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SRJC's Mission is to cultivate learning through the creative, intellectual, physical, social, emotional, aesthetic and ethical development of our diverse community.

## Comm 4: Spring 2024 Survey of Communication

**Section 5199:** January 16 - May 16  
**Days/Times:** Tues/Thur 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.  
**Location:** 100 Garcia Hall  
**Final Exam:** May 23, 2024, Thur 1:00 to 3:45 p.m.

**Instructor:** Cassandra Shafer, M.A.  
**Email:** [cshafer@santarosa.edu](mailto:cshafer@santarosa.edu)  
**Phone:** (707) 527-4999 x9128 (voicemail)  
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**Consultation Hours:** Tues/Thur, 1:20 to 1:50 p.m., or by appointment

## Course Description

**Catalog Description:** In this class, students will focus on four areas: public speaking, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, and communication in groups, with special emphasis on career-focused skills.

**Instructor's Description:** This class is a learn-by-doing "communication laboratory" where we experiment with various modes of communication, observe and analyze the outcomes, and reflect on ways we can refine our skills and extend/deepen our knowledge in four areas: presentational speaking, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication and group process. Through experiential learning of oral interaction and performance, this course cultivates career-focused communication skills. In-class presentations, exercises and projects are supplemented with lectures, discussions and readings.

## Grading Philosophy

You are not competing against other students. As the instructor, I do not compare students with each other, and I ask that you not judge yourself in comparison to your classmates. My task is to share communication concepts and tools, and assist each student in discovering and developing your own unique voice, your own style and your own message. Your task is to exercise your voice and listen to the voices of others. It is highly likely you will learn more from your classmates than from your instructor or textbook. Improvement is expected; consequently, assignments are worth more as the semester progresses.

## Textbooks - free online

[Stand Up. Speak Out.](#) (free, no cost, open source, online textbook)

[Intercultural Business Communication](#) (free online open-source Creative Commons license)

# Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Conceive, research, organize and prepare coherent oral presentations incorporating qualified sources and effective verbal and nonverbal delivery.
2. Express and identify concepts of intercultural communication.
3. Develop effective listening and interpersonal skills for various communication contexts.
4. Develop skills and strategies to work effectively in small groups.

## Course Objectives

During this course, students will have the opportunity to

1. Acquire a foundation of basic terminology, concepts and theories of communication.
2. Demonstrate awareness of and sensitivity to issues of gender and cultural diversity and its implications for communication.
3. Recognize ethical dimensions of communication.
4. Demonstrate proficiency in preparing and delivering presentations using an outline format.
5. Manage communication apprehension.
6. Critique presentations and develop feedback skills.
7. Demonstrate listening skills.
8. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills.
9. Demonstrate small group and/or team-building communication skills.

## Topics & Scope (link to [Course Outline of Record](#))

Many of the concepts and skills overlap the four communication areas surveyed in this course, therefore, course assignments have been designed to integrate presentational speaking skills into the interpersonal, intercultural, and group communication units. Group and interpersonal skills are also integrated into the oral and written feedback component of the course, as students assume progressively more responsibility for sharing analyses of classmates' communication in a way that is honest, supportive, and useful.

### **Public Speaking:**

Communication Apprehension, Managing Speech Anxiety

Modes of Rhetoric: Conquest, Conversion, Benevolent, Advisory, Invitational

Neo-Aristotelian Rhetoric

Five Canons: Content, Organization, Style, Preparation, Delivery

Modes of Proof: Logos, Ethos, Pathos

Entelechy

Topic Selection

Audience Analysis, Adapting to Audience

Speech Research and Support

Speech Purpose

Outlining and Notes

Visual and Presentational Aids

Listening to Analyze & Evaluate (Critical Listening)

*(continued on next page)*

### ***Interpersonal Communication:***

Listening So Others Feel Heard (Empathic Listening)  
Communicating in Relationships  
Self-Concept & Self-Disclosure  
Supportive and Defensive Communication Categories  
Constructive Feedback & Appreciative Analysis

### ***Intercultural Communication:***

7 Dimensions of Cross-Cultural Communication  
3 Cultural Prototypes (Dignity, Face, Honor)  
Language, Sensitivity to Gender and Cultural Diversity  
Nonverbal Communication Variation Across Cultures  
Perception of Cultural Identity

### ***Career-Focused Persuasion:***

Persuasive strategies  
Preparing for Interviews  
Conducting Interviews  
Interview Questions  
Nonverbal Messages in Interviews

### ***Group Process:***

Group Development  
Group Members' Roles and Functions  
Decision-making  
Leadership  
Types of Power  
Creating Solutions in Groups  
Conflict Resolution

## **Expectations**

This section emphasizes experiential learning of oral communication skills through face-to-face interaction. Therefore, students who pass this class are expected to

- Attend every class meeting.
- Be "present" (awake, alert and engaged) during class.
- Do all the assignments.
- Be open to communicating with classmates and the instructor.

