



COMS 1315.01W: Fundamentals of Public Speaking

COURSE SYLLABUS : Summer II 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Robert Ortiz

Office Hours (virtual): Mondays 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

University Email Address: robert.ortiz@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24 hours. Emails sent Fri-Sun, or on holidays, will receive a response on the next business day.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

COMS 1315: This course addresses how to develop and organize effective oral presentations. This class covers theories and related skills for planning, organizing, rehearsing, presenting and evaluating different types of speeches as well as rhetorical traditions, principles, and strategies used in informative, persuasive, and ceremonial speeches. Emphasis on student performance and evaluation of oral and written models of classical and contemporary speeches. Recommended for students pursuing careers in sales, human resources, training and development, teaching, law, the ministry, politics, or other professions requiring public presentations. May be taken to meet a communication requirement.

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required Texts:

[Exploring Public Speaking, 4th Edition](#)

Contributors: Amy Burger, Chad Daniel, Jerry Drye, Cathy Hunsicker, Amy Mendes, Barbara

Authors: Tucker, Matthew LeHew

The textbook is an Open Educational Resource (OER), which is free to use for all.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Student Learning Outcomes

As a Core Curriculum requirement, this class focuses on four common Student Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking** - Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art.
2. **Oral/Visual Communication** - Students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion with an evident message and organizational structure.
3. **Personal Responsibility** - Students will understand and practice academic honesty.
4. **Social Responsibility** - Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or civic issues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods and Assessment

Instructional Methods will include, but not be limited to:

- Discussion boards
- Video and digital instruction
- Assigned readings

Student Responsibilities, Expectations, and Tips for Success

Communication

My only source of communication with the class will be via ETAMU email. I will not respond to personal emails. Please be in the habit of checking your university email on a daily basis. Class Announcements will be sent via Brightspace.

In your emails to me, please include a subject title and full course number (ex. Grade Question: COMS-1311-8xxxx)

If the full course number is not included, you must provide it before I can respond. This will cause a delay in providing a timely response, which may have implications.

I suggest reaching out to your groupmates for support, as they may be quicker to respond than I can.

Census

Participation is measured by completing assignments each week by the deadline. To be counted as attending the course by the Census date, students must complete the census assignment.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

I aim to post grades within 7 days of the posted deadline.

If there is a question regarding the grade you earned, please email me immediately. Students have up to a week after the grade is posted to seek clarification and changes if required. However, grades will

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not be discussed during the last week of the semester or during finals week. At this point, there is no possibility of a grade change. **Final grades are not rounded up.**

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

Example:

A = 900- 1000 Points

B = 800- 899 Points

C = 700- 799 Points

D = 600- 699 Points

F = 0 - 599 Points

Type	Topic	Notes
Technology Check SLO #1,2	Census Date	This assignment is designed to check your knowledge of the necessary use of technology in the course. It is also required to be marked as "attending" the course. Failure to submit may affect your financial aid eligibility.
Reflections SLO #1,4	varies	The purpose of these assignments is to help you reflect on learnings in the course. I will provide questions to guide your response. These assignments should be at least 250 words . Any plagiarism will result in the loss of all points for that paper. The submission text box must be used to type your reflection. Files are not accepted.
Discussion Boards SLO #1,4	varies	Discussion boards require you to create your post and reply to at least 3 classmates. Each discussion varies according to requirements and the scale of points. Students should read each discussion board assignment to understand the instructions and expectations. Most discussion board assignments are designed for peer feedback, allowing the class to support one another in the course in preparation for final versions. You must be respectful during all discussions, even if/when you disagree with a classmate. If any offensive material is posted, I will remove it, and you will receive a 0 for the assignment. Any plagiarism will result in losing all points for that particular discussion. In responses to classmates, students must use the questions provided in the assignment to guide feedback comments. Each response to your classmates must be at least 75 words . Note: Students must have an original submission before they reply to others. So, a student cannot receive a grade for a response if they didn't have an original post by the deadline as part of the assignment expectations. If a student chooses to include the guiding questions in their submission, please note the questions are not part of the required word count because they're not original comments.
Speech Outlines SLO #1,2,3,4	varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A speech outline is mandatory for each presentation within the class. • The outline functions as the foundation and driver of your speech, guaranteeing its structure, timing, and impact. • Following the provided example (found in the assigned week's module) is obligatory for all students. • Students who do not include a references page and/or write their outline as an essay/manuscript will receive an automatic 0. <p><i>Additional instructions and requirements will be provided in the assignment descriptions.</i></p>
Speech Visual Aids/PowerPoints SLO #1,2,3,4	varies	A visual aid (PowerPoint) will be required for each speech—the visual supplements your presentation with images and key text, promoting engagement with the audience. The PowerPoint must be used throughout the presentation submission, following the appropriate guidance for screen sharing.
Speech Submissions SLO #1,2,3,4	Varies	Speeches must be recorded on a PC or Mac device (laptop, MacBook, etc.). Recordings done on a phone or tablet are not accepted. Students will submit videos of their speeches. Speech videos must be uploaded to YouTube or ETAMU OneDrive and set to "Unlisted" and/or public viewing

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		<p>permissions. The student must then submit a link to the video via D2L on the appropriate assignment submission page.</p> <p>Specific instructions for both assignments are provided within their respective lesson folders.</p> <p>Students must meet the following requirements below for each speech to be accepted for grading. If any of the requirements listed below are not met, the speech grade is an automatic 0, and the student is at risk of failing the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student's face must be facing the camera and seen. I cannot grade a speech if the back or back of your head is to the camera, resulting in a 0. • The student's voice must be audible on the speech recording. If I can't hear what you're saying, I can't grade your speech, resulting in a 0. • Speeches must be done in one take and submitted as one file. I will not accept separate video/audio submissions or screenshots for speech assignments. If a student submits an edited speech video, more than one submission, or screenshots, it will result in an automatic 0. • Speech submissions must be a YouTube video, not a YouTube short. Submissions as YouTube shorts will automatically receive a 0. • Speech submissions need to be accessed by the instructor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is the student's responsibility to ensure the link provided leads to their presentation. Complications with the instructor viewing the presentation due to a faulty link or permissions not being allowed subsequently will result in a 0. • Speech submissions must be a YouTube video, not a YouTube short. Submissions as YouTube shorts will automatically receive a 0. <p><i>Additional instructions and requirements will be provided in the assignment descriptions.</i></p>

