

Intro to the Major – COM 102
Western Connecticut State University

Sec. 01: M & W 10:50am-12:05pm (8/29-10/20)	Office Hours (BR 225):	8/29 – 10/20	10/21-12/17
Professor: Dr. Jessica Eckstein		M 7:45-8:15am	M 10:40-12:10pm
Website: www.jessicaeckstein.com/teaching		W 7:45-9:15am	W 10:40-12:10pm
Email: jessicommclass@gmail.com		R 11am-2:00pm	R 11:00-1:00pm

Course Description Expose Freshman Communication majors to areas that will help ease the transition from high school to college, in a discipline-specific way. A practical resource for students to become oriented to the Communication major. One SH in this class over 8 weeks (two 50 minute classes/wk) = approx. 13 hrs. in class *and* for each hour inside class, about 1 hr. outside of class (roughly, 13 additional hrs. in the semester) working on assignments/studying.

Learning Objectives

You'll become familiar with ideal study strategies, the fastest and most actually useful resources to be successful campus, stylistic considerations for using research at a college-level (i.e. APA style), and retention strategies – all specific to Communication. You'll also practice in-person and social media networking and self-promotion and come to recognize practical uses of a liberal arts degree.

Student Learning Goals/Outcomes

Describe Communication & Media Arts (C&MA) discipline and its central questions (#1): (a) Explain the origins of, (b) Summarize broad nature of, (c) Categorize various career pathways for students of, and (g) Identify with specializations in the C&MA discipline; (d) Articulate importance of C&MA expertise in career development & civic engagement; and (f) Distinguish C&MA discipline from related areas of study.

Engage in C&MA inquiry and creative activity (#3): (f) Differentiate between various approaches to study of C&MA.

Create messages appropriate to audience, purpose, & context (#4): (a) Locate & use info relevant to goals, audiences, purposes & contexts; (e) Adjust messages while in process; and (f) Critically reflect on one's own messages.

Demonstrate the ability to accomplish communicative goals (self-efficacy) (#6): (a) Identify contexts, situations & barriers that impede C&MA self-efficacy; (b) Perform verbal & nonverbal C&MA behaviors that illustrate self-efficacy; (c) Articulate personal beliefs about abilities to accomplish C&MA goals; and (d) Evaluate personal C&MA strengths & weaknesses.

What do I expect from you?

ATTENTION. Listen & comprehend. I won't repeat myself – either in class or in office hours. Feel free to ask for clarity, but not redundancy. I won't tolerate anyone detracting from classmates' abilities to learn.

PREPARATION. Come to class ready to discuss the day's content.

PARTICIPATION. My classes are active learning environments; “organized chaos” exists. This succeeds to the extent you participate & engage – and I expect both.

ENGAGEMENT. There is no silencing in this class; all are expected to express ideas freely & respectfully.

All ideas are important to consider, regardless of bias so I'll play “devil's advocate” to provoke discussion.

RESPECT. I expect you to help create an atmosphere of caring, concern (for well-being of all), fun, and energy!

What can you expect from me?

* For each class, I will be fully prepared & work hard to engage you in a stimulating and interactive manner.

* I will work to provide assignments, discussions, and in-class activities to challenge your thinking.

* I will be available to you through email and office hours.

* I will provide clear and concise instructions on all assignments & promptly return them to you graded.

By remaining in this class after the first day, you are providing passive consent that...

- You acknowledge reading and understanding all syllabus details/policies; they are non-negotiable.
- You accept that material in this course will be *disturbing, controversial, offensive*, and/or may otherwise *make you very uncomfortable*; that is the nature of this course.
- If you cannot agree (for whatever reason) to these conditions, you will drop this course.

MATERIALS: To the extent feasible (and legal), I want to save you \$. Thus, *most* assigned materials (e.g., readings) are accessible from my website. The only required reading to purchase for this course is an APA manual. **I highly recommend getting:** APA Publication Manual (6th ed.). *It's the blue & green one. Trust me, if you're a comm. major, you'll use it for more than just this class!*

Films may be available online, but are formally only shown in class. Lectures are a primary source of new content/info in my courses, so it's important to be in class to actually get the material.

DEADLINES-DUE DATES: All work must be submitted ON or BEFORE due dates (received via email attachment - *.doc, .docx, .odt, or .pdf files only* – prior to class due); late work is never accepted for any reason.