Written communication is useful for sharing information. Face-to-face communication tends to work better for personal concerns. Students are invited to speak informally with the instructor after class as needed and/or to schedule appointments for sensitive matters. If you have a concern about me, the instructor, that you are uncomfortable talking about with me directly, please contact the Chair of Communication Studies Department at (707) 778-3964.

Students who do well in this course meet the expectations above, and also

- ◆ participate with an open mind & an open heart
- ◆ take risks (*creative, intellectual, social, interactive-participatory, and/or design thinking*)

# Class Participation & Attendance

Attendance and participation are required. In speech classes, everybody serves as the audience for each other and provides feedback on each others' presentations. In addition, a group culture unique to this section will develop during the semester. Analyzing and working within this group dynamic is key to the Group Projects.

College policy 8.1.5 stipulates that **students missing more than 10% of total class hours are subject to being dropped from the class**. When a student has missed 10% of class time, *this* instructor is more likely to drop the student if you have also

- not attempted one or more of the assignments; and/or
- missed your classmates' presentations.

Participation & Active Listening count for 10% of your semester grade. **Missing 10% of class time drops semester grade 10% of total credit (i.e., a full letter: B to C)**. For this section, 10% of class hours is equivalent to 3½ absences or a combination of absences, late arrivals and early departures equaling 280 minutes.

## Course Materials & Assignment Guidelines

Specific guidelines and grading criteria for each assignment will be explained during class as we go along (also posted in Canvas). 5% = 1 step. 10% = 2 steps.

### **Oral & Interactive Assignments (40%)**

- 5% Oral Feedback on classmates' presentations
- 5% Personal Experience Narrative Speech (3 to 4 minutes)
- 10% Informative Speech (4 to 6 minutes)
- 15% Persuasive Pitch (10%) with follow-up Interview (5%) (10 minutes)
- 5% Interview Panel (one class period)

### **Problem-Solving Assignments (10%)**

- 5% Group Project 1 (Intercultural focus)
- 5% Group Project 2 (Group Dynamics focus)

### **Written Assignments (20%)**

- 5% Communication Journal/Blog
- 5% Informative Outline with Sources
- 5% Persuasive Outline (Motivated Sequence)
- 5% Written feedback on classmates' presentations

### **Exams (20%)**

- 10% Midterm exam
- 10% Final Exam

### **Active Listening & Participation (10%)**

Group discussions, experiential exercises, class activities, classmates' speeches

### **Gateway Assignments (required prior to being scheduled to present)**

- Research Sources for Informative Speech
- Career-Focus/Published Job Description for Pitch/Interview

**Gateway assignments** must be completed before students will be scheduled with a date to deliver your Informative Speech or be allowed to interview.

**Late work.** Being late with oral assignments disrupts the course for your classmates and is strongly discouraged. ***Re-scheduling a speaking date requires advance consultation with the instructor and is not guaranteed.*** Written assignments will be accepted late, but may not be graded promptly. Exceptions to these late work guidelines are addressed on a case-by-case basis. Have a one-on-one conversation with the instructor.

**Feedback Forms.** Students are responsible for evaluating classmates' presentations according to specific criteria, which are included on feedback forms. The instructor will provide an electronic version of the required feedback forms, which vary for each assignment. On speech days, students are expected to analyze and use the relevant feedback form while writing critiques for that day's speakers, and to refer to these feedback criteria when sharing your analyses and feedback aloud with classmates.

## Grading

The course assignments count for 90% of your semester grade. Participation and Active Listening count for the remaining 10%.

Students begin the semester at the level of B minus (80%). Assignments are weighted more and less heavily in 5% increments (see list on previous page), which are designated 1-step and 2-step. Assignments are assessed as follows:

- + takes a risk: raises semester grade designated step(s)
- ✓ satisfies guidelines: maintains semester grade at same level
- does not fulfill basic guidelines: drops semester grade designated step(s)
- 0 assignment not attempted: drops semester grade triple its designated step(s)

It requires "plus grades" on assignments worth 6 steps to raise semester grade a full letter (i.e., B to A). "Minus" grades cancel out "plus" grades and reverse upward progress.

A "**Zero 0**" grade, as its shape suggests, opens a black hole in the Holistic Learning Universe, potentially sucking the student into oblivion. More concretely, not attempting an assignment lowers semester grade by its percentage grade weight (i.e., 5%, 10%).

**Missing class** may affect your grade. Missing 0% of class time raises semester grade a one-step "plus." Missing 10% of class time drops semester grade by 10% (a full letter).

