MESSAGE FROM THE BASIC COURSE DIRECTOR

Dear students:

As the Director for this course, I’d like to welcome you to what I hope will be one of the best classes you take at URI. Whether you’re enrolled in this class to fulfill a general education requirement, or as the introduction to your Communication Studies major, you will be gaining theoretical knowledge and practical and analytical skills that will help you to be successful in your life and career, wherever those may take you.

I am proud of our exceptional faculty who deliver this course every year to 3500 students enrolled in more than 150 sections of COM100, COM100H, and COM110. Your professor is highly educated and trained, and committed to your success in this course. Take the time to get to know your instructor, visit with them during office hours and you’ll soon discover what all studies indicate—students who meet regularly with their instructors score higher on all course assignments.

On the first day of class, your instructor will remind you to purchase the book and/or access code for this course from the URI Book Store. Because this course is so large, we’ve used our size and leverage to negotiate with book publishers to get you the best prices you’ll find anywhere on the most current readings in the field. All of the readings and assignments in this course have been designed specifically for URI students, cutting the price to you in half, and providing you with the most up-to-date knowledge in the field, and cutting-edge technology and assessments to further your learning in this course.

Your instructor should always be your first point of contact for this course, and will provide you with a complete course schedule, including all of the assignments to be completed. Although you should always go to your instructor first with questions, please let me know if I can do anything to make your experience in this class the best that it can possibly be.

Welcome to Communication Fundamentals!

Sincerely,

Adam David Roth

Adam David Roth, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Basic Course Director
Department of Communication Studies
Harrington School of Communication and Media
The University of Rhode Island
adamroth@uri.edu
MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Dear students:

Welcome to Communication Fundamentals. It will appear on your transcript as COM Fun, a deliberate abbreviation, because we believe you will enjoy as well as learn in this class.

Some of you will take this class as part of your general education program, and others as an introduction to your major of Communication Studies. Whether you are a COM major or this is the only class you take in Communication Studies, you will benefit from the small, interactive classes. You will be introduced to the basic principles of human communication as well as the communication contexts of interpersonal communication, small group communication and public communication. Understanding audiences is important in all communication contexts; therefore a significant component of the class is examining human difference, a concept that underlies audience analysis and introduces the areas of intercultural and co-cultural communication.

Finally, you will have an opportunity to put the concepts you are learning to use in class presentations. Students in every major will discover that success in their major and in their career is enhanced by improved public communication skills.

Welcome to COM Fun!

Sincerely,

Kevin McClure

Kevin McClure, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Communication Studies
Harrington School of Communication and Media
The University of Rhode Island
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Competent communication is based on the ability to create and share meaning effectively and appropriately in a variety of contexts. This course provides students with theoretical knowledge and practical experience in communicating interpersonally, across cultures, in groups and teams, and in public spaces. We combine an understanding of the theories and research on communication with the development of practical skills. Since audience adaptation is fundamental to effective communication, an appreciation for the differences among people will be integrated into our studies. Through speeches and a paper, in-class and on-line activities, class discussions and debates, we will explore the ways in which differences shape identities and communication styles, and how to recognize and analyze the range of ways in which people communicate, in an effort to also improve our own skills in communicating with a variety of people. A primary focus in this course is on speaking effectively, using and evaluating qualitative data, and examining human differences.

Communication is one of the great issues of our times. It is a subject that touches all aspects of our lives, and nothing as we know it today would be the same without it. As an intellectual subject, communication has roots dating back to ancient Greece, when Plato and Aristotle wrote important texts on the role of communication in democratic societies, and initiated a 2500-year history of research in communication. Today, Communication Studies is a broad subject, with areas of study ranging from interpersonal communication and conflict management, to globally distributed music and films, from theories of rhetoric and persuasion in society, to the interpretation of political discourse. If you like what you learn in this class, then consider checking out our other course offerings and declaring Communication Studies as your major.

Note on Difficulty Level

Although this course is introductory level, you should not expect that it will be easy. In fact, basic knowledge is sometimes more challenging to grasp than advanced topics, since the ambiguities are often more profound. Many people take communication for granted; they consider it natural. In this course, you will explore the many wonderful nuances of communication, and develop theoretical insights and practical skills that are guaranteed to be important in your life and career. Although the work will not be easy, you will be given many opportunities to demonstrate your knowledge and be evaluated fairly.
COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Recognize core concepts and theories of public communication, interpersonal communication and small group communication.
- Apply theories and skills to be a competent communicator in a variety of contexts, with diverse audiences.
- Understand various styles of communicating and analyze the role of human differences in shaping communicative practices.
- Analyze and evaluate the oral and written messages and arguments of others.
- Collect original research and utilize qualitative and quantitative data to support oral and written messages and arguments.
- Construct effective arguments and communicate those arguments to diverse audiences in oral and written forms.
- Demonstrate ethical communication when constructing arguments, interpreting messages, and communicating with others.

