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| Instructor/Course: | <b>Derek Story - Com 110 Sec 51 – Fell Hall 148 – ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY</b>                          |
| Office:            | <b>NSB 201K / FEL 450 / Zoom</b> (Complicated – like your Social Media relationship status) <sup>1</sup> |
| Office Email:      | <a href="mailto:djstory@ilstu.edu">djstory@ilstu.edu</a> & <b>ONLY</b> from your ISU account             |
| Office Hours:      | Fridays from 2:30-4:00p <u>and also by arrangement</u> (call/email as needed)                            |

### **TEXTS & MATERIALS**

Simonds, C. J., Hunt, S. K., & Simonds, B. K. (2018). Engaging communication. (Top Hat eBook version). Fountainhead Press. (**see class announcements for how to buy/enroll in this platform**)

Simonds, C. J., Hooker, J. F., Hunt, S. K., & Kaufmann, J. J. (2025). Communication as critical inquiry: Student workbook. Stipes Publishing. (**see class announcements and in-class discussion prior to purchase**)

**COM 110 Top Hat eBook.** You are required to have an eBook for COM 110, which you will access through the interactive platform Top Hat. This platform will allow you to engage with the textbook and complete assignments for the course. You will receive an invitation from Top Hat to register your book with your section of the course. You may purchase eBook access directly from Top Hat or at the bookstores.

### **COURSE GOALS**

Communication as Critical Inquiry (Com 110) seeks to improve students' abilities to express themselves and to listen to others in a variety of communication settings. Effective oral communication is viewed as an essential life skill that every person must possess to function in today's society. Our course emphasizes participation in a variety of communication processes to develop, reinforce, and evaluate communication skills appropriate for public, small group, and interpersonal settings. The course content and experiences will enable students to assume their responsibilities as speaker-listener-critic in a culturally diverse world, striving for inclusivity. In short, the course is designed to make students competent, ethical, critical, confident, and information-literate communicators. COM 110 addresses the following General Education outcomes (Primary outcomes are indicated in plain text and secondary outcomes in italics).

- II. intellectual and practical skills, allowing students to
  - a. make informed judgments
  - c. report information effectively and responsibly
  - e. deliver purposeful presentations that inform attitudes or behaviors
- III. personal and social responsibility, allowing students to
  - a. *participate in activities that are both individually life-enriching and socially beneficial to a diverse community*
  - c. interact competently in a variety of cultural contexts
- IV. integrative and applied learning, allowing students to
  - a. identify and solve problems
  - b. transfer learning to novel situations
  - c. work effectively in teams

### **OUR APPROACH:**

I am here to promote an environment where we can have fun learning. That environment cannot be accomplished without the full participation of EVERYONE in the class. I like to bring real-world (and fake-world) examples in and have us relate these to class concepts. Grades are earned and awarded based on effort and product. This is college and you will find yourself challenged to rise to that level of learning. I would be doing both of us (and future generations) a disservice if I did not ask and require your full potential. We will meet both synchronously (at the time you signed up for from the course calendar) and asynchronously (apart from one another). More on that in the course schedule at the bottom. That said, this next section of the syllabus can appear heavy...

**ATTENDANCE / TARDINESS / PROFESSIONALISM:** This is the big one. We both are expected to come to class prepared (I weekly post announcements of anticipated work on our Canvas Site). Being absent or late (even to a Zoom appointment) will deprive us of valuable class discussions and will also prevent us from fulfilling certain graded in-class activities **which cannot be made up**. With that in mind, sleeping, reading materials irrelevant to class purposes (like texts from “the dude”), and disrupting the class will not be tolerated. Because many people are nervous when speaking publicly, we will be supportive both verbally and nonverbally.

All **approved absences** are those with prior approval arrangements (YOU and I both understand **well before** class begins that you will be gone). Assignments that are due that day will still need to be submitted on (or before) that day. Per the Undergraduate Catalog, you are responsible for attending class and completing academic work. This means written arrangements with me in advance if you will be missing class due to participation in sanctioned University activities, satisfying religious obligation, exercise of bereavement leave (below), or other university-recognized excused absence. If you are absent due to a required self-isolation or quarantine, you will need to provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office for your absence to be excused and can reach them at this link: <https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/contact/absence/>.

- Professionalism includes respecting others’ opinions, not interrupting in class, being respectful to those who are speaking, and working together in a spirit of cooperation.
- All assigned readings need to be done before class – (questions/answers/prepared discussion items)
- Texting, chatting, snapping, swiping, and recording are not permitted during class (I feel like we covered this already...) without advanced permission
- Students who experience the death of an immediate family member or relative as defined in the University Student Bereavement Policy will be excused from class for funeral leave, subsequent bereavement, and/or travel considerations. Students are responsible for providing appropriate documentation to the *Dean of Students* office and for contacting the instructor as soon as possible to for completing missed work. <https://policy.illinoisstate.edu/students/2-1-27/>

**CHEATING/PLAGIARISM:** Students are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on speech topics and/or the presentation of someone else’s work warrants plagiarism. Students found to inadvertently commit acts of dishonesty will receive appropriate penalties specific to the assignment in question. Students found to commit intentional acts of dishonesty will receive a failing grade in the course and will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action through *Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution*. All work submitted in this course must be your own original work, and not borrowed from “high school you.” Content generated in AI can also be considered plagiarism. **We will use some AI in class**, but when appropriate.