PARTICIPATION: My course mirrors the real world where showing up/looking interested are mandatory. Missed in-class activities can't be made-up; you're responsible for getting missed take-home assignments (still due when scheduled) from classmates. My office hours are to clarify concepts - not to re-cover material from days you're absent/not paying attention. **Text, sleep, read, do other-class's work? You win an automatic absence that day (trust me, I always see it). You must email me immediately after class with any notes taken on a laptop.** Read the Code of Conduct for expectations (www.wcsu.edu/studenthandbook/). *No* disruptions tolerated; perceived threat/other disruptions must leave; fail to do so & WCSU security called (& you may automatically fail). **I may offer extra credit (in &/or out of class). DO. NOT. ASK. for it! No one gets it if anyone asks.**

ATTENDANCE: Absences don't excuse students from work due. For times you can't be there, I allow 1 absence (*excused or unexcused*) without penalty. I don't need *or want* documentation/notes/calls...just use freebies judiciously, if at all. Be wise: this is where grades are impacted most. I take roll each class & grade on participation. **If you miss class, you're responsible for material covered. Don't ask me to re-cover it; get it from a classmate.** This condensed class begins on time; walking in consistently late affects yours & others' knowledge. If you're *significantly late* (i.e., I've already started lecturing), that'll be noted. I understand we all have days when we're just running late, so your tardiness only affects you if it's habitual; when you've accumulated > 2-3 *significantly late days, you'll get points deducted. Habitual tardiness or leaving class early = absence. Each absence above your "freebies" = 15 pt. overall deduction.*

PLAGIARISM: It's your responsibility to not only abstain from cheating (i.e., academic dishonesty of any kind), but also to avoid making it possible for others to cheat. Submission of someone else's work (in literal word or in thought) as one's own is plagiarism; *others' info must be said in your work or it's plagiarism!* 1st incident: "0" on assignment, official report. 2nd offense: fail course, class dismissal, official report.

WRITING: *All writing assignments should be typed (Times New Roman, 12 font) & carefully proofread for errors.* Both quality of writing & ideas' substance are graded; meaning & idea import are inseparable from language through which they're conveyed. I'll return ungraded papers with significant typos, grammar errors, poor organization, lack of clarity, or untyped. *In other words, if I have difficulty reading your college-level paper, I can't grade it;* take time to make all assignments acceptable at a **college level**. Use APA style on all work; citations must be provided whenever you refer to words, ideas, stats or other info provided by others.

The *Writing Lab* (located in Haas Library) is a place where students can improve most aspects of writing: development, style, organization, grammar and mechanics. <http://www.wcsu.edu/writinglab/> However, there are more appropriate sources (like me) for really getting good at APA style.

ACCESSIBILITY: It's a student's responsibility to notify me ASAP of any needs to aid course participation. Students with disabilities, contact Accessibility services (203-837-8225) to discuss reasonable accommodation.

REQUIREMENTS...TO EARN CREDIT:

Please keep track of your grades on the grid provided on the last page. That way, you will always know what you're getting and will never need to ask. ☺ *I will not keep a running total of your grades for you – please do it yourself. This also means that if you're not doing well, you are responsible for withdrawing yourself. Your end-of-semester grade should never come as a surprise, because I've returned each and every point to you immediately, throughout the semester.*

Participation & Activities: (320 pts)

This course is interactive in nature & requires class participation. You'll be required to *actively* demonstrate effective communication skills in both oral & written assignments. First, you're expected to come to class prepared to discuss & participate in activities associated with the material. Next, I will make a qualitative assessment of your involvement (Participation) at the end of the semester, when I grade. In addition to assessing your level of active involvement in the course on a day-to-day basis, other “negative” things (e.g., tardiness, sleeping, texting/phone use, poor attitudes, hostility/rudeness toward me or your classmates, and inappropriate behaviors) will also bring down this score.

For the specific class-activities, many are assigned or completed in class, some outside of class. In-class activities are not available for make-up (you'll know in advance when activities are due/occur). Any activities assigned in class as homework for subsequent class periods may be obtained from a classmate. Think of these activities as another way to get points for being in class and participating fully.

Reading Reflections: (9 @ 20pts each = 180)

One way of achieving our goals is to make you read things that are practical ☺. Therefore, you'll write brief reflections (I'll teach you how) for each reading. They will always be due via email attachment *before* class starts that day. Twelve opportunities will occur and your three lowest scores will be dropped, for a total of 9 that count toward your final grade.

