COMM 210: Public Speaking Fall 2026 (Online)

Instructor

Lecturer: Mary Moore, she/her, Senior Lecturer in Communication Studies, Director of COMM210
mkmoore@bsu.edu
Link to Lab Instructor contact information

Course Pace:

Many online courses are built around one Sunday deadline each week, so it can feel surprising to see both Wednesday and Sunday due dates in COMM 210. Because this7-week course is a sprint style course we use two weekly checkpoints to help you stay engaged, manage the faster pace, and keep from falling behind.

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.	
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

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.

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 can complete 10 Challenges during the semester for credit. We actually offer 20 total, so you have choices. Some Challenges have specific due dates, while others can be completed anytime during the five weeks. There is no extra credit for doing more than 10 and the maximum you can earn from Challenges is 150 points. Each completed Challenge is worth 15 points. You are not required to complete all 10, but only the ones you finish will count toward your total. For example, if you complete 8 Challenges, you earn 80 points. This system is designed to give you flexibility while making the grading straightforward: every completed Challenge adds directly to your grade, up to the 150-point limit.

Notecard Requirement

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. Please show your notecards either before or after your speech. If you need notecards and are on campus, they are available from the main office in LB 300 or from your instructor

Audience Requirement

Since this section of COMM 210 is asynchronous online, you're responsible for finding your own audience. For your speeches, you'll need at least three adults present, either in person or on Zoom, and they need to be there for the entire speech, not just part of it. Pan your camera to show your audience before and after you speak. If your audience is virtual, they need their cameras on and should wave at the start and end of the speech. **Grading note:** Failing to meet the audience requirement results in a 10% deduction on that speech.

Recording Requirement

Recording Requirement

Start your recording on the audience, then shift to the speaker for the speech itself, then end back on the audience. If your audience is virtual, they need to wave both before and after the speech so we can see them. Your recording has to run continuous from start to finish. No pauses, no edits, no cuts. **Grading note:** Recordings with pauses or edits, or that don't show the required audience shots, won't be graded.

Delivery Requirement/ Camera Setup for Speeches

You are welcome to use a phone your laptop to record, but we recommend you film yourself landscape or horizontal. When delivering your speeches (and most of challenges) please stand up and back away from your camera so we can see more than just your face. Frame the shot to show your upper body, ideally most of your body. We need to see your posture, your gestures, how you're using the space. That's not optional in public speaking. It's part of the message. Standing also helps you physically. You breathe better, you project more energy, and it comes across as more confident, even over Zoom. Grading note: If you deliver your speech seated or framed head-and-shoulders only, that's an automatic 10% deduction on the speech grade.

Attendance Policy

This course is fully online, which means your attendance is measured through your academic engagement each week, not simply by logging into Canvas, per federal financial aid regulations. To be marked present each week, you will need to submit assignments, quizzes, or discussion posts. Please be aware that faculty are required to report student participation in compliance with institutional policies and federal financial aid guidelines.

Late Work Policy

We ask that you submit your assignment to Canvas by the due date to ensure you receive feedback at an appropriate time. All assignments have a 10-hour grace period. After which the following policies apply:
Quizzes: not accepted after a 10-hour grace period
Challenges: not accepted after a 10-hour grace period
Speeches: late submissions accepted for 5 days, will receive a 10% late penalty

Again, Quizzes and Challenges will not be accepted after the 10-hour grace period as we have a generous policy regarding both. We only count 10 of the 15 Quizzes and 10 of the 20 Challenges throughout the semester. Rather than requesting an extension or re-opening of a missed Challenge, we encourage you to look ahead to the Challenges that are still available.

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.