If your personal situation or personal philosophy compels you to miss class, please note that this course requirement may be completed mostly *asynchronously*, and consider enrolling in an online section that affords you more flexibility.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: In your grading system, what do you mean by "take risks"?**

**A:** Risks may be creative, intellectual, social, interactive-participatory, and/or design thinking. The following explanations are by no means exhaustive, and students are encouraged to think outside the box and stretch beyond your comfort zone.

**Creative risks** could involve multi-sensory or experimental choices in speech delivery, or an unusual, innovative or multi-cultural approach to a topic, activity, or assignment.

**Intellectual risks** could involve choosing cutting edge, controversial, or fringe speech or project topics that challenge both speaker and audience to consider new ideas, re-consider deeply held beliefs, or question our biases.

**Social risks** could involve listening empathically as well as critically to others' speeches; offering honest constructive feedback; discussing sensitive topics; or being open and authentic in sharing personal beliefs and personal experiences.

**Interactive-Participatory risks** could involve engaging with listeners; experimenting with class exercises; participating productively in group projects; and/or inviting our participation in your presentations beyond the use of a rhetorical question to open your speech.

**Design Thinking risks** could involve planning your presentations to integrate beginning, middle and end with visual or verbal repeating motifs; planning group meeting agendas to simultaneously manage time, talk, task, trust and tension; and/or incorporating all of the above risks into communication activities, exercises and projects.

## Cell Phones: To be or not to be?

Cell phone activity unrelated to class needs interferes with the fundamental focus of this course and is strongly discouraged. This section focuses on face-to-face real-time oral communication. More than simply speaking, communication entails listening, attention to body language, nonverbal messages, and awareness of group energy and dynamics.

Phone expectations:

Sound Off	Out of Reach
Vibrate Off	Out of Sight
Signal Off	Out of Mind

## Academic Honesty

Honesty and integrity are encouraged in this course and among the relationships that develop in this class. To paraphrase author and radio host Caroline Casey in her interpretation of philosopher George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff:

*Knowledge tends to degrade from one generation to the next, especially when we take on somebody else's original work without doing our own. A Tibetan saying goes, "Knowledge must be burned, hammered, and beaten like gold. Then, one can wear it like an ornament." When we passively, hence uncritically, receive teaching of any kind, our learning is degraded and our grade is merely fool's gold.*

College Policy 3.11 states: "Academic dishonesty is regarded as any act of deception, benign or malicious in nature, in the completion of any academic exercise. Examples of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, impersonation, misrepresentation of idea or fact for the purpose of defrauding, use of unauthorized aids or devices, falsifying attendance records, violation of testing protocol, inappropriate course assignment collaboration, and any other acts that are prohibited by the instructor." Students are responsible for knowing [definitions of academic integrity](#) and adhering to the [Student Conduct Code](#).

# Health Services, Emergency Plan, and Disability Accommodations

**Physical and Mental Health Services Available:** All of us at SRJC care about your well-being. Should you experience any physical or mental health issues, know that SRJC's Student Health Services (SHS) has nurse practitioners and mental health therapists available. Confidential sessions are provided via secure Zoom or in-person. Sessions are free for SRJC students taking credit or non-credit classes, and some providers can converse with you in Spanish if you prefer.

SHS also has on-site covid rapid testing and vaccinations available at no cost. To start the process for any type of physical or mental health appointment, contact Student Health at (707) 527-4445 or email [studenthealthservices@santarosa.edu](mailto:studenthealthservices@santarosa.edu). More information about student health services available to you can be found at [shs.santarosa.edu](https://shs.santarosa.edu).

**Emergency and Disaster Protocol:** If severe weather results in widespread power outages, or disaster events disrupt public power supply, our class will not meet. If your individual household loses power during class time, you are still responsible for attending class.

**Emergency Evacuation Plan:** In the event of an emergency during class that requires evacuation of the building, please leave the class immediately and calmly.

To make sure everyone got out of the building safely and to receive further instructions, our class will meet at the following location:

▶ ***On the green lawn north of the classroom building***

If you are a student with a disability who may need assistance in an evacuation, please see instructor during office hours as soon as possible to discuss an evacuation plan.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you need disability-related accommodations for this class, such as a note taker, test taking services, special furniture, etc., please provide the Authorization for Academic Accommodations (AAA letter) from the Disability Resources Department (DRD) to the instructor as soon as possible. You may also speak with the instructor privately during consultation hours about your accommodations. If you have not received authorization from DRD, it is recommended that you contact them directly at <https://drd.santarosa.edu>. DRD is located in Bertolini Hall (3rd Floor, Room 4842) on the Santa Rosa campus, and Jacobs Hall (Room 101) on the Petaluma Campus.