COMM 008: GROUP COMMUNICATION

Proposer:

Name:	Email:
Aimee Ahle	aimeea@cos.edu

Effective Term:

Fall 2025

Does this course use a CA Common Course Number

No

Credit Status:

Credit - Degree Applicable

Subject:

COMM - Communication

Course Number:

008

Discipline:

And/Or	(	Discipline	)
		Communication Studies	

Catalog Title

Group Communication

COS Course Description

This course focuses on oral communication and presentation in small group settings. Students are provided with the foundational knowledge and practice of speech making in a democratic society, while simultaneously emphasizing theory and research about communication in a variety of small group contexts. This course exposes students to rhetorical theory, small group theory and public speaking fundamentals within the context of their interpersonal interactions, group communication processes, and live presentations (including informative and persuasive speeches). Students will learn historical roots and key rhetorical theories that ground the study and practice of public speaking, and be able to discover, develop and critically analyze ideas and information in public discourse. Students will also explore and evaluate group communication processes, including problem-solving, conflict management, decision-making and leadership.

Method of Instruction:

Distance Education
Lecture and/or Discussion

Course Units/Hours:

Course Units Minimum:

3

Lecture Hours Minimum (week)

3

Total Contact Hours Minimum (semester)

52.5

Total Outside Hours Minimum (semester)

105

Total Student Learning Minimum Hours (semester)

157.5

Repeatability:
No

Open Entry/Exit:
No

Field Trips:
Not Required

Grade Mode:
Standard Letter

TOP Code:
150600 - Speech Communication

SAM Code:
E - Non-Occupational

Course Content

COS Methods of Evaluation:
Essay quizzes or exams
Mulitple choice tests
Oral presentations
Problem solving assignments or activities
Problem solving quizzes or exams
Project
Short answer quizzes or exams
Written essays or extended papers

COS Course Topics:

	COS Course Topics
1	Theoretical Foundations of Creating and Sharing Knowledge Through Oral Communication/Speaking
	A. Five cannons of rhetoric B. Aristotelian proofs of ethos, pathos, logos C. Psychological, social, and cultural basis of oral communication D. Significance of oral communication from its roots through current times E. Apply rhetorical principals to analyze historical and contemporary public discourse
2	Creation of Compelling and Engaging Persuasive and Informative Oral Messages
	A. Distinguish between informative and persuasive group speaking B. Organization patterns specific to effective informative and persuasive messages C. Audience analysis and adaptation D. Strategic message creation tailored to various audiences and social contexts E. Building blocks of argument F. Effective incorporation of ethos, pathos, and logos G. Outlining oral messages H. Strategies of persuasion I. Types of arguments J. Principles of sound reasoning including identifying and evaluating fallacies K. Demonstrating rhetorical sensitivity to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility

3	Supporting Informative and Persuasive Messages
	A. Using the type of support most effective for informative and persuasive messages B. Distinguishing between primary and secondary sources C. Distinguishing between support and source D. Assessing credibility of sources E. Finding credible sources (research) F. Incorporating supporting material into presentation outlines and verbal messages G. Citing sources in presentation outline and in verbal delivery H. Critically evaluating support and sources as an audience member
4	Creating Effective Team Presentations
	A. Planning and organizing team presentations B. Analyzing and adapting to group presentation audiences B. Outlining team presentations C. Creating a cohesive team presentation D. Creating and using presentation aids E. Rhetorical sensitivity to diversity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility in team presenting F. Adhering to ethical communication practices in team presentations G. Using and evaluating ethos, pathos, and logos H. Self and group evaluation of speaking skills and presentation content
5	Delivery Techniques and Practices
	A. Verbal delivery skills (clarity and engagement) B. Nonverbal delivery skills (connection, engagement, nonverbal credibility, enhancing verbal messages) C. Virtual delivery skills D. Managing communication apprehension E. Using your speaking notes F. Self-reflection and improvement G. Giving constructive feedback to peers H. Identifying how our perceptual schema of verbal and non-verbal communicative traits of other cultures potentially creates biased perceptions of ourselves and others
6	Fundamentals of Group Communication
	A. Distinguishing between theories, strategies, and methods of group communication B. Systems theory C. Balancing group dialectics D. Group types E. Groups in context F. Basis (psychological, social, and cultural) and importance of oral communication in a variety of types and public settings G. Stages of group development
7	Responsibilities of Group Members
	A. Role theory B. Assertiveness C. Team Talk D. Constructive feedback (regarding the content and forms of communication) E. Communication Apprehension F. Creating a supportive communication climate
8	Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills
	A. Methods and approaches to problem solving B. Methods of generating and selecting ideas/making choices C. Consensus and voting D. Cultural considerations