COURSE WEBSITE

Please sign in to your course website on Sakai (https://sakai.uri.edu/portal/). After you enter the course website, use your access code (purchased separately or packaged along with your book) to access the premium content on the course website (i.e., e-book and chapter quizzes). Click on “Start Here” to register your code and save your username and password to access your resources throughout the semester. After signing in, if you’re presented with a screen that does not close after five seconds, please close the window and go back into your course in Sakai to access all of the resources available.

REQUIRED TEXT AND ACCESS CODE

By the end of the first week of classes, students must purchase either:

1. An access code that grants entry to the e-book and all online assessments;

These products and the readings for this course are designed specifically for URI students, and they are for sale in the URI Book Store. Because we offer so many sections of this course, we use our size to leverage book publishers, to cut the price of their products in half, by customizing our book and online technology applications. We are pleased to offer you state-of-the-art assessment technologies, and the most up-to-date readings in communication, for less than half the price that introduction to communication texts usually sell for (around $125). Your instructor will explain more about how to use your access code to complete the online assessments in this course.
**REQUIRED COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Opening Speech (1–2 minutes)
2. Informative Speech (5–7 minutes)
3. Group Presentation (20–25 minutes)
4. Midterm and Final Exam (approximately 75 questions each)
5. Communication Analysis Paper (5–7 pages)
6. On-line Quizzes and Activities for Each Chapter
7. Participation (assignments, activities, class discussions, attendance)

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Students will receive a detailed schedule during the first week of classes, outlining all of the readings and assignments that will be completed over the course of the semester, including the date when the final exam will be administered. Unless your instructor has told you otherwise, final exam dates and times are determined by the University, and can be found at: http://www.uri.edu/es/menus/acadcal.html. Your instructor will distribute assignment sheets and directions no less than two weeks before any assignment is due.

**RESEARCH STATEMENT**

As a student registered in this course, you may be asked to participate in research questionnaires, and you may be offered extra credit for doing so. Although participation is voluntary, if you do not wish to participate in the study, an alternative assignment will be administered, if extra credit is being offered.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Any student with a documented disability should contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible so that we can arrange reasonable accommodations. As part of this process, please be in touch with the Disability Services for Students’ office at 330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098.

**CIVILITY POLICY**

The University of Rhode Island has adopted a civility policy regarding disruptive classroom behaviors. Disruptive behaviors are defined as behaviors that interfere with the learning and teaching process. Disruptive behaviors in the classroom include inappropriate talking during lectures or class discussions, or in any manner interfering with other students’ ability to have a quality learning experience. Students who engage in disruptive behavior will receive one warning without penalty. Continued incidents of disrupting the class will result in the initiation of removal procedures or the loss of a letter grade. Disruptive behaviors especially include cell phone and pager use during class time. Cell phones and pagers must not be used during class time. Common sense and common courtesy should govern classroom civility.
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student’s name on any written work shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student’s own thought and study. Work should be stated in the student’s own words, properly attributed to its sources. Students have an obligation to know how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, or reference the work of others with integrity. The University Manual contains detailed information and examples of academic dishonesty: http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html

Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate “0” for the assignment and possibly failure of the course. Cases of academic dishonesty are reported to URI officials at the discretion of the instructor.

All incidents of academic dishonesty will be immediately reported to the Basic Course Director, Dr. Adam David Roth. Further actions may be warranted and can result in expulsion from the University.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and on-time attendance is expected. We do recognize, however, that circumstances may arise that necessitate your absence from class. Therefore, you may miss up to a week’s worth of classes without penalty, for illness, funerals, court appearances, or other personal reasons. Additional absences will result in the following semester grade penalties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Class Meets</th>
<th>MWF</th>
<th>TTH</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EXCUSED ABSENCES</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ letter grade penalty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 letter grade penalty</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ½ letter grade penalty</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTOMATIC COURSE FAILURE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unless you make prior arrangements with your instructor, missing a scheduled speech, quiz, test, or assignment, for any reason, will result in a grade of “0.” If you do miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate and making up any work that you miss.