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Unit	Dates	Name of Lessons	Unit I Assignments	Unit Assignment Deadline
Census and Introductions	7/6-8	Census Assignment Orientation & Setting Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Video Check - Census Assignment • Introductions: Discussion Board - Initial Post + Responses to 3 classmates 	Census Assignment Due: Wednesday, July 8, by 11:59 p.m.
Unit I	7/13 - 15	Who Am I Speech Read Chapters 1-2 and 4-6 in the textbook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection: Embracing Others, Embracing Self • Who Am I Speech • Who Am I Speech Outline • Who Am I Speech Visual Aid • Discussion Board: Who Am I Speech Debrief - Initial Post + Responses to 3 classmates 	Unit I Assignments Due: Wednesday, July 15, by 11:59 p.m.
Unit II	7/20 - 22	Celebratory Speech <i>No textbook readings this week</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection: Building Confidence • Celebratory Speech Outline • Celebratory Speech Visual Aid (PowerPoint) 	Unit II Assignments Due: Wednesday, July 22, by 11:59 p.m.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebratory Speech Submission • Discussion Board: Celebratory Speech Debrief – Initial Post + Responses to 3 classmates 	
Unit III	7/27 - 29	<p>Read Chapters 3, 7-12 in the textbook</p> <p>Informative Speech</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection: 10 Ways to Have a Conversation • Informative Speech Outline • Visual Aid (PowerPoint) for Informative Speech • Informative Speech Submission • Discussion Board: Informative Speech Debrief - Initial Post + Responses to 3 classmates 	<p>Unit III Assignments Due:</p> <p>Wednesday, July 29, by 11:59 p.m.</p>
Unit IV	8/3 - 4	<p>Read Chapters 13-15 in the Textbook</p> <p>Persuasive Speech</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection: Obama's Keynote • Persuasive Speech Outline • Visual Aid (PowerPoint) for Persuasive Speech • Persuasive Speech Submission 	<p>Unit IV Assignments Due:</p> <p>Tuesday, August 4, by 11:59 p.m.</p>

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

By enrolling in an online class, students assume the responsibility to have the necessary technology required for the course. The following are required in this course.

- Students must be familiar with recording and posting (uploading) digital videos to an online website.
- Students must be able to use Brightspace (D2L) to navigate the entire course and submit all assignments.
- Students must be able to open documents using PDF and Microsoft Suite (Word, PPT, etc.). Microsoft Apps are free to ETAMU students. Please visit the library for support.
- Students must be able to save documents in MS Word-compatible files or as PDFs.
- For slideshows, students must be able to submit slides in PowerPoint (.ppt / .pptx) or PowerPoint-compatible files.

Assignments must be submitted in formats the professor can open and view on a PC using MS Office. Incompatible files used for submissions will result in an automatic 0.

Students must use the text-entry/box feature in Brightspace for all reflections.

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

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COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Late Work

You will receive a thorough description of all assignments before they are due. Assignments must be submitted online via the Brightspace assignment tools. Homework assignments submitted via e-mail, messaging, or hard-copy form will not be accepted.

I expect assignments to be submitted by their due date. However, you can submit your assignment 48 hours after the due date—without penalty. Once that 48-hour window passes, assignments will not be accepted.

Extenuating circumstances: I know that it is impossible to consider all the possible circumstances that may prevent you from submitting your assignments on time. I am sensitive to some of those circumstances. Formal documentation will be required if you submit an assignment after the 48-hour grace window. Approval is left to the instructor's discretion and may require further action that's not mentioned. However, having assignments for other classes, a hectic work schedule, tech related issues, or not feeling it yet are not extenuating circumstances.

NOTE: Missing a significant amount of the course limits the student's ability to meet the course objectives regardless of circumstances. Students who experience significant life events such as death, critical illness, or other related matters that result in excessive inactivity in the course should connect with an advisor to determine appropriate next steps, which may include dropping the course.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

All students will be held to a high level of professionalism. To this end, all discussions and engagement must be professional, civil, and friendly, even when students disagree with each other or with the instructor. There should be no name-calling, profanity, or disrespectful comments. Any student who does not follow these standards may see a negative impact on their grade and will be referred to student conduct, which may result in being removed from the class.

College courses are designed to promote critical thinking. This process is an important life skill and a valuable, marketable skill in the workplace. Throughout your college education, you may encounter material (in a face-to-face or virtual environment) outside of your comfort zone, designed to cause critical evaluation and the examination of different perspectives. This is an important part of the

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educational process. It is the student's responsibility to make an appointment to speak with an instructor in order to open a dialogue to support your educational process in the classroom.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Statement on Student Grievances

Students who have questions or concerns about the instructor's course policies or the conduct either of the instructor or a classmate should first consult with the instructor. In the event of a lack of resolution or satisfaction on the matter, the student may bring their concerns to the head of the History and Liberal Studies Department, Sharon Kowalsky (Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu). If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion to the matter, students may bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Dean of Students per procedures outlined on pp. 15-19 of the Student Guide Book.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

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<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

AI Use Policy

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there may be legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructor's guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

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Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.etamu.edu/counsel



<http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>