



# Oral Communication: Principles and Practices



## Course Description

Oral Communication: Principles and Practices explores the foundations of oral communication. In this course, we will focus on preparing for and delivering a variety of presentations, including informative, special occasion, persuasive, and group. Specifically, we will discuss topics that aid in effective presentational speaking such as audience analysis, ethics, topic selection, finding and using supporting evidence, listening, and delivery. This course fulfills the Oral Communication Fundamental Studies requirement for the General Education program. For more information about the Oral Communication Program, see: <https://comm.umd.edu/undergraduate/oral-communication-program>

## Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of oral communication in academic, social, civic, and professional endeavors
- Demonstrate effectiveness in using verbal and nonverbal language appropriate to the goal and the context of the communication
- Demonstrate an ability to listen carefully
- Demonstrate skill in asking and in responding to questions
- Demonstrate competency in planning, preparing, and presenting effective oral presentations
- Use effective presentation techniques including presentation graphics

## Required Resources

Course website: [elms.umd.edu](https://elms.umd.edu)

Additional readings will be posted to the ELMS site

## Campus Policies

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics such as:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit [www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html](http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html) for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with the instructor if you have questions.

## INSTRUCTOR

**Ollie L. Jefferson, Ph.D.**

[oljeffer@umd.edu](mailto:oljeffer@umd.edu)

## Class Meets

Section 9401  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
11:00 AM – 12:15 PM  
WDS #1127

Section 9903  
Tuesdays & Thursdays  
12:30 PM – 1:45 PM  
WDS #1127

## Office Hours

Tuesdays  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

## Academic Integrity

The UMD Honor Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. On every examination, paper or other academic exercise not exempted by the instructor, students must write by hand and sign the following pledge:

*I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).*

Allegations of academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Student Honor Council:

<http://www.shc.umd.edu>

## Accessibility and Disability Service

Students with a documented disability should inform the instructors within the add-drop period if academic accommodations will be needed. **NB: You are expected to meet with your instructor in person** to provide them with a copy of the *Accommodations Letter* and to obtain your instructor's signature on the *Acknowledgement of Student Request* form. You and your instructor will plan together how accommodations will be implemented throughout the semester. To obtain the required Accommodation Letter, please contact Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) at 301-314-7682 or [adsfrontdesk@umd.edu](mailto:adsfrontdesk@umd.edu).

## Academic Accommodations for Students Who Experience Sexual Misconduct

The University of Maryland is committed to providing support and resources, including academic accommodations, for students who experience sexual or relationship violence as defined by the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy. To report an incident and/or obtain an academic accommodation, contact the Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct at 301-405-1142. If you wish to speak confidentially, contact Campus Advocates Respond and Educate (CARE) to Stop Violence at 301-741-3555. As 'responsible university employees' faculty are required to report any disclosure of sexual misconduct, i.e., they may not hold such disclosures in confidence. For more information:

<http://www.umd.edu/ocrsm>

## University Classroom Climate

The University of Maryland values the diversity of its student body. Along with the University, I am committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Potential devaluation of students in the classroom that can occur by reference to demeaning stereotypes of any group and/or overlooking the contributions of a particular group to the topic under discussion is inappropriate.

## Copyright Notice

Class lectures and other materials are copyrighted. They may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructor. Copyright infringements may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

## Course Expectations for Students

### Course Communication Policy

- The best method of communication is via email: [oljeffer@umd.edu](mailto:oljeffer@umd.edu)
- In the event the university closes due to inclement weather, I will announce changes to the course and/or assignment schedule via ELMS and/or e-mail.

### Attendance Policy

- Due to the participatory and activity-based nature of the course, it is recommended that you do not miss class. Points will be assigned to each day's discussion and/or activity component. Please note that university-excused absences will not result in decreased grades. Students are responsible for meeting with the instructor to discuss appropriate academic accommodations. Students are expected to inform the instructor in advance of university excused absences and provide appropriate documentation. The instructor may request the dates of treatment or the time frame that the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities, but may not request diagnostic information.