9	Diversity in Groups

A. Cultural, ethnic, gender, generational, and personality dimensions of communication
B. Layers of diversity
C. Ethnocentrism
D. Obstacles to understanding others
E. Listening with a diverse lens
F. Adapting verbal and nonverbal communication and group process methods to diverse members
G. Managing group process with sensitivity to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
H. Recognizing and mitigating bias

10	Leadership and Communication

A. Power and its uses
B. Models and theories of leadership
C. Emerging leadership
D. Effective qualities and communication skills of leaders
E. Leading diverse groups
F. Providing constructive feedback
G. Making decisions
H. Listening as a leader
I. Ethical leadership

11	Managing Conflict and Creating Cohesion

A. Conflict
1. Types of conflict
2. Approaches and methods to solving conflict
3. Strategies for constructive conflict management
4. Constructive and destructive communication in managing conflict
5. Styles of managing conflict including cultural influences
6. Adapting conflict approach and strategy to various group contexts including in-person, virtual, and diversity dimensions

B. Cohesion and Groupthink
1. Importance of constructive conflict engagement and management to group cohesion
2. Types of group cohesion
3. Strategies for creating group cohesion
4. Maintaining group cohesion
5. Recognizing and avoiding groupthink

12	Managing the Group Process in Planning and Implementing Group Projects

A. Group Meetings
1. Planning successful group meetings
2. Conducting productive group meetings
3. Using technology to conduct group meetings and facilitate group participation
4. Effective communication strategies for virtual meetings and CMC (computer mediated communication)

B. Project Management
1. Distinguishing between goals, objectives, and tasks
2. Goal and objective setting
3. Collaborating to achieve goals
4. Creating and implementing a project timeline
5. Examining hidden assumptions
6. Prototyping

13	Effective Listening

A. Listening to evaluate oral message content and delivery to provide effective feedback
B. Listening types
C. Adapting listening to various situations
D. Barriers to listening
E. Listening strategies
F. Listening skills
G. Virtual listening

COS Course Objectives:

	COS Course Objectives
1	Employ the five canons of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery) and the Aristotelian proofs of ethos, pathos, and logos, as the framework for creating, delivering, and critically evaluating effective speaking
2	Find, critically evaluate, and incorporate credible information from primary and secondary sources to support informative and persuasive oral messages.
3	Formulate and present public messages as a team, and evaluate communication effectiveness through research, analysis, and organization of evidence and visual supporting material appropriate for the audience, occasion, and across a variety of contexts.
4	Employ sound reasoning and construct compelling arguments in support of a guiding thesis and organizational pattern appropriate for the audience, occasion, and purpose.
5	Use effective verbal and nonverbal delivery techniques to deliver effective messages, including use of effective methods of managing communication apprehension.
6	Demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging and adhere to ethical communication practices which include truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason.
7	Compose and deliver presentations that incorporate the concepts presented in the course through a variety of well-prepared, faculty-supervised, faculty-evaluated speeches delivered to a live audience (one to many) using effective rhetoric and delivery techniques.
8	Use critical and effective listening skills to evaluate oral presentations, speaking skills, and oral message content (including historical and contemporary public discourse) and to provide constructive feedback to peers in various group situations and settings.
9	Identify and apply effective problem-solving and decision-making methods and managing team projects in pursuit of a shared goal
10	Demonstrate successful strategies, methods, and skills for managing conflict.

Course Outcomes:

	Course Outcomes
1	Students will be able to explain the basic principles of human communication and the role of ethical public speaking and other communication contexts in a democratic society.
2	Students will be able to effectively manage communication apprehension and prepare, organize, and deliver informative and persuasive presentations to a live audience (one to many)
3	Students will be able to demonstrate the effective use of verbal and nonverbal communication in extemporaneous speech delivery and group contexts
4	Students will be able to demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity to cultural diversity, opportunity, and accessibility in various contexts.
5	Students will be able to conceptualize and utilize compelling arguments and sound reasoning in support of a guiding thesis and organizational pattern appropriate for the audience, occasion, and across a variety of contexts, including informative and persuasive speeches
6	Students will be able to critically listen to and evaluate the messages of others and provide meaningful feedback in both public speaking and group contexts (e.g. speech analysis, leadership feedback)
7	Students will be able to compare and contrast leadership choices and outcomes, conflict management strategies, and problem solving methodologies within various public and group settings
8	Students will be able to apply theoretical foundations of communicating knowledge including use of the canons of rhetoric and Aristotelian proofs (ethos, pathos, and logos).

