COMM 210: Public Speaking | FALL 2026

Lecturers

Mary Moore, she/her, Senior Lecturer in Communication Studies, Director of COMM 210
mkmoore@bsu.edu
10:00 AM MON LECTURE, Pruis Hall
10:00 AM TUES LECTURE, AJ 175

Course Description

COMM 210 is a University Core Curriculum requirement that focuses on communication concepts and skills with the goals of helping you to understand basic communication principles, providing you with the opportunity to improve your own oral communication skills, and enhancing your awareness of the role of communication in culture. An emphasis is placed on preparing, selecting, organizing, and delivering oral messages, as well as on analyzing and evaluating the speaking-listening process. Additionally, many of the activities of the course are of a collaborative nature, allowing you to work with others to enhance your communication skills. Because this course focuses on oral presentations, the following course objectives are given to help you understand the intentions and purposes of this course.

Course Objectives

ICC	Course Learning Objective	NACE Competencies
2.1 Use **appropriate organization** or logical sequencing to deliver an oral message.	Prepare and use detailed outlines that demonstrate **appropriate organization**, well-supported claims, and sensitivity to the rhetorical situation.	Critical Thinking
2.2 **Adapt** an oral **message** for diverse audiences, contexts, and communication channels.	Analyze an audience and occasion, then **adapt messages** to meet the needs of diverse audiences based on factors including, but not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, economic status, and social background.	Communication Critical Thinking
2.3 Identify and **demonstrate appropriate** oral and nonverbal communication practices.	Deliver speeches extemporaneously, **demonstrating competence, expressiveness, and confidence** in public speaking settings.	Communication
2.4 **Advance** an oral **argument** using logical reasoning.	Build and **advance** an **argument** using logical reasoning, citing sources verbally and appropriately.	Critical Thinking Communication Equity & Inclusion
2.5 **Provide credible and relevant evidence** to support an oral argument.	**Provide credible and relevant evidence** to support an oral argument.	Critical Thinking
2.6 Demonstrate the **ethical responsibilities** of sending and receiving oral messages.	Demonstrate **ethical standards** in listening, research, and delivery in public speaking contexts.	

ICC	Course Learning Objective	NACE Competencies
2.7 **Summarize** or paraphrase an oral message to demonstrate comprehension.	Practice active listening by **recognizing and summarizing the main ideas** of the speech and providing constructive feedback.	Communication
	Understand and analyze the communication process, recognizing how culture and diverse experiences influence the sharing of meaning.	Communication
	Perform a series of speeches using effective delivery techniques, including the use of presentation aids and ethical communication practices.	Technology
	Select and use precise, clear, and audience-appropriate language in public speaking to enhance understanding and engagement.	Communication
	Students will explain (a) new or different perspective(s) as a result of learning from or with diverse communities or cultures.	Equity & Inclusion
	Students will apply previous knowledge or skills to demonstrate comprehension and performance in novel situations.	Equity & Inclusion

University Core Curriculum Objectives

COMM 210 is one of the requirements of the University Core Curriculum. As such, COMM 210 contributes to your overall experience at BSU by enabling you to:

- Realize your intellectual potential.
- Develop skills that promote lifelong success through applying the principles of listening and speaking confidently before others.
- Engage in audience analysis for the purpose of selecting appropriate arguments, language, and supporting material.
- Apply principles of communication

Course Values

The core value of this course is transformation. We believe strongly that public speaking can be transformative for yourself, your audience, and your communities. We believe strongly that we have as much to learn from students as they learn from us. Students, because of their experiences, come to the classroom with incredible skill sets that serve as the basis for a successful course. Education provides an incredible opportunity to learn from one another, explore topics in new and challenging ways, and empower students. As such, you can expect a class that demands your enthusiastic engagement, feedback, and dedication. We are your partners in learning and as such, we are committed to the values of respect, empathy, and civility when communicating with you.

Communication

Your primary contact in the course is your lab instructor (TA). To reach them directly, find your lab section and look up their contact info below. Your lab instructor is your best resource for almost any question or concern. They'll let you know their preferred method(s) of communication.

