



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

Arts & Sciences

Syllabus Spring 2026

Syllabus Overview:

Your college syllabus is your road map to success. You should always keep your syllabus with your class notes AND REFER TO IT OFTEN. Please CAREFULLY review this syllabus. Your syllabus represents a binding agreement between you and your instructor. The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus, *except for the grading scale and attendance policy*, anytime during the course. You will be notified of all changes via a Blackboard Announcement and forwarding email correspondence from your instructor.

Course Information:

Course Title: Fundamental of Public Speaking

Course Number & Section Number: COM 1315-018

Credit Hours/Contact Hours: 3

Prerequisite/Co-requisite: None

Drop Deadline: The last day to drop this course without a grade penalty is April 17th, 2026

Faculty Information:

Instructor: Courtney Bobb-Meilinger

Office Location: MOD C 101

Office Hours: Monday's 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM & Wednesday's 12:30 PM CST to 1:30 PM CST. This also includes if a student would like to do a Blackboard Collaborate meeting instead of a face-to-face meeting.

Email: cmeilinger@tamusa.edu Please make sure that you check the spelling of your instructor's name as you prepare, review, and submit any email correspondence. The misspelling of your instructor's name will affect your correspondence with your instructor. Additionally, please use your TAMUSA email account for ALL online communication with your instructor to ensure that your message is received.

Phone number: 210-784-2808

Best time to contact outside of office hours: Monday's from 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM, please schedule your appointment by contacting me via email. Reminder this is an additional time that I may be available if the student follows the previously mentioned terms in which to contact me prior. But note, this time is also designated for faculty meetings or other administrative duties as well. Therefore, scheduling in advance is important. Please keep in mind that I do not check my email before 9:00 AM or after 6:00 PM Monday through Friday (unless I have announced otherwise). Note that this does not mean that your instructor will not periodically check his/her email beyond that time. Lastly, if there is any class related information and or changes, you will be notified via email and through a Blackboard Announcement.

Course Description:

Introduction to Public Speaking details the history, theory, and practice of public speaking with an emphasis placed upon the organization and delivery of informative and persuasive speeches. Further emphasis is given to the reduction of anxieties associated with public speaking. This course meets the standards for the Component Area Option category of courses under the core curriculum.

Course Format:

This class incorporates a face-to-face learning environment with course responses and interaction through the usage of Blackboard. The online learning elements via Blackboard also include McGraw-Hill Connect Master which students purchase as their access code and Go React. These elements consist of several forms of computer-mediated communication assignments and forums needed to supplement the course content (readings, video links, discussion questions, and assignments). Class will be held FACE-TO-FACE in the format of a lecture-based recitation on Tuesday's & Thursday's from 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM CST; with specific assignments and deadlines being addressed and highlighted in class. Please keep in mind that weekly course information is posted every Sunday between the hours of 5:00 PM and 9:00 PM CST. This post is called "Communication Sunday Reveal" and will inform the student about upcoming assignments and course materials. For example, class starts August 26th which happens to be a Tuesday. Therefore, you will receive your Communication Sunday Reveal on Sunday, January 25th, 2026. This reveal will be a recap regarding Week One of the semester and announce where we are headed for the next upcoming week in the course. The email will explain the need for the students to complete their McGraw-Hill Connect Master registration and how our course is managed via Blackboard, McGraw-Hill Connect Master, Go React, and various other Open Educational Resources (OER) and the library database. Then on the following Sunday, February 1st, you will receive another message that explains what will occur during the next week.

Therefore, every Sunday (Communication Reveal), Wednesday Nights (Assignments are due by 11:00 PM CST) and Thursday's (Class Meeting & New Week Folder Opens). Note your instructor will inform you if the course designation of face-to-face switches to asynchronous on Blackboard Collaborate due to extenuating circumstances. If that occurs, the course module will be altered for a temporary period. Thus, resulting in the class participating in group work, peer-evaluation, research assignments, or self-paced course related tasks online until further notice to return to the original course module of face-to-face meetings.

Time allocated for assignments in McGraw-Hill Connect Master, Go React, or Blackboard may consist of two or more hours a week depending on the assignment. For example, as students prepare for various speeches in the course one's time will increase to more than two to three hours depending on a students' level of preparation, understanding of course expectations, and retention of course materials. Also, once the instructor has announced the beginning of the speech group project, be aware that we may have two virtual class meetings a week to accommodate information needed to complete assignments (optional but given by the instructor), group concerns, student conferences or speech tutoring. Note this does not mean that we will have class twice in one day or class three to four times a week. It means that you may be meeting with your instructor more than once a week depending on the course assignment and need of aid. Additionally, this course offering has an extensive writing component. In this course students will produce various forms of writing in conjunction with brainstorming and the editing process of speechmaking (papers, journals, outlines, discussion boards, short essay, etc.). Therefore, students will extend their writing skills learned in English courses to practice and gain knowledge of subject-specific writing forms within the context of public speaking.