*consult your instructor for summer-session attendance policies.*

GRADE POLICY FOR COMMUNICATION MAJORS

Students who wish to pursue Communication Studies as their major must earn a grade of “B-“ or better in this course, whether or not you have taken other communication classes before. The course can be taken up to three times.
**GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Rarely, issues arise that may require arbitration. If such an issue does occur, and only after you have initially tried to resolve the issue with your instructor—in a professional and respectful manner—please contact the Director of the Basic Course Program, Dr. Adam David Roth, at: adamroth@uri.edu; or 401-874-9526.

*On behalf of the Harrington School of Communication and Media, the Department of Communication Studies, and all of the instructors who deliver this course to 3500 students enrolled in more than 150 sections every year, we wish you a fun, successful, and engaging learning experience.*

*Welcome to Communication Fundamentals, and to the study of one of the great issues of our times!*
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

URI SPEAKING CENTER
002 Davis Hall
http://harrington.uri.edu/speaking-center
(book appointments online!)
401-874-2284

The URI Speaking Center provides assistance to students who need or want to improve their public speaking skills, or manage issues regarding speech apprehension and anxiety. The Center is staffed by undergraduate peer tutors, graduate students, and faculty who ensure that students are adequately trained to prepare, develop, and deliver oral presentations. The URI Speaking Center also serves to prepare students for the inevitable expectation of effective public speaking in their careers. Please stop by the URI Speaking Center or check out their website for operating hours.

WRITING CENTER
Roosevelt Hall, 4th Floor
www.uri.edu/writingcenter
(book appointments online!)
401-874-2367

The URI Writing Center is open and free to all members of the University of Rhode Island community and is available to all writers, at all levels, in all disciplines. Any student may bring any piece of writing at any stage to the Writing Center for feedback.

THE ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT CENTER
Roosevelt Hall, 4th Floor
www.uri.edu/aec
401-874-2367

AEC tutors can answer questions, clarify concepts, check your understanding of course material, and help you to study. The Academic Enhancement Center helps students get more out of their studies. They offer tutoring in a wide range of subjects, help with time management and study skills, supplemental instruction in challenging courses, and a comfortable place to relax and study alone or with friends.
Technical Support

SAKAI QUESTIONS

University of Rhode Island Sakai Site:
Login, news, instructions, tools, and tips
sakai.uri.edu

ITS Services Computer Help Desk
General Support for Sakai
www.uri.edu/helpdesk/
sakai-uri@etal.uri.edu
401-URI-HELP (874-4357)
helpdesk@uri.edu
IM: URIComputing
Walk-in: URI Kingston Library (LL19)

VERY IMPORTANT/ save and register your access code:
1. Navigate to the University’s Sakai homepage
2. Log on using your university username and password
3. Click on your Communication Fundamentals course website
4. Click on “Start Here” to register your access code
5. Once registered, access content in Sakai—i.e., e-book, flashcards, etc.
Student Contract

I received a class syllabus and an explanation of the policy on absences. I understand that I can miss no more than one week’s worth of class without penalty. I know that I must attend class and submit all work on time and at a passing level and that I must participate in class discussions in order to receive a passing grade. Furthermore, I will purchase a book and access code (or access code sold alone) from the URI Book Store in order to complete all assignments for this course. By signing this contract, I agree to abide by the rules (including the academic honesty policy) for this course as stated in the syllabus. The instructor, on the other hand, will do everything in her/his power to be fair and just, while adhering to the guidelines set forth in the syllabus.

Signed: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Name (print): ______________________ Instructor signature: ________________

E-mail & phone number: _______________________________________________

Intended major/career: _______________________________________________ 

Academic level (i.e., freshman, sophomore): _____________________________

✓ Please list communication (oral and written) courses you have taken (high school or college) and other experiences you feel will contribute to your success in this course.

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

✓ When it comes to public speaking, I

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

✓ When it comes to working in groups, I

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

✓ When I think of “communication”, I think about

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

✓ Do you have any needs that will require special accommodations?

____________________________________________________________________
Additional Student Data Sheet

Name: ________________________________

- Which communication skills do you anticipate will be most important in your academic major or future career?

- Which communication skills do you think you need to work on most in this class?

- Do you consider yourself a good speaker? What, specifically, are your strengths?

- Do you consider yourself a good writer? What, specifically, are your strengths?

- Do you consider yourself a good listener? What, specifically, are your strengths?

- What do you know about the history of communication studies? Do you know about Plato and Aristotle’s writings on communication and rhetoric?

- What is the most pressing issue facing communication today?

- What will be the most pressing communication issue in 2050?

- Why is communication so important to democratic societies?