You can also reach the COMM210 helpline at 626.662.1044 (6COMM210HI). Lab instructors and speaking center coaches monitor this line, and you can text it anytime, though responses may be delayed at night and on weekends.

If your lab instructor and the helpline can't resolve your concern, or if your concern is about your lab instructor, visit Mary or Lee during office hours. Because this course has over 1,200 students, emails sent directly to us will be redirected to your lab instructor unless they've already forwarded your message up the chain on your behalf.

Regardless of who you're contacting or why, use a relaxed-professional tone: include a greeting and closing, write in full sentences, and lead with your name and section number.

Contact Information

COMM 210 text helpline: 6-COMM210-HI (626.662.1044)
Mary Moore, she/her, Senior Lecturer in Communication Studies, Director of COMM 210
Office Hours: Monday, 1-3 pm
mkmoore@bsu.edu

Lab Instructors: Canvas Link for T/TH Contact Information

Textbook Information

To be successful in this course and successfully engage with weekly lectures, and read, watch, and listen to course materials at: https://digitalresearch.bsu.edu/comm210
The password for accessing the textbook is **speak1918**

Student Success

Your success in this class is important to us. We want you to succeed, and we know that everyone learns differently. We are here to help you in any way that we can. If you are struggling with any aspect of the class, please let us know as soon as possible. We can work together to find strategies that will help you succeed. We are also happy to connect you with the student resources available through BSU Basic Needs Hub. We believe in you, and we are confident that you will succeed.

The Role of Low-Stakes Learning (AKA, Challenges)

One of the big ideas of COMM 210 is practice makes great speakers. We use “challenges" in this class, drawing inspiration from the ancient Greek tradition of Progymnasmata, to give students a chance to learn through low-stakes activities. These challenges give you a chance to practice, develop skills, and grow as confident and effective communicators, laying a strong foundation for success in your graded speeches and beyond. The challenges emphasize growth, learning, and collaboration, embodying the essence of COMM 210's commitment to fostering competent and empowered public speakers.

In this course, you will have access to 25 different Challenge activities, and each one is worth 10 points. You may choose which Challenges you want to complete, and you can earn a maximum of 150 points from this part of the course. To reach the full 150 points, you would complete any 15 of the 25 available Challenges. You are welcome to complete more than 15, but doing so will not result in additional points; 150 is the highest number of Challenge points you can earn.

You are also not required to complete all 15. You will earn 10 points for every Challenge you complete, and those points add up directly toward your total. For example, if you complete 12 Challenges, you would earn 120 points. This structure gives you flexibility and ensures that every Challenge you choose to complete contributes to your overall grade, up to the 150-point limit.

Attendance Policy

As this is a face-to-face class, attendance is expected and encouraged. Students who miss more than **20%** of the total class meetings (lab and lecture combined)—including both excused and unexcused absences—will receive a grade deduction at the end of the semester (this will be done manually when we submit grades). **For example, if the course meets 45 times, 20% would be 9 absences; your tenth absence would trigger the deduction.** If a student exceeds the 20% threshold, their final grade will be lowered by one level. For instance, an A will be reduced to an A-, a B+ to a B, a B to a B-, a C+ to a C, a C to a C-, a D+ to a D, and a D to a D-. Any student who arrives more than 15 minutes late or leaves with more than 15 minutes remaining will be counted as absent.
If you know you will miss a class meeting, please communicate with your lab instructor as soon as possible.