**GRADE DISCUSSIONS/CHALLENGES/NOTE ON GROUP SPEECH:** All speeches, assignments, and exams must be completed on the date specified as assigned. Here is the hard truth – **I DO NOT accept late work**. As an instructor, I am always willing to discuss students’ grades on assignments on an individual basis; all students must wait at least **24 hours** and complete the *Evaluation Challenge* in the spiral within a week of the grade received.

**NOTE:** If you are not passing this class at the time of the Group Speech – you will not be placed into a group and may complete an alternative assignment only eligible for **80%** of the total maximum value of the Group Speech.

**ILLINOIS ARTICULATION INITIATIVE (C2900: Oral Communication)** - The Illinois Articulation Initiative is designed to allow students to transfer course credit between institutions. The IAI requires that all Com 110 students present at least three speaking opportunities that include research and are five minutes, or longer, in duration. Additionally, these speaking opportunities (participation) must comprise at least 50% of the overall grade.

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

**PARTICIPATION, REFLECTIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR QUIZZES:** You will be expected to complete reading (really) and be familiar with the text prior to the class period in which we will be discussing them (really). This will help you be prepared for discussion and to earn any points awarded during class periods. Those opportunities are only available the day of that class. Group and individual activities will be in class almost always, and points will be assessed there. Alternatively, there will be some uploads and reflections that you will do online in Canvas. This will be about 200 of your points.

## **SPEECHES:**

Students will present three major speeches worth 100 points each (& a few others for smaller value):

1. Informative (approx. 5 min)
2. Persuasive (approx. 5-7 min)
3. TBD (length TBD)

**These three speeches must be completed to pass the course. This is a University requirement. If you do not deliver a speech, you will fail the course regardless of grades on other assignments.** Each presentation will be evaluated on both content and delivery. Specific details will be clearly outlined in class, on Canvas, as well as in spirals. If you miss your assigned speech day/deposit, you will receive a **ZERO** on the speech. Exceptions to this rule are very rare and made at the instructor's discretion. These three major speeches are 100 points per speech and the details for assignment expectations and grading rubrics will be posted in Canvas 2-3 weeks prior to the due dates. **NOTE:** If there is a group assignment, and you are not passing this course at the time that is assigned, you will not be able to be assigned to a group, and will not be able to earn full credit for that assignment.

## **EVALUATION (roughly 500 points at semester end):**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Major Speeches | 300+ pts. |
|----------------|-----------|

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Other Assessment Material (Reflections/Quizzes/Small Speeches/In-class "stuff") | 200+ pts. |
|---|-----------|

The grading scale is a standard ten-percentage point scale – and grades will be posted as available in Canvas:

90-100% = A ; 80%-89% = B; 70%-79% = C; 60-69% = D; below 60% = F

**\*\***In this course, simply completing an assignment does not result in an "A." See spiral for specifics on Grading Criteria for Speaking Assignments. ".5" rounds up, I am not a monster. "You're the monster, Gaston." Extra credit will be offered, but "as we go" and not all at the end.

## **OTHER RESOURCES:**

**Com110 LAB & LIBRARY:** We work very closely with some folks on campus with regards to preparing your speech, offering feedback, and helping to gain additional research tools. These resources are typically updated very close to the beginning of the semester, so we will go over these on night one in class, otherwise, by request to me.

**SPECIAL NEEDS:** Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact *Student Access and Accommodation Services* at 308 Fell Hall, Phone (309) 438-5853, Video Phone (309) 319-7682 or website at [StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu](http://StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu).

**MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:** Life at college can get very complicated. Students sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. SCS is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at [Counseling.IllinoisState.edu](http://Counseling.IllinoisState.edu) or by calling (309) 438-3655.

COURSE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE: College can get expensive, but there are solutions for which you might not have been informed. If you have concerns about being able to afford the materials for this class, there are several options for you.

- As early as possible, let your instructor know if the cost of the materials will be a barrier to your success in class. Your instructor will be able to point you to resources that may assist you.
- Through Milner Library you can access course materials using their course reserve service. These materials can be used for two-hour time blocks inside Milner Library. You can also ask a librarian for assistance with this process.
- Your academic advisor is knowledgeable about your academic goals and will assist you in navigating your academic experience.
- Make an appointment with a financial aid counselor and specifically mention you are seeking help paying for course materials. The Financial Aid office can ensure students are using all forms of available aid and will investigate options for students, such as a Short-Term Emergency Student Loan.