All class meetings will be held face-to-face from 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM CST in Madla room 244 unless your instructor states otherwise. Due to this course having some formats of online engagement, please review our classes **Online Civility Code** below:

This class encourages critical thinking and the ability to perceive information, thoroughly analyze it, and then question particular problematic components of it. This means you are encouraged to question the course

teachings, findings, etc. of both your instructor and fellow peers. Of course, this is to be done in an academically encouraging and respectful manner. We as a community and student body must come together to create an online environment that embraces “A&M-San Antonio as being reflective of its diverse and heritage rich community it serves.” By no means will the following behaviors be tolerated or given credence during our online meetings: instances of personal attacks which include all racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist, etc. language and/or *comments. The act and or presence of an illegal substance or alcohol usage during our online meetings. If at any time you feel violated or uncomfortable about anything said, witnessed or discussed in class, please communicate those concerns with your instructor immediately.

*Note, comments are considered to be both verbal and nonverbal (Blackboard Collaborate Chat messages, interactive educational apps, inappropriate images/post/emoticons shared with the class or individuals).

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate awareness of self-perception through recognizing diverse perspectives and understanding ethical implications of communication.
2. Cultivate active listening skills.
3. Design intentional messages by practicing audience analysis.
4. Research, develop, and deliver extemporaneous informative and persuasive speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal messages.
5. Develop critical thinking skills through practicing effective group communication.

Text, Technology, and additional materials

Text: Master Basic Course in Communication (Connect Access Card) (Texas A&M Univ San Antonio)

Technology: Students should have access to a reliable computer and Internet connection. This course will be using Blackboard on a day-to-day basis and thus a student should check their Blackboard page frequently for course updates and more. It is also recommended that each student have the appropriate hardware to back up their course materials (I.e., jump drive, email, etc...).

Technology concerns for this course during the pandemic: If you are currently experiencing technological difficulties or various moments of inconsistent internet connection, please contact your instructor immediately. We are aware that living in these unprecedent times may unfortunately challenge the way in which a student can access their course materials. It is the students' responsibility to contact their instructor in a timely manner to inform them of such changes that may drastically affect one's ability to successfully participate in or engage in the course.

Additional Materials & Resources: Art Supplies & Note Cards (please wait for the instructor's comments regarding these materials or see Blackboard for more information once announced in class).

Your instructor will announce and offer various times in which you, the student, can participate in speech tutoring or mentoring. These sessions times will be announced no later than week three and are per a students' request and are considered another avenue for practicing speeches and getting additional feedback regarding their verbal and nonverbal skill set.

Course Overview

- 1) Define Communication and Culture

- 2) Identify the Power of Perception, Language, and Nonverbal Communication
- 3) Listening & Recognizing Interpersonal Communication
- 4) Speech Preparation (Getting Started, Organizing, & Outlining) and Presentation
- 5) Research (Persuasive Topics, Toulmin's Model of Argumentation, APA Writing Style, Journal and Electronic Resources, etc...)

EVALUATION METHODS:

Where in the World Speech (Culture) 10%

PechaKucha Speech 15%

Informative Speech (TED Talk) 25%

Persuasive Group Speech 30%

Speech Reflection Paper & Portfolio 10%

Class Activities & Participation 10%

Grade Breakdown

During the semester, your grade will be recorded under the column labeled Course Grade via the grade book on Blackboard. In this category, you will be able to view your grade as the semester progresses as well as the calculation of your final grade. Please keep in mind that Blackboard does not automatically round up. So even if you have an 89.73 in your grade book, Blackboard will still count that as a B and so will your instructor. Please be aware of this as you progress through the class. More details will be provided in class and on the course Blackboard page.

A = 100-90 B = 89-80 C = 79-70 D = 69-60 F = 59 or lower

All assignments are based upon a percentage grading scale. Students will receive a detailed explanation of all assignments and grading procedures before the due date. Each student's work will be assessed in terms of concept comprehension and skill mastery. Concerning skill mastery assessments, it must be stressed that although objective standards exist and can be used to determine the quality of an oral communication skill presentation, a certain amount of subjectivity is inherent in the determination of the degree to which such standards are met. Thus, each presentation will be graded based on the factors provided by the rubrics, which will be discussed in class and later posted to Blackboard for students to evaluate the expectations for each required presentation.