Late Work Policy

Speeches: Please choose your speaking day carefully. Once you have signed up, you are responsible for attending your speaking day. If you miss your speaking day, you may complete an optional fifth speech assignment to replace any other speech grade. The fifth speech assignment should be submitted within two weeks of your missed speaking day. Permission to deliver a makeup speech after your originally assigned speaking day will be exceedingly rare. To secure permission to do so, you would need an earth-shattering documentable reason, the support of your lab instructor, and permission in writing from your lecturer. We understand that sometimes things come up, and that's why we're offering these options. But please make every effort to attend your speaking day. It's an important part of the course, and it's an opportunity for you to practice your public speaking skills. We are here to help you succeed, so please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Quizzes: Quizzes are due on Sundays at 11:59 pm. If you fail to take the quiz before the deadline, you have a grace period to complete your quiz without penalty until Monday morning at 10 am, which is when the scores/answers will be released, and the quiz will be unavailable. We will drop your five lowest quiz grades. No quizzes may be made up or reopened.

Challenges: We offer 25 challenge opportunities across the semester, 16 in class and 9 out of class, but only your best 15 count toward your final grade. A student who attends every class session will already max out the in-class category on attendance alone. Because of that flexibility, challenge make-ups aren't permitted. We still encourage you to complete out-of-class challenges when you can, they're your insurance policy. If illness, a conflict, or anything unexpected costs you an in-class challenge later in the semester, having a few out-of-class ones already banked means it won't cost you any points.

Speaking notes/Notecard Guidelines for Speeches

For three of the four speeches in COMM 210, you are permitted to use notes to support your extemporaneous delivery. These notes must be in the form of notecards. A notecard is defined as a standard index card (3×5 or 4×6 inches), not a sticky note or any other piece of paper. You may not speak from a phone, tablet, or laptop. Notecards must be handwritten unless you have an approved accommodation. You may write keywords or short phrases only; full sentences are not permitted, except for brief direct quotations from research. Write on only one side of each card. At the end of each speech, you will turn in your notecards to your instructor. If you need notecards, they are available from the main office in LB 300 or from your lab instructor.

COMM 210 Course AI Policy

In this course, we value your authentic voice and the development of your speaking skills. Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, or Grammarly may be used to support your learning, but with clear limits.

Permitted Uses

Brainstorming topic ideas
Practicing delivery with AI speech coaches (e.g., Microsoft Presenter Coach, Ovation VR)
Clarifying grammar or revising drafts of your outline

Prohibited Uses

Submitting speeches, outlines, peer evaluations, or assignments written entirely or mostly by AI

Using AI to conduct research, generate citations, personal stories, or persuasive appeals you present as your own
Uploading course materials or other students' work to public AI tools
Research Verification:

It is the student's responsibility to know where their information came from. You must be able to produce and explain the research behind your speech if asked, including locating your original source material, explaining how you found it, and discussing why it's credible. Not knowing where your information came from, or being unable to produce it, will be treated as a potential academic integrity violation, regardless of whether AI was involved.

Fabricated or Inaccurate Sources:
Submitting a citation with an incorrect author, title, date, publication, or any other detail that does not match the actual source is treated as submitting a fabricated source, regardless of intent or whether AI was involved. Fabricated sources are an academic integrity violation. It is the student's responsibility to verify every detail of every citation against the original material before submitting it.

Why This Matters:
Evaluating whether a source is credible requires reviewing it yourself, checking the author, the publisher, the date, and the context. This is a core research skill this course is meant to build. AI tools cannot make that judgment for you, and using them to find or summarize sources means you never develop the ability to tell a credible source from an unreliable one.

All work you submit should reflect your original thinking, your voice, and your preparation as a speaker**. If you use an AI tool during the planning process, you must note this in your speech outline (e.g., "Used ChatGPT to brainstorm topic ideas").** Improper or undisclosed use of AI tools will be treated as a potential academic integrity violation. If you're unsure whether the use of AI is appropriate, just ask.

BALL STATE STATEMENTS:

University Statement
We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Disability Statement
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Academic Ethics Policy
Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the complete Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Ball State First Day

Students' course materials are available via Canvas and through the Ball State First Day partnership with Barnes & Noble. This program ensures students obtain all their course materials the first day of classes. Students are automatically enrolled in the program and charged the flat course material fee on their BSU eBill. Students can opt out of the program by the deadline listed on the "Course Materials" page in Canvas. Please review the program details to make the most informed decision regarding your course materials and participation in this program: Ball State First Day

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Academic Support Services

The Speaking Center

The Speaking Center is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message. The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this direct link to sign up for a time**.** Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

The Learning Center

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to bsu.navigate.eab.com. Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center. Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: BallStateLC.