### Assignment Policy

- You must submit all assignments to ELMS by the published due date and time.
  - Assignments (not including quizzes or presentation/speeches) will be penalized 10% if they are submitted late and an additional 10% each calendar day that they are missing. The last day to submit an assignment for points will be five calendar days after the due date listed on ELMS; unless previously arranged with the instructor.
  - Quizzes submitted after the due date/time will not be accepted.
- There are no makeups allowed for missing a presentation (presentations count as a major scheduled grading event) unless you have appropriate documentation of a university-excused absence.
- If you must miss class the day that an assignment/quiz/presentation is due, upload the assignment to ELMS by the stated due date and time.
- You must type and double space your assignments, number each page, set the margins to one inch, and use Times New Roman 12 point font. Remember to proofread your assignments.
- You must cite your sources using the accepted citation and APA format style.

### Academic Resources

- To schedule a presentation consultation with the Oral Communication Center, visit <http://umdocc.wixsite.com/blog>
- To schedule an appointment with the Writing Center (brainstorming, tutoring, editing, etc.) visit <http://ter.ps/writing>

## Assignments and Point Distributions

All assignment details can be found on ELMS.

**Informative Presentation I (60 points):** The first individual presentation assignment will ask you to speak for 3-4 minutes about one topic or issue.

**Informative Presentation II (160 points):** The second individual presentation assignment will ask you to present an improved version of your first informative presentation; incorporating the feedback you receive from your instructor and peers.

**Special Occasion Presentation (50 points):** The third individual presentation will ask you to speak for 2-3 minutes on a topic selected by the instructor. You will practice giving “everyday” presentations (e.g., wedding toasts, speeches of introductions, acceptance speeches).

**Persuasive Presentation (190 points):** The final individual presentation will ask you to speak for 6-7 minutes to persuade your classmates to adopt/quit a behavior or address a policy. You will need to incorporate a presentation aid for this assignment.

**Group Presentation (260 points):** The group presentation will ask you to work with a team of your classmates to identify a problem in your community and develop three solutions. You will have 18-20 minutes to present. After you present, there will be a 10-minute question and answer session.

**Reading Quizzes (100 points):** There will be 12 quizzes over the course of the semester worth 10 points each. The lowest two quiz scores will be dropped.

**Final Exam (60 points):** The final exam will be administered online. It will be an essay asking you to reflect on your growth as a communicator; specific instructions will be posted on ELMS.

- Please note that the question will be locked until the university designated final exam time. Your final exam will take place according to the schedule listed on the Office of the Registrar’s website:  
<http://registrar.umd.edu/current/registration/exam%20tables%20spring.html>

**Daily Activity Points (100 points):** Students receive points for active participation in class. The instructor will keep track of the points and will update the ELMS gradebook regularly.

**Oral Communication Assessment (10 points):** You will complete non-graded online assessments at the end of the semester to measure your learning gains in the course. You will receive 10 points for completing the assessment.

**Outside Communication Activity (10 points):** You will receive 5 points for each outside communication activity completed. More information can be found on ELMS.

Below is a summary of the major projects/assignments/exams:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Informative Presentation I	60 points
Informative Presentation II	160 points
Special Occasion Presentation	50 points
Persuasive Speech Presentation	190 points
Group Presentation	260 points
Reading Quizzes	100 points
Final Exam	60 points
Daily Activity Points	100 points
Oral Communication Assessment	10 points
Outside Communication Activity	10 points
<b>Total: 1,000</b>	

### Semester Evaluation and Final Letter Grades

Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course and is assigned individually (not curved).

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>A+</b>	1000-970
<b>A</b>	969-940
<b>A-</b>	939-900
<b>B+</b>	899-870
<b>B</b>	869-840
<b>B-</b>	839-800
<b>C+</b>	799-770
<b>C</b>	769-740
<b>C-</b>	739-700
<b>D+</b>	699-670
<b>D</b>	669-640
<b>D-</b>	639-600
<b>F</b>	599 and below

Please note that there is no “rounding” of final scores. For example, if you receive 895 points you will receive a final letter grade of B+.

## Campus Resources for Students

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is encouraged to use the resources listed below for support. Students are better served and supported when such circumstances are shared with the professor. Please consider sharing your situation with your professor who may be able to assist you in finding the appropriate resources.

