience or reader whether you are:

1. directly quoting from a source
2. paraphrasing closely from a source, which means using significant portions of another source’s sentences or language
3. using the ideas advanced by a different source

### **Plagiarism Detection**

In this course we will be using an electronic plagiarism detection tool, Safe Assign, to confirm that you have used sources accurately in your speeches and outlines. All assignments are subject to submission for text similarity review to this plagiarism detection tools. Assignments submitted to Safe Assign will be included as source documents in Safe Assign’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. I will provide specific instructions in class on how to submit your speech outlines for electronic plagiarism review.

### **Penalty for Academic Dishonesty**

Western Kentucky University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on an exam, or purchasing papers, speeches, or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade on the assignment and potentially in the course, and will be reported for disciplinary action. **Falsified medical excuses** and presenting another student’s work as your own fall within the guidelines of this academic integrity policy.

As you can see, these are extreme measures for academic offenses that we believe are serious. If you have any questions about whether you may be plagiarizing in your work, please be sure to contact me well in advance of the due date for your assignment.

## IF YOU NEED HELP

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If you have questions or concerns or find certain materials or assignments difficult please contact me by e-mail or come by during my office hours. If you are unable to come during my scheduled times, call me to arrange an appointment. If you have a special need that may require assistance or accommodation, please let me know as soon as possible. You need to provide documentation; then, we'll work to make reasonable accommodation. Students with Disabilities who require accommodations must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room 101, Garrett Conference Center. The OFSDS phone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD.

## ASSIGNMENTS

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**YOU MUST PRESENT YOUR SPEECH ON THE DAY ASSIGNED. IF YOU MISS CLASS FOR AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE OR ARE NOT PREPARED TO SPEAK ON YOUR SPEECH DAY AND DO NOT PRESENT AS SCHEDULED, YOU WILL RECEIVE A 0 FOR THAT SPEECH ASSIGNMENT.**

- **Basic Requirements:** This semester there will be three graded speech assignments. You are expected to use topics of your own choice, which meet the guidelines for the specific speech assignment. Each speech has a time limit allowing all class speakers to complete the assignment on schedule and to give you practice in fitting materials into a given time allotment. Speaking too long or not long enough means your speech does not meet the requirements of the assignment. As you prepare your speech, please allow enough time to practice orally so that you can meet these time limits.
- **Outlines:** Outlines are required for each of the graded speeches. **Late outlines will receive comments from your instructor but will not be assigned points.** The outline should include: specific purpose, central idea, a sentence outline of the speech, a list of sources you used in the preparation of the speech, & any other form your instructor may assign.

### Speech 1: Introduction Speech (2-3 minutes)

You will do one of two possible types of an introduction speech described below based on teacher preference.

**Classmate interview speech**-The speech serves a number of purposes. It is designed to get to know the rest of the class and for them to learn something about you, to practice organizing a speech, and to get

you up on your feet and speaking. Each student will introduce someone else in the class. Tell us what makes the person interesting, what their future goals are, etc. Each student will interview another member of the class, organize, and present a 2-3 minute speech. Each student must complete an outline. You may use no more than one single-sided index card. The speech must contain an introduction, body, and conclusion. The most effective speeches will center around a theme with two or three main points to support the theme rather than listing random details about the person's life.

**“Just Bag It” Speech**—This introductory speech gives you the opportunity to start speaking right away and gives your classmates an opportunity to learn a little about you. Select three items, place them in the bag, and be prepared to explain how the three items describe you. For example, you might include a symbol of your place of employment, an item indicating an interest of yours (e.g. a tennis ball if you play tennis), or an item that symbolizes your career interest (e.g. an apple for an education major). Make sure your visuals are larger than a driver's license or small photo so that everyone in class can see. In addition to the items you bring consider using quotations, stories, and examples. No sources, other than *you*, are required. You must demonstrate that effort went into the assignment. In other words, someone pulling 3 textbooks out of a backpack and telling the class which courses they are enrolled in will not receive full credit. This first speech should include the most basic components of any speech—an introduction, main points, and conclusion. You are required to use extemporaneous delivery, speaking from a brief outline, using no more than one single-sided index card.