Assignments:

Assignment Type:	Details
Reading	Famous Speech Reading Assignment
	Pick a transcript of a famous historical speech (e.g. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech). Read the transcript and in a one page response identify uses of ethos, pathos, and logos.

Writing	Speaker Critique Paper
	Over the course of the semester, you will be required to assess your own public speaking effectiveness. In 2 different papers of varying lengths, you will assess your strengths and weaknesses as a public speaker as well as discuss strategies you plan to use to improve your effectiveness.
Homework	Speech Outline Rough Draft
	Using the format discussed in class, students will write a research based and audience adapted speech using the Working Speech Outline Format incorporating credible research and reference page. Students must label key speech elements throughout (Attention getter, Thesis, Preview Statement, etc). Bring rough draft to class and work in their groups to edit and refine.
Other	A minimum of three faculty-supervised, faculty-evaluated, oral presentations in front of a live audience (one to many), including an Informative speech of at least five minutes per person and a Persuasive speech of at least six minutes in length per person; speech outlines and works cited/references; critiques of speeches. Additional methods of evaluation are at the discretion of local faculty.
Other	Informative Speech: Group Communication Theory (Teach a Theory speech)
	The objective of this assignment is to provide you with experience in informative speaking by researching and presenting on a group communication theory (e.g. System's Theory). You will work collaboratively with your group to explore various aspects of your chosen theory and the research conducted. Individually, each member will research and write a working speech outline, practice, and prepare a 6 minute speech that is audience adapted and extemporaneous in front of a live audience (one to many).
Other	Persuasive Speech: Problem-Solution Symposium
	The goal of this assignment is for your group to research a pressing issue affecting your local community, use local data to highlight the problem, and persuade your audience to adopt a specific solution. Your group will work together to present a clear, data-backed argument that addresses the problem and proposes a practical solution for improving the situation. Individually, group members will write a Working Speech Outline and present a persuasive speech for 6 minutes per person in front of a live audience (one to many).

Representative Texts, Manuals, and/or OER that is equivalent, Other Support Materials:

Texts used by individual institutions and even individual sections will vary. The list of representative texts must include at least one text with a publication date within five (5) years of the course outline approval date.

COS Textbooks or other support materials

Resource Type:	Details
Zero Textbook Cost	Exploring Public Speaking, Tucker, Barbara & LeHew Matthew.
	https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/411 , Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike, Creation Commons 4.0
Zero Textbook Cost	Mapes, M. Speak Out, Call In: Public Speaking as Advocacy. LibreTexts.
Zero Textbook Cost	An Introduction to Group Communication. LibreTexts. UC Davis. 2024.
	https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Communication/Public_Speaking/An_Introduction_to_Group_Communication_(LibreTexts)
Books	In Mixed Company: Communicating in Small Groups and Teams, J. Dan Rothwell, 11th Edition. 2021. ISBN: 9780197602812
Books	Floyd, K. Public Speaking Matters. (Latest edition.) McGraw-Hill.
Books	Rothwell, J. Dan Practically Speaking (4/e). Oxford University Press, Oxford, (2022).
Books	Gehrke, Pat, & Foley, Megan Contemporary Public Speaking (1/e). W.W. Norton, New York, (2023).

Equity Review:

Yes

Transferable to CSU

Yes - Proposed

This course will also be proposed for UC transfer.
Yes

Transferable to UC
Yes - Proposed

Transferable to UC Justification
Satisfies all requirements for Cal-GETC GE Area 1C: Oral Communication

Cal-GETC General Education
Cal-GETC GE Area 1C: Oral Communication
Transferable to UC
IGETC 1C: Oral Communication

COS General Education
COS GE Area 1B: Oral Communication & Critical Thinking
COS GE A2: Oral Communication/Analytic Thinking

Other Degree Attributes
Degree Applicable
Not a Basic Skills Course

Distance Learning Addendum
DLA Comm 8 Updated 2024.pdf

Banner Title:
Group Communication

Course Control Number:
CCC000451975

C-ID:
COMM140