Grades are earned, not given! Simply meeting the requirements of an assignment *may* garner you a C. Time spent does not equal time earned. Excellence is rewarded, effort is not (though it is appreciated ☺).

- A = Superior work.** Greatly exceeds requirements with outstanding levels of creativity, skill, initiative, and/or effort. *Elicits the “excellent, really excellent” comment.*
- B = Good work/above average.** Exceeds requirements. Shows substantial creativity, skills, initiative, and/or effort. Goes beyond minimal requirements of assignment. *Elicits the “nicely done” comment & gets me telling everyone how proud of you I am!*
- C = Average work.** Meets the requirements in every aspect, but does not exceed requirements. I already expect this level of completion from every student on the assignment. *Elicits the “OK, they did the work” comment.*
- D = Deficient.** Meets some requirements, but deficient in others. *Elicits the “hmmm, I wonder if they waited till the last minute to do this?” comment.* A good thing to do when you get this grade is to come see me; I really DO want you to pass.
- F = Poor.** Deficient in most or all requirements. *Elicits “well, they blew this off” comment from me.* A MUST is to see me!!

Tentative Schedule

	COVERED	DOING IN CLASS TODAY	DUE BEFORE TODAY (via email)
W – Aug 30	Intro to Class		
M – Sep 4	Labor Day – NC		Syllabus Quiz
W – Sep 6	Using Your Liberal Arts Education Asking Questions	Org. Activity	SKS Read. 1 Reflection
M – Sep 11	The Communication Field How We Roll	Desires Activity	Read. 2 Reflection
W – Sep 13	Learning APA Details	APA Activity	Read. 3 Reflection
M – Sep 18	Work the System! Learning APA Approach	Paraphrasing Activity	Read. 4 Reflection
W – Sep 20	Researching the Correct/Easy Way!	Source Activity	Read. 5 Reflection APA 1
M – Sep 25	Writing <i>Really</i> Correct & Easier!	Writing Activity	Read. 6 Reflection APA 1.5
W – Sep 27	“Great” versus “Good” Students Tricks to “look” like you’re better	APA 2	Read. 7 Reflection
M – Oct 2	Future Options – Dreams Future Options – School, Job, etc.	Myths Activity	Read. 8 Reflection
W – Oct 4	Max Opportunities & Connect!	Connect w/ Someone (assigned today)	Read. 9 Reflection
M – Oct 9	Networking – Here & Everywhere	Networking Activity	Read. 10 Reflection
W – Oct 11	Presentations 101 What Teachers <i>Really</i> Look For	Speaking Activity	Read. 11 Reflection
M – Oct 16	Advising 101	Advising Activity	Read. 12 Reflection
W – Oct 18	APA & Final Paper Workshop	Review Activity	
Connection/Involvement Paper Both due via email BEFORE Monday, October 23rd			

A = 450-500 = 90-100% B = 400-449 = 80-89% C = 350-399 = 70-79% D = 300-349 = 60-69% F = 299 and below

RECORD OF MY GRADES:

Participation/Activities	Total		Total	
	Possible	My Scores	Possible	My Scores
Participation/Activities	320		Reading Reflections	180
			(drop 3 lowest)	
Syllabus Quiz	5		Reading 1	20
Student Knowledge Survey (SKS)	15		Reading 2	20
In-class Org. Activity	5		Reading 3	20
In-class Desires Activity	5		Reading 4	20
In-class APA Activity	5		Reading 5	20
In-class Paraphrasing Activity	5		Reading 6	20
In-class Source Activity	10		Reading 7	20
APA 1	20		Reading 8	20
In-class Writing Activity	10		Reading 9	20
APA 1.5	25		Reading 10	20
In-class APA 2	40		Reading 11	20
In-class Networking Activity	10		Reading 12	20
In-class Myths Activity	5			
In-class Speaking Activity	15			
In-class Advising Activity	10			
Review Activity	10			
Pop In-class Reading Review 1	10			
Pop In-class Reading Review 2	10			
Pop In-class Reading Review 3	10			
Pop In-class Reading Review 4	10			
Connect w/ Someone	10			
Connection/Involvement Paper	50			
Overall Participation Quality	25			