Lastly, students in this course will be expected to engage in the APA style of writing. For more information about APA, we will be discussing the Speech Lib Guide and additional resources that will guide the student through the writing style process.

Speech Reflection Paper & Portfolio (10%)

Instead of a traditional final exam in this course, the student will experience a speech reflection paper that will include information, data, and analysis of previous speeches into a portfolio like presentation. Note the word presentation does not mean that there is a speech component to this assignment. The word only means that a student will need to provide several core pieces for the assignment to be completed. Students will be introduced to this assignment during Week 4 and will be due prior to the examination schedule. Please note during the final

examination schedule, students will need to attend a student-instructor conference meeting to discuss the paper and portfolio.

Speech Presentations (75%)

Reminder: This is a public speaking class and thus presenting speeches is a vital part of the grade. Each student will be responsible for the development, organization, and delivery of four oral presentations. You will present at least two informative presentations with research (Where in the World & TED Talk), a presentation that asks each student to identify and analyze who they are (PechaKucha Speech) and the required formal group presentation (Persuasive Speech w/h research writing portfolio). Additional speeches will be discussed in class with handouts. All presentations are due on the assigned date. There will be no make-up for missed speeches unless appropriate documentation has been given, which will warrant the possibility of a make-up speech. A student must apply for a make-up approval regarding a missed speech. If a student is given permission to take part in a make-up speech, they have 48 hours to do so. Please see the make-up approval form and make-up policy for further information under Course Documents on Blackboard.

Note: For Informative Speech (TED Talk) and PechaKucha Speech project, students will be preparing a variety of materials related to their research and understanding of the project through either an artifact or manuscript of sorts. These two speech projects will be discussed throughout the semester, but specifically during week two/three of the semester. More information will be available in class and on Blackboard. There is no make-up for any of these project elements without appropriate documentation of an illness, injury, death in the family, natural disaster, or major catastrophe. Lastly, all COM 1315 students need to review the information about the Group Speech Project (Persuasive) under the critical success strategies. It is important to familiarize yourself with the expectations of this speech. And again, there are no make-ups for any of these project elements without appropriate documentation of an illness, injury, death in the family, natural disaster, or major catastrophe. This does include ALL speeches in the course.

Class Activities & Participation (10%)

Throughout the semester, each student will be assigned various activities that help supplement the course readings as well as contribute to in-class discussions and forums. More details regarding class activities and participation will be provided in class and on the course Blackboard page.

Presentations and all writing assignments will be returned to you within 2 weeks after the due date unless the instructor states otherwise. Additionally, any written assignments for the course must be submitted via Blackboard. Your instructor will not accept late, hard copy, or emailed assignments in place of submission to Blackboard, various interactive educational apps or Go React. For a more detailed description of the assignments and courses grading summary please see the Course Content Tab on Blackboard.

Writing Intensive Connection

Each student will be asked to participate in various brainstorming enrichment assignments which include but are not limited to:

- o Specific Purpose/ Thesis Statement Construction
- o Introduction & Conclusion
- o Ethical Writing
- o Transitional Prompts

- o Developing Research Questions
- o Outline Formation & Peer Review Assessment
- o Persuasive Speech Portfolio

Additionally, each student will be asked during the PechaKucha Speech to write a reflective essay that records their writing experience within the course. Specifically targeting the speech writing process, narratology, the evolution of becoming a speaker and the value of one's message). In public speaking, "good writing remains at the heart of good speechmaking, particularly when the intent is to inspire or motivate audiences" (Zielinski, 2008). This assignment will be the beginning aspect of the Speech Reflection Paper & Portfolio. More information about this assignment will be announced in class.

Again, there are NO MAKEUPS for any assignments (Blackboard, Go React and interactive educational app generated) given in this course, unless the students' situation falls under our courses extenuating circumstances clause for make-up work (See make-up policy on Blackboard or below). Makeup Policy can only be applied in such circumstances that include serious illness/injury/ Natural catastrophe and/or disaster/or a death in the immediate family. In such circumstances, documentation is required. Thus, if none of these situations applies to you, then you will not be given the opportunity to do make-up work unless the situation requires and pertains to sensitive information.

AI Statement

Because a major focus of this course is on developing your skills and fostering creativity in [writing, argumentation, and critical thinking], you must complete assignments for this course entirely on your own. You may not copy from any online sites (e.g., Course Hero or Chegg) or utilize composition technologies (e.g., ChatGPT or other GenAI software). Work submitted by students—all process work, drafts, low stakes writing, final versions, and all other submissions—will be generated by the students themselves. For this course, any use of these sites or tools will be considered academic misconduct and consequences will follow University policies. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, contact your instructor before submitting any assignments.