### **Speech 2: Speech of Information and Diversity (4-6 minutes)**

This is a 4-6 minute informative speech, which must take a multicultural perspective. You may elect to compare and/or contrast an aspect of two cultural groups or discuss an aspect of one cultural group in detail. Other possible topics include social customs, family traditions, holidays, clothing, food, religious traditions, sports, etc. You must step outside of your own cultural perspective in some way. Focus on presenting information relevant to your audience. You are required to present within the time limit, using a speaking outline of no more than five note cards (one side only). You are to cite no fewer than three different sources (at least two must come from the *academic databases* found within the WKU online library system; only one may be an internet source) and use three or more types of amplification or supporting materials. Visual aids are required for this speech (powerpoint, posterboard, video/DVD etc.).

### **Speech 3: Problem-Solution Speech (5-6 minutes)**

This is a 5-6 minute action-oriented persuasive speech. The purpose of the problem-solution speech is to influence the audience's beliefs or actions. The speech should contain a problem and solutions to the problem, including action steps the audience can take. Possible topics include influencing classmates to donate blood, start/increase flossing, exercise more or eat healthier, sponsor a child, get involved with a charity, adopt a pet etc. You are required to present within the time limit, using a speaking outline of no more than five note cards (one side only). You are to cite no fewer than four different sources (at least three must come from the *academic databases* found within the WKU online library system; only one may be an internet source) and use three or more types of amplification or supporting materials. No visual aid is

required, but please keep in mind that a visual aid can be a very effective way to persuade your audience to act on your topic.

### **Communication Theory/Context Paper**

Based on the chapters in the textbook, select a communication context (interpersonal, group, team, the workplace or another organization) or communication theory (dialectics, communication privacy management etc.) you are interested in and write a 3-4 page paper (double spaced). Explain why you selected this context or theory and why this context represents an important area in which to study/learn about communication and/or why this theory is important to the study of communication. Include a minimum of three primary and/or secondary sources cited within the text of your paper (communication journals and books located using use the WKU libraries' academic databases; the textbook does not count as one of your 3 sources). Discuss what Communication scholars have learned about your topic that could be relevant to your own experiences (give examples). Also discuss what you learned about communication from your research (how this will this be useful in your life, career etc). The paper will be graded on content, organization, and writing. Please include an introduction, clearly organized and supported paragraphs in the body of the paper (please use topic sentences), a conclusion, and source citation along with a bibliography in APA format. You will be presenting your paper informally to the class so that everyone can learn about the theory/concept. Please include relevant/interesting information about your topic from your research as well as how your topic contributes to the study of communication. The presentations should be 3-4 minutes.

### **CommuniCoach Self Evaluation:**

Each student will complete an evaluation form using the Communicoach system. This will evaluation will be done for the problem-solution speech.

### **Written work/homework**

In addition to the speeches, you will be graded on several in class activities and written assignments required by your instructor.

### **Examinations**

Exams and/or quizzes will be used to evaluate your understanding of the course material (primarily focusing on the communication process, interpersonal communication, group communication, and listening). The testing (exams and quizzes) schedule is located on the tentative daily schedule, but unscheduled quizzes may be given to assess your understanding of the chapter materials. Please come to class having read the chapter we are covering. Exams and quizzes may include various question formats.

## **GRADING POLICY**

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Speech One: Introductory/Interview

50 pts.

Speech Two: Speech of Information and Diversity 100 pts.

Speech Three: Problem-solution speech 100 pts.

Outlines: 25 pts. each 75 pts.

Communication Theory/Context Paper 100 pts.

Theory/Context Paper Presentation 50 pts.

Participation/activities 100 pts.

In-class Speaking Assignments

Communication Activities

End of Chapter Exercises

Participation in Departmental Research

CommuniCoach Self Evaluation 25 pts.

Exams (3 exams) test # 1 = 50 pts 200 pts. **Total: 800 pts.**

test #2 & #3 = 75 pts each

## **FINAL GRADE SCALE**

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**A = 800—720 pts (90% – 100%)**

**B = 719—640 pts (80% – 89%)**

**C = 639—560 pts (70% – 79%)**

**D = 559—480 pts (60% -- 69%)**

**F = Below 479 (Below 60%)**