If you use an AI tool during the planning process for a permitted use, 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 aTUESg 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
*Challenges (complete 10 options @ 10 pts each)	150	10%
Quizzes (10 quizzes @ 15 pts each) (Canvas will drop your 5 lowest scores)	150	15%
Speeches		
Speech of Introduction	150	5%
Informative Speech	150	15%
Advocate Speech	200	20%
Toast Speech	150	15%
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%	

COMM 210 Summer (Online) Schedule

WEEK	READ/ WATCH/ LISTEN	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1	**Watch: Intro to COMM 210 Online** Watch: Challenge Expectations Quiz 1: Syllabus, How to Record a Great Speech, & Growth Mindset Quiz 2: Communication Basics, Communication Apprehension, Professionalism and Play, Qualities of a Great Speaker & Coaching	**WEDNESDAY:** Quiz #1 & Quiz #2 **SUNDAY:** Practice Videos for Speech of Introduction **SPEECH OF INTRODUCTION**
WEEK 2	**Watch: Week 2 Overview** Quiz 3: Read Purposes, Oral Citations & Disruptions and Mistakes Quiz 4: Audience Centeredness, Topic Selection, & Organization Quiz 5: Listening, Credibility (Ethos) & Giving & Receiving Feedback	**WEDNESDAY:** Quiz #3 & Quiz #4 **SUNDAY:** Quiz #5
WEEK 3	**Watch: Week 3 Overview** Quiz 6: Informative Speaking Quiz 7: Introductions & Conclusions, Attention Getters, & Clinchers Quiz 8: Presentational Aids, Slide Design, & How to Build PowerPoint Slides Like a Graphic Designer	**WEDNESDAY** Quiz #6 & Quiz #7 **SUNDAY** Quiz #8 Practice Videos for INFO Speech **INFORMATIVE SPEECH**
WEEK 4	**Watch: Week 4 Overview** Quiz 9: Supporting Material & Persuasive Speaking Q10: Source Credibility & Research	**WEDNESDAY** Quiz #9 **SUNDAY** Quiz #10
WEEK 5	**Watch: Week 5 Overview** Q11: Reasoning with the Toulmin Method, Logical Fallacies & How to Spot Logical Fallacies Q12: How to Handle Questions During Your Presentation, Lecture on Q & A & the 3-2-1 Speaking Trick That Forces You to Stop Rambling!	**WEDNESDAY** Quiz # 11 Quiz # 12 **SUNDAY** Practice Videos for Advocate Speech **ADVOCATE SPEECH**
WEEK 6	**Watch: Week 6 Overview** Quiz 13: Disruptions and Mistakes, Modes of Delivery, Voice & Vocal Delivery & Body & Physical Delivery Quiz 14: Special Occasion Speaking & Rehearsal Process Quiz 15: Power of Story & How to Use Humor in Your Speech Without it Being Awkward?	**WEDNESDAY** Quiz #13 & Quiz #14 **SUNDAY** Quiz #15
WEEK 7	**Watch: Week 5 Overview**	**SUNDAY** Practice Videos for TOAST Speech **TOAST SPEECH**

Challenges: Choose 10 of the following 20 challenges to complete:

Practice Videos -Intro Speech	(can submit week 1)	Attention Getter Challenge	(can submit week 1-6)
Practice Videos- Info Speech	(can submit week 3)	Impromptu #3	(can submit week 1-6)
Impromptu #1	(can submit week 1-4)	Vlog #3	(can submit week 1-6)
Impromptu #2	(can submit week 1-4)	Children's Book Reading	(can submit week 1-6)
Vlog #1	(can submit week 1-4)	Joke Challenge	(can submit week 1-6)
Vlog #2	(can submit week 1-4)	Slide Design Challenge	(can submit week 1-6)
Practice Videos-Advocate	(can submit week 1-5)	Storytelling	(can submit week 1-6)
Speaking Center- Planning	(can submit week 1-6)	Verbal filler	(can submit week 1-6)
		Word of the day speech	(can submit week 1-6)
		Speaking Center- Delivery	(can submit week 1-6)
		Practice Videos -Toast	(can submit week 1-7)
		Speech self-reflection	(can submit only week 7)