

PHR 270C

Communication Skills for Health Professionals

Fall, 2011, UN 59415
M 5-7 pm
PHR 4.114

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LECTURE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC
Aug. 29	Syllabus review, why excellent verbal communication is important
Sept. 5	Holiday
Sept. 12	Tips on presentations, friendly evaluations, goal-setting, reducing fear
Sept. 19	(Round 1, Pr 1), (Round 2, Pr 1)
Sept. 26	(Round 3, Pr 1), (Round 4, Pr 1)
Oct. 3	(Round 5, Pr 1), (Round 6, Pr 1)
Oct. 10	Openings, closings, vocal variety, eye communication, visual aids
Oct. 17	(Round 1, Pr 2), (Round 2, Pr 2)
Oct. 24	(Round 3, Pr 2), (Round 4, Pr 2)
Oct. 31	(Round 5, Pr 2), (Round 6, Pr 2)
Nov. 7	(Round 1, Pr 3), (Round 2, Pr 3)
Nov. 14	(Round 3, Pr 3), (Round 4, Pr 3)
Nov. 21	No class
Nov. 28	(Round 5, Pr 3), (Round 6, Pr 3) student awards, course evaluation

Note: The recommended text is Hoff, R., I Can See You Naked, Andrews and McMeel, Kansas City, MO (1992), paperback.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This is **not** a speech course. It is an advanced-level communication skills enhancement course with an emphasis on improvement in practical skills associated with professional life situations.

At the end of this course the student will be able to:

1. give more effective presentations, based upon an emphasis on simplicity and clearer thinking;
2. effectively plan and execute an oral presentation suitable for an audience of peers, the general public, or any other appropriate group of listeners (note in this course we do not give “speeches”, we give “presentations” that have creativity, flair, and technical excellence);

3. give an oral presentation of higher quality than students who have not had such communication skills training; i.e., the presentation will be notable for its organization, speaker confidence, and (when appropriate) entertainment style;
 4. enhance his/her professional reputation through a higher quality of oral presentations, via knowledge of the audience, through practice, and confidence through planning; and
 5. communicate more effectively one-on-one (as in professional relationships with patients) because of enhanced communication skills and confidence.
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Grades will be determined using these factors:

	<u>Points</u>	<u>Scale:</u>
Attendance	10	90-100 = A
Evaluations completion	20	80-89 = B
Improvement:		70-79 = C
Non-scripted speaking	10	< 70 = F
Presentations	40	
Toastmasters Meeting attendance	10	
Excellence Award	<u>10</u>	
Total	100	

Note. This is a work-intensive course in which high grades are the norm. Students who follow instructions carefully and improve throughout the semester will receive the highest grades. Grades in this course, by nature, are subjective rather than objective (thus, + and – grades will not be given). If students follow instructions, they will naturally improve. Following this syllabus exactly is the best way to get a high grade.

Attendance. One point will be deducted for each class missed, up to a maximum of 10. No partial credit will be given, and excused absences do not receive points. However, an absence must be excused (written documentation to the instructor) if a student cannot give a scheduled presentation or evaluation. As will be apparent, absences are disruptive of the published presentation schedule, since all students are involved in every class session.

Evaluations, both oral and written, of other students are a part of this course. This is an excellent opportunity to learn how to listen, to speak with minimal notes, and to help others improve their presentations. Three oral evaluations of other students are required by each student. In addition, each student must fill out and turn in an evaluation of his/her own (three) presentations, all of which will be videotaped (What needs improvement? How have I improved?). Also, a written evaluation of a Toastmasters meeting must be submitted within a week of attending the meeting (approximately 500 words, no special format). Finally, the course evaluation at the end of the semester is required. Failure to turn in all evaluations may lower the final grade.

Improvement in presentation skills is the primary grading factor in this course. Dr. Erickson will give improvement scores based upon a) written critiques from students; b) his perception of improvement

over the semester, based upon his own notes; and c) any other indicators that might develop throughout the semester, which will be announced in class. For non-scripted speaking, there will be multiple opportunities for this through “Quik Topics”. For presentations, each student’s first presentation will be evaluated for a baseline value; then, the amount of improvement will be determined by the quality of the last presentation compared to the first one.

Excellence award. Points will be given whenever a student wins a “best presentation”, “best Quik Topic”, or “best evaluation” award. There will be a limit on the number of awards that a student may win (max = 3), but two awards will qualify for the 10-point excellence award.

Toastmasters Meeting. All students are required to attend a Toastmasters International meeting sometime during the semester. This is an excellent opportunity to pick up tips on how to give a presentation, how to do Quik Topics (Table Topics, in Toastmasters), and how to evaluate other presenters. Times and places of Toastmasters meetings in Austin are available on the Toastmasters website (www.toastmasters.org). A properly signed form, stapled to a written evaluation of the meeting (see “Evaluations” above), must be presented to Dr. Erickson within one week to confirm attendance; each student must turn in a separate form, multiple names on a form will not be accepted.

Presentation Topics. Students must give three oral presentations during the course. The first oral presentation (2-3 minutes) will be on the topic “What are My Life’s Goals?” and no audio-visual equipment can be used. The second oral presentation (5-7 minutes) will be on a general research topic of the student’s choice (no data allowed), in language that can be easily understood by all members of the class. The third presentation will be an improved redux (repeat) of the second presentation, OR a new presentation, if the student wishes. Audiovisual aids can be used during the second and third presentations. All presentations will be videotaped so that the student can learn from self-critique (which will be written and turned in). All students are expected to attend the presentations of others so that they can critique the presentations. Student presentations will be given on the days indicated, according to a schedule provided by Dr. Erickson. (Note: Dr. Erickson must be consulted before preparing the third presentation, to discuss how to improve. Failure to do so will result in a penalty of 5 points on the presentation score. Please make an appointment via e-mail.)

Class sessions. Class sessions during which student presentations are being given will be mock toastmasters-style meetings. Dr. Erickson and student volunteers will serve as Master of Ceremonies, and each session will have three timed presentations, several "Quik-Topics" (non-scripted speaking), and three oral evaluations. A master schedule will be given to the students no later than the second week of class. If a student has any class period conflicts, please let Dr. Erickson know immediately so that he will not schedule you for that period. (All absences must be excused, with Dr. Erickson informed before the affected class period.)

***Dishonesty** on providing falsely-inflated peer review scores, signing false attendance forms for Toastmasters, or plagiarism of other students’ work, will **not** be tolerated and will be penalized by a Failing grade in the course.*

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.