### Campus Pantry

Alleviates food insecurity and provides a safe space to distribute emergency food to current UMD students. The Campus Pantry is located in the Health Center, Heilsa Room 0143 (Ground Floor), and is open each Friday during the semester from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Individual appointments are also available. Contact 301-314-8054 or [campuspantry@umd.edu](mailto:campuspantry@umd.edu). More information is available at <http://campuspantry.umd.edu/>

### Fostering Terp Success

Provides a safe and supportive campus network for students who were or are in foster care, who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, and who are without a supportive family system. Contact 301-314-8440 or [fosteringterpsuccess@umd.edu](mailto:fosteringterpsuccess@umd.edu). More information is available at [www.studentaffairs.umd.edu/fostering-terp-success](http://www.studentaffairs.umd.edu/fostering-terp-success)

### Counseling & Mental Health Services

Counseling Center: Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7651, <https://counseling.umd.edu/>

Mental Health Service (University Health Center): Campus Drive, 301.314.8106, <https://www.health.umd.edu/mentalhealth/services>

University Chaplains: University Chapel, 301-314-9866, [https://thestamp.umd.edu/memorial\\_chapel/chaplains](https://thestamp.umd.edu/memorial_chapel/chaplains)

### Student Crisis Fund

For students who have an unexpected critical situation and need immediate financial support. Students will be asked for basic information to describe their circumstances of the emergency need and what other sources of funds are available. For more information, visit <http://www.crisisfund.umd.edu/gethelp.html>

Week		Tuesday		Thursday
1	1/28	Welcome to COMM107 Read: Chapter 1 <i>Activity Points: 1</i>	1/30	Introduction Read: Chapter 2 <b>Quiz 1/Chapter 1 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
2	2/4	Presenting with Confidence Assign: Informative Presentation Read: Chapter 8 <b>Quiz 2/Chapter 2 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	2/6	Informative Presentations Read: Chapters 5 <b>Quiz 3/Chapter 8 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 5</i>
3	2/11	Information Literacy Read: Chapters 6 <b>Quiz 4/Chapter 5 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	2/13	Presentation Preparation Read: Chapters 3 <b>Quiz 5/Chapter 6 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
4	2/18	<b>Informative Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	2/20	<b>Informative Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
5	2/25	Delivering with Skills Read: Chapters 4 <b>Quiz 6 /Chapter 3 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	2/27	Assessing the Speaking Situation Read: Chapters 12 <b>Quiz 7/Chapter 4 Due</b> <b>Informative Speech Outline Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
6	3/3	<b>Informative II Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	3/5	<b>Informative II Presentations</b> Assign: Special Occasion Assign: Special Occasion (Read: Appendix) <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
7	3/10	Virtual Presentation Workshop: Special Occasion Framework & Presentation Situations (Appendix) Read: Chapters 10 & 11 <b>Quiz 8/Chapter 12 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 5</i>	3/12	<b>Special Occasion Presentation</b> Assign: Persuasive Presentation <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
8	3/17	Spring Break  No Class	3/19	Spring Break  No Class

9	3/24	The Persuasive Process & Persuasive Speaking Read: Chapters 7 <b>Quiz 9/Chapters 10 &amp; 11 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	3/26	Workshop: Persuasive Topic  <i>Activity Points: 5</i>
10	3/31	Narratives and Storytelling Read: Chapter 9 <b>Quiz 10/Chapter 7 Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	4/2	Visual Aids Workshop: Outlining – Bring your Power Point  Visual Communication Read: Chapter 13 <b>Quiz 11/Chapter 9 Due</b> <b>Persuasive Speech Outline Due</b> <i>Activity Points: 6</i>
11	4/7	<b>Persuasive Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	4/9	<b>Persuasive Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
12	4/14	Small Group Communication & Presentations  Group Contract Group Communication  <b>Quiz 12/Chapter 13 Due</b> Assign: Group Presentation <i>Activity Points: 4</i>	4/16	Workshop: Group Topic Selection  <i>Activity Points: 5</i>
13	4/21	Group Q&A <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	4/23	Group Workday <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
14	4/28	Workshop: Outlining <i>Activity Points: 5</i>	4/30	Group Delivery & Workday <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
15	5/5	<b>Group Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>	5/7	<b>Group Presentations</b> <i>Activity Points: 3</i>
16	5/12	Last Day Course Wrap-up  Assign: Final Exam <i>Activity Points: 4</i>		No Class

*Refer to [elms.umd.edu](http://elms.umd.edu) for additional assignments, instructions, and deadlines.*