CRITICAL SUCCESS STRATEGIES: (Recommended topics that students need to know)

Students should be proficient in the usage of computer software (PowerPoint, Microsoft Office, and Blackboard). Additionally, students should be able to construct a paper with proper citations, grammar, footnotes, margins, font style and size, etc... All assignments call for the student to send it electronically. The assignment must be submitted through the appropriate Blackboard assignment link, Go React or interactive educational apps. Please do not send your assignment via email or drop off a hard copy to your instructor's box.

- Your instructor will not accept any late assignments in the course. Please do not ask your instructor for extra credit or if he/she could reopen an assignment for you to at least get half credit. If the assignment is not completed by the deadline, then it is late and warrants a grade of zero.
- When a student submits an assignment via Blackboard, it is the final representation of the student's work of body and therefore will be graded accordingly. Accidentally, submitting the wrong assignment does not warrant a do over for the assignment. Thus, each student should double check their work before they submit the assignment.

Students should be aware that your instructor will not accept Google Doc links or shared Google Doc invites as an acceptable format of assignment submission. There is a way to convert a Google Doc to a word document or a PowerPoint. Please make sure that you do so before submitting the assignment.

- Students should be able to locate, access, and submit an assignment on Blackboard, Go React and interactive educational apps. Students who struggle with either Blackboard, Go React or interactive educational apps

should immediately contact either Blackboard IT or Go React Support. If there is an issue with the interactive educational apps, please let your instructor know. A student who states that they are unable to complete or find an assignment, should reach out to the appropriate student services for help before an assignment deadline has either happened or is quickly approaching.

•If a student has a concern with an assignment or grade, the student must communicate that with their instructor within a week of the assignment or grade in order to resolve the matter. Waiting to discuss such a matter is not in the best interest of the student. Therefore, a student should be monitoring their grades weekly on Blackboard.

•Students are encouraged to keep up with the assigned readings to participate in classroom discussion and activities.

•Students who are registered for the course are required to take part in the group formation, preparation, and presentation of a group speech project (Persuasive). Students are not permitted to present this speech as an individual speech presentation. The group speech project is a direct reflection of the student learning outcomes and the components of being a writing focused assignment. Therefore, all students are required to participate in the final group speech project (Persuasive) of the semester. Failure to do so will drastically affect your final grade in the course.

o Although this speech is conducted in a group atmosphere, please be aware that everyone in the group is still responsible for their portion of the speech, group outline, and peer review. Be aware that if your group communication is less than stellar, this does not excuse you, the student, from completing your portion of the work. You are still being graded on your contribution to the speech and the group. If you or your group happens to experience minimal to no communication and participation within your group, your instructor will contact you to discuss an academic plan.

o There is no make-up for this speech. If a student does not come to class without appropriate documentation of a serious illness, injury, death in the family, natural disaster, or major catastrophe, they will receive an automatic zero for the project. Keep in mind the goal of the project is for each student to deliver a presentation based on their work and contribution (outline, PowerPoint, speech, and peer review).

•If a student fits the parameters of the make-up policy and is approved, please note:

o The student only has 24 hours to complete a missed assignment upon their return to class

o The student only has 48 hours after a missed speech upon their return to class in order to schedule a time to present that speech later. Remember it is up to the student to schedule the time and date on which the speech make-up will occur.

ASSESSMENT

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

To remain officially enrolled in the course, all students must enter class prior to the class census date, which is the date set by the state for reporting purposes. Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students for them to achieve their potential in class and to develop desirable personal traits necessary to succeed in employment. Class attendance is calculated from the first scheduled class meeting to the last. **Late arrivals and/or early departures may count toward total absences.** You are responsible for material covered and assignments regardless of whether you are present.

For this course, if a student misses **more than 12.5%* or 2 weeks** in the course or **2 days**, the student will be dropped. The student can be dropped at ANY TIME during the semester including that time before the date designated each semester as the last day a student can drop without grade penalty. This rule includes absences from class **for any reason including sickness, jury duty/court, work demands, funerals.** If a student is dropped by an instructor due to excessive absences, a grade of "WF" will be issued. A "WF" is a GRADE PENALTY and could affect his/her financial aid. The student must ask for REINSTATEMENT permission from the instructor to reenter class. If this request is denied, the student may petition the Dean for reinstatement. If the Dean denies the request, the Vice President of Instruction will make the final ruling on the decision.

Students who choose to participate in college related activities such as SGA, Ambassadors or Athletics must adhere to the attendance policy. Students are responsible for informing their instructors in advance of absences and are expected to make arrangements for making up work missed. In such cases, upon approval of the instructor, class time missed will not be counted as absences provided the students are otherwise in good academic standing (2.0 cumulative GPA).