The Writing Center

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center to get additional feedback on your writing. The Writing Center can help you at any stage of the writing process, whether you're just getting started and need help brainstorming or when you're wrapping up a project and just want a second set of eyes. We work with writers from all disciplines and with all kinds of writing, including essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts.

You can choose from three appointment types: getting started on a new project (Planning appointment), discussing an existing draft (Feedback appointment), or scheduling time to work, with a tutor on hand to keep you motivated (Accountability appointment). To schedule a free appointment, go to bsu.edu/writingcenter. We offer online appointments any time we're open, or you can meet a tutor face-to-face in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays and Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings. Make sure you plan ahead, because appointments book quickly!

Student Services
If at any time you need the assistance of a mental health professional, are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the Dean of Students Office: https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/dean-of-students.

Recording the Class

Your speeches will be recorded by your lab instructor and will only be shared with the director/asst director in case of grade challenge. No other electronic recording or broadcast of any portion of this class is permitted without permission; posting audio or video recordings of any portion of this class online is not permitted without permission.

Course & Instructor Evaluation

Students will have an opportunity to participate in formal assessment of this course and the instructor's teaching performance at the end of the semester through the university's online evaluation process.

Subject to Change Statement

The syllabus and course schedule may be adjusted because of scheduling difficulties or instructional need. You are responsible for all materials and instructions given in class and on Canvas.

COMM 210 Assignments

	Point Value	% of class
Peer Evaluations	50	5%
Challenges (complete 15 options @ 10 pts each)	150	15%
Quizzes (15 quizzes, best 10 count @ 15 pts each)	150	15%
Speeches		
Inform Speech	150	15%
Pitch Speech	150	15%
Advocate Speech	200	20%
Toast Speech	150	15%
Comparative Theory Speech (Make-up/Replacement Speech)	Varies	Varies
Total Points	**1000**	

GRADES

A 100% - 93.6%	B- 83.5% - 79.6%	D 66.5% - 59.6%
A- 93.5% - 89.6%	C+ 79.5% - 76.6%	F Below 59.5%
B+ 89.5% - 86.6%	C 76.5% - 69.6%	
B 86.5% - 83.6%	D+ 69.5% - 66.6%	

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COMM 210 Tentative Schedule for T/TH

Big Idea #1: Public Speaking is Irreplaceable			
Date	**Lecture/Lab**	**Reading**	**Assignments/Topics**
August 25	TUES Lecture	Public speaking matters Growth mindset Professionalism and Play	Welcome to COMM 210
August 25	TUES Lab		Intro to Lab Instructors Course Expectations
August 27	THURS Lab		Challenge: Introduce Yourself Mini-Speech
August 30	SUNDAY		Out of Class Challenge: Vlog/Podcast #1 Quiz #1
Sept 1	TUES Lecture	Ethics & Plagiarism Comm Basics Communication App Qualities Of a Great Speaker	
Sept 1	TUES Lab		Challenge: Comm App Myth Busting
Sept 3	THURS Lab		Assign Inform
Sept 6	SUNDAY		Quiz #2
Big Idea #2: The Audience is the Hero			
Sept 8	TUES Lecture	Audience Centeredness Credibility (ethos) Purposes Topic selection Speaking from notecards	
Sept 8	TUES Lab		Challenge: Audience Analysis
Sept 10	THURS Lab		Challenge: Impromptu Speech #1
Sept 13	SUNDAY		Quiz # 3
Sept 15	TUES Lecture	Introductions and Conclusions Informative Speaking Organization Attention getters Clinchers Oral Citations Modes of delivery	Challenge: Oral Citation
Sept 15	TUES Lab		Challenge: Attention Getter Contest
Sept 17	THURS Lab		Challenge: Organization & Notecard Showdown
Sept 20	SUNDAY		Quiz #4
Sept 22	TUES Lecture	Audience in the Hero Supporting material Listening Giving & receiving feedback	Challenge: Listening
***** Out of Class Challenge: Practice Videos Due midnight the night before you deliver your INFORM Speech**			

