

Criteria for Communication-A Courses

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Purpose

The first course is to be a basic course in communication skills at the college level, developing student abilities in writing and public speaking, for both exposition and argumentation. As such, the course is to serve as a general foundation in the central skills and conventions required for student success in a variety of subsequent course work, as well as in careers after college.

Objectives

The course will advance basic skills in:

- The four modes of literacy: writing, speaking, reading & listening, with special emphasis on writing
- Critical thinking
- Information-seeking skills and strategies

These skills should be taught through continuous practice in the process of writing and speaking. Although the items listed below suggest a sequence, many or all of them are simultaneously learned in this process. Courses which satisfy the new University requirement must advance student skills in the following areas:

- **Planning:**
Selecting, narrowing, and focusing topics
Identifying and analyzing audience information needs
Generating and organizing ideas
Comprehending and analyzing texts
- **Drafting:**
Learning structures of exposition and argument & the use of evidence
Organizing and developing paragraphs, papers, and speeches
Adapting writing and speaking for intended audiences
Learning conventions of academic writing
Mastering elements of grammar, usage, and style
Preparing speeches for oral delivery
Citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, and compiling accurate bibliographies
- **Revising:**
Developing critical skills for reading and listening -- in review of peer writing/speaking
Revising and editing essays and speeches -- for spelling, punctuation, grammar, style, organization, and logic
Critiquing assigned readings and speeches delivered outside class

- **Information-Seeking Skills and Strategies:**

Develop and adapt information seeking strategies in order to access information effectively
Evaluate information retrieved and select information sources appropriate to the particular research need information

Requirements

- Frequent assignments in writing and speaking totaling 25-30 pages of clear, revised prose, including at least one researched essay and several prepared oral presentations, including one researched speech; completion of the information component developed in conjunction with the campus library user education program.
- "Students required by their school/college to complete two freshman-level courses shall complete both courses before earning 45 credits; students required to take one freshman-level course shall complete the course during the freshman year and the remaining credits later as prescribed by the school/college" (Faculty Document 1065).

Assessment

There will be normal evaluations of student work by individual instructors. In addition, each course proposal shall include an assessment plan designed to demonstrate that the course meets the objectives stated above.

Consistent with the University General Education Assessment Plan (first approved in May 2008), student learning with respect to the broad learning outcomes for Comm A courses will also be assessed at the program level.

Format

Class size should be held to 20 or fewer students; 2-3 contact hours per week (L & S policy currently requires 3 credits).

Instructors

Faculty, academic staff, experienced TAs.