

COM 312 Section 007

Effective Communication Fall 2025

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1 - 2:20pm

Location: Faculty Memorial Hall, Room 405

Mode: Face-to-Face

Instructor: Louis Kornfeld

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Office Hours

Kupfrian Hall room 113, Thursdays 2:30 pm, by appointment

Students must bring a laptop or tablet to class. If you do not have access to adequate equipment, please contact the Office of the Dean of Students.

Course Catalog Description: This pre-professional course is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to intentionally and effectively communicate across an array of real-world contexts. Through a mixture of instruction and practical application, students will learn to identify the conventions and needs of audiences across modalities and rhetorical situations such as oral presentation, collaborative discussion, and one-on-one interviews, and apply appropriate approaches leveraging organizational, vocal, physical, and visual strategies to achieve their predetermined goals. This course satisfies the three credit 300 GER in History and Humanities. Prerequisites: [ENGL 102](#) with a grade of C or higher, and one History and Humanities GER 200 level course with a grade of C or higher.

Course Objective: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze course materials and relate them to authentic situations;
2. Create unique messages that are simple, tailored, unexpected and valuable;
3. Deliver compelling, organized, and well positioned presentations with clarity, confidence and credibility;
4. Integrate date, multimedia, and discussions into presentations;
5. Participate in a presentation as a conscious audience member, and
6. Evaluate oral messages and the skills presenters have successfully mastered.

Course Assignments: COM 312 is a highly interactive class that uses project based learning. The goal is for you to develop skills as a presenter and public speaker, and to help you facilitate an environment in which others can also excel

with their presentation skills. As such this is a highly interactive class. Expect to be on your feet.

To help master these skills we will explore aspects of effective presentation each week. For class you will be expected to:

1. Complete the assigned course prep prior to class
2. Come to class with any notes or answers to research questions that you have- ready to ask questions, share your reflections, and apply what you've learned.
3. Apply course materials to authentic situations.
4. Participate as a conscious audience member and provide constructive feedback.

Originality of Your Work, Etiquette, and Academic Integrity: This course is highly interactive and facilitates a great deal of reflection, collaboration, and discussion. Although collaboration is an essential element to the class, all of the work you present and submit will ultimately be entirely your own.

Although you are expected to build on, react to, criticize and analyze the ideas of others, when you do you must follow NJIT's Code of Student Conduct and Code on Academic Integrity.

Class participants must arrive on-time, remain engaged and present, and be respectful of one another's time and turn to speak, even when opinions may differ (as they invariably will). Thoughtful debate is welcome. Personal attacks are not.

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy.

[\(<https://www.njit.edu/dos/university-code-academic-integrity>\)](https://www.njit.edu/dos/university-code-academic-integrity)

Please note that it is my professional obligation to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing, or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu.

AI Guidelines and Policies: The use of generative AI presents an interesting and evolving set of ethical issues at the college level. Luckily for us, those issues are largely irrelevant to this class. Since the overwhelming amount of coursework involves in-person presentation without recourse to notes, the only way to pass an assignment is to actually know what it is you're talking about. The use of generative AI to help prepare for a presentation is allowable for some (but not all) assignments.

We'll discuss the exceptions together in person.

Grading Policies: The evaluation of student proficiency in this course is based on the following:

1. **Attendance/Participation (20%):** As this course is very practical in nature, participation is an essential part of the learning process. Students are expected to be present in body and mind, and to participate in discussions and class activities. Students will only be counted as present if they are in the classroom at the time roll is called. As make-up presentations are not given, students should contact their professor well in advance if they know of any potential conflicts for presentation days.
2. **Presentation practice (30%):** Because becoming a better speaker takes practice, you will use course materials to develop and give presentations to help practice the skill you're learning. In addition, you will be expected to collaborate with fellow classmates in exercises designed to hone your ability to think on your feet, remain open and responsive to audience attention, and stay present in a way that feels organic and authentic to your personal style. You will receive constructive feedback from myself and your fellow classmates designed to help highlight what you're mastering and where you have opportunities to keep growing as a presenter. Once you've given a presentation, you're expected to stay engaged as an audience member for your classmates and to provide them with your best and most helpful feedback. If you do not present and/or are not present to provide feedback for others, you will receive zero points for the assignment. Of these presentations, your lowest grade will be dropped. No late submissions will be accepted, and no make-up presentations or assignments will be given.
3. **Midterm Presentation (20%):** Based on course lectures, assigned readings/videos, in-class discussion, presentation practice and constructive feedback, you will prepare and deliver a presentation to demonstrate that you have mastered course content and understand its applications. The midterm presentation must be completed in person in class on the date assigned. You must be present for the duration of all midterm presentations and participate as an audience member. No late submissions will be accepted, no make-up midterm will be given, and failure to give your midterm presentation will result in zero points.
4. **Final presentation (30%):** Based on course lectures, assigned readings/videos, in-class discussion, presentation practice and constructive feedback, you will prepare and deliver a presentation to demonstrate that you have mastered course content and understand its applications. The final presentation must be completed in person in class on the date assigned. You must be present for the duration of all midterm presentations and participate as an audience member. No late submissions will be accepted, no make-up midterm will be given, and failure to give your midterm presentation will result in zero points.

Aggregate Grading Scale for Semester Grades (based on percentage of points earned):

A= 100%-90%

B+= 89.99%-86%

B= 85.99%-80%

C+= 79.99%-76%

C=75.99-70%

D=69.99%-60%

F= Less than 60%

Attendance and Lateness Policies: Again, COM 312 is a highly interactive class. The goal is for you to develop skills as a public speaker, and to that effect the bulk of our workload involves in-person presentations and dialogue. Thus, attendance is essential. We have twenty-eight class sessions this semester, and you'll be expected to be present for all of them barring excused absences. An accumulation of absences and latenesses will adversely affect your grade, as follows:

A= 100% of classes (28)

B+= 85% of classes (25)

B= 80% of classes (22)

C+= 75% of classes (21)

C= 70% of classes (19)

D= 60% of classes (16)

F= Less than 60%

9/2/25		Introduction/ Course Overview
9/4/25		Oral Presentation Overview: Honesty and vulnerability
9/9/25		"What makes us listen?" Presentation 01
9/11/25		"What makes us listen?" Presentation 02
9/16/25		Organization and Making Ideas Understandable 01
9/18/25		Organization and Making Ideas Understandable 02
9/23/25		Organization and Making Ideas Understandable: Presentation 03
9/25/25		Organization and Making Ideas Understandable: Presentation 04
9/30/25		Non-Verbal Communication
10/2/25		Persuasive Tactics
10/7/25		Speaking with Expertise: Understanding genre
10/9/25		Speaking with Expertise: Understanding genre
10/14/25		Visual Aids and Slideshow prep
10/16/25		Slideshow Presentations 01

10/21/25		Slideshow Presentations 02
10/23/25		Slideshow Presentations 03
10/28/25		Preparing for Job Interviews
10/30/25		Video presentation 01

11/4/25		Video presentation 02
11/6/25		Video presentation 03
11/11/25		Presence in the virtual: Zoom 01
11/13/25		Presence in the virtual: Zoom 02
11/18/25		Speaking the unspeakable: Poetry 01
11/20/25		Speaking the unspeakable: Poetry 02
11/25/25		Storytelling
11/27/25		THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS
12/2/25		Storytelling
12/4/25		Storytelling
12/9/25		Final Presentation
12/11/25		Last Day of Class
Please note, this syllabus is subject to change over the course of the semester. Any changes will be discussed beforehand, in class.		