Sept 22	**TUES Lab**		**SPEECH: Inform/Peer Evals**
Sept 24	**THURS Lab**		**SPEECH: Inform/Peer Evals**
Sept 27	SUNDAY		Quiz #5
Big Idea #3: Make Messages Stick			
Sept 29	TUES Lecture	Make Messages stick Persuasive Speaking	
Sept 29	**TUES Lab**		**SPEECH: Inform/Peer Evals**
Oct 1	THURS Lab		Assign Pitch
Oct 4	SUNDAY		Out of Class Challenge: Vlog/Podcast #2 Quiz #6
Oct 6	TUES Lecture	Presentational aids MMS	
Oct 6	TUES Lab		Challenge: Zombie MMS
Oct 8	THURS Lab		Challenge: Impromptu #2
Oct 11	SUNDAY		Quiz #7
Oct 13	No TUES Lecture/or Lab Fall Break Still need to read	Power of Story	
***** Out of Class Challenge: Practice Videos Due midnight the night before you deliver your PITCH Speech**			
Oct 15	THURS Lab		Challenge: I Dissent Debate
Oct 18	SUNDAY		Quiz #8
Oct 20	TUES Lecture	Research Source Credibility	
Oct 20	TUES Lab		**SPEECH: Pitch/Peer Evals**
Oct 22	THURS Lab		**SPEECH: Pitch/Peer Evals**
Oct 25	SUNDAY		Quiz #9
Big Idea #4: Great Speeches can Change the World			
Oct 27	TUES Lecture	Logical Fallacies Reasoning With the Toulmin method	
Oct 27	TUES Lab		Assign Advocate Topics & Begin Research
Oct 29	THURS Lab		Challenge: Toulmin Model
Nov 1	SUNDAY		Quiz #10
Nov 3	TUES Lecture	Q & A Language	
Nov 3	TUES Lab		Challenge: Word of the Day
***** Out of Class Challenge: Practice Videos Due midnight the night before you deliver your ADVOCATE Speech**			
Nov 5	THURS Lab		**SPEECH: Advocate Speech/Peer Evals**
Nov 8	SUNDAY		Out of Class Challenge: Vlog/Podcast #3 Quiz #11
Big Idea #5: Practice Makes Great Speakers			

Nov 10	TUES Lecture	The body (delivery) The voice (delivery) Coaching	
Nov 10	**TUES Lab**		**SPEECH: Advocate Speech/Peer Evals**
Nov 12	**THURS Lab**		**SPEECH: Advocate Speech/Peer Evals**
Nov 15	SUNDAY		Quiz #12
Nov 17	TUES Lecture	Special Occasion Speaking Assign Toast	
Nov 17	TUES Lab		Challenge Children's Story
Nov 19	THURS Lab		Challenge: Impromptu #3
Nov 22	SUNDAY		Quiz #13
Nov 24	TUES Lecture	Rehearsal Process Review Toast Rubric	
Nov 24	TUES Lab		Challenge Storytelling
Dec 1	TUES Lecture	Wrap Up/ Next Steps	
***** Out of Class Challenge: Practice Videos Due midnight the night before you deliver your TOAST Speech**			
Dec 1	**TUES Lab**		**SPEECH: Toast Speech/Peer Evals**
Dec 3	**THURS Lab**		**SPEECH: Toast Speech/Peer Evals**
Dec 6	SUNDAY		Quiz #14
Dec 8	COMPREHENSIVE FINAL QUIZ	Due Dec 8th by 11:59 PM	Quiz #15

Please visit the speaking center early as slots fill up fast. The last day to complete the speaking centers challenges are:

Dec 2 for the planning seesion

Dec 3 for the coaching session