FINAL THOUGHTS: This syllabus (including the first 3 pages) is a contract between us. Though the schedule may shift a bit here and there as the course proceeds, everything we have discussed thus far (we will cover questions the first night of class) in the syllabus will not. I am contracting with you to follow these guidelines. I will ask you to sign and date it below; so that I *know* that you have read and understood it.

**I HAVE READ THE SYLLABUS FOR DEREK STORY'S COM 110 CLASS AND AGREE TO THE TERMS FOR REQUIRED  
COURSEWORK AND ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR ABOVE.  
INITIAL BELOW SOME OF THE BIGGER "TAKEAWAYS"**

- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand DStory wants me to succeed and will give me all of the instructions needed to do so. If I feel I don't have enough info in order to be successful, I will ask him for help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have received and read a copy of the syllabus and calendar for this course and agree to the terms. Specifically, I understand the following are my responsibilities and my failure to comply may result in point deductions and possibly failure from the course.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand I need to check ilstu email & Canvas frequently for updates/revisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand this is a college-level course meaning that DStory expects me to read the syllabus and schedule, check Canvas and email, look for the answers in the book, class notes, and spiral book. I understand DStory wants me to learn how to be independent and, as a result, will not give me the answers to every question because he wants me to learn how to learn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand if I do not complete all three major speeches this term, I cannot pass the class.

UID \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE (ONLY USED FOR URGENT NEEDS) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. PLEASE LIST AT LEAST TWO GOALS THAT YOU HOPE TO MEET THROUGH THIS COURSE:**

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**2. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU "GROW UP?"**

**3. WHEN YOU GROW UP, AND EVERYTHING TURNS OUT JUST RIGHT, AND YOU WAKE UP IN THE MORNING AND OPEN THE WINDOW OF YOUR ROOM, WHAT WILL YOU SEE OUTSIDE / WHAT WILL BE YOUR VIEW?**

**4. BEST MOVIE/BOOK YOU HAVE SEEN/READ RECENTLY? WHY? WHAT ABOUT EVER? WHY AGAIN?**

RECENTLY:  
EVER:

WHY:  
WHY:

**5. FAVORITE SNACK (NOT THAT WAY...DON'T BE GROSS):**

**SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE SLIGHTLY AS WE PROGRESS AND AS NEEDED. WE WILL DISCUSS THOSE CHANGES ONLINE AND I WILL POST UPDATES AS THEY ARE SOLIDIFIED.**

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**GREY – UNIT 1 (IMMERSION)**

**ORANGE – UNIT 2 (MESSAGE CLARITY)**

| <b>Week 1<br/>8/17</b> | <b>Modality/Location<br/>"In class" = Fell Hall</b> | <b>Topic</b>   | <b>Tentative<br/>Chapters<br/>&amp; Other<br/>Reading</b> | <b>Assignment Due<br/>All Assignments in this column due<br/>Fridays by 5pm</b> |
|------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| T                      | In class  | Orientation/Introductions<br>Syllabus<br>Defining Communication<br>Intro Speech Assignment Summary | Ch. 1   |   |
| Th                     | In class  | Comm Apprehension/Confidence   | Ch. 2   |   |
| Fr                     | Optional Office Hours                               |  |   | Syllabus & Intro Speech Due   |
| <b>Week 2<br/>8/24</b> |   |  |   |   |
| T                      | In class  | Perception & Ethics<br>CIP Assignment Overview   | Ch. 3 & 4   |   |
| Th                     | In class  | Topic Selection & AI   | Ch. 5   |   |
| Fr                     | Optional Office Hours                               |  |   | CIP Speech & Outline Due  |
| <b>Week 3<br/>8/31</b> |   |  |   |   |
| T                      | In class  | Information Literacy & Audience  | Ch. 6 & 7   |   |
| Th                     | In class  | Let's talk about that Unit 1 Quiz<br>and re-group on assignments                                   |   |   |
| Fr                     | Optional Office Hours                               |  |   | Unit 1 Reflection Due in Canvas<br>Informative Speech Proposal Due              |
| <b>Week 4<br/>9/7</b>  |   |  |   |   |
| T                      | In class  | Intros and Conclusions & Delivery  | Ch. 10 & 13   |   |
| Th                     | In class  | Organizing and Outlining   | Ch. 8 & 9   | 2 Min Train Speech<br>Informative Outline Due<br>Informative Speech Trailer Due |
| Fr                     | Optional Office Hours                               |  |   |   |
| <b>Week 5<br/>9/14</b> |   |  |   |   |
| T                      | Online and in person                                | Informative Speech Conferences   |   |   |
| Th                     | Online and in person                                | Informative Speech Conferences   |   |   |
| Fr                     | Optional Office Hours                               |  |   |   |
| <b>Week 6<br/>9/21</b> |   |  |   |   |
| T                      | In class  | Informative Speeches   |   |   |
| Th                     | In class  | Informative Speeches   |   |   |
| Fr                     | Optional Office Hours                               | Special Speeches by Appt   |   |   |

**\*\*This second "half" will be posted when we make it through in weeks 1-6**