

**Syllabus for CMST 1061–Fundamentals of Communication  
Fall 2014**

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**Office Hours:** TBA

**Required Texts:**

Butcher, Joni. *The 5 Pathways of Communication*. Kendall Hunt, 2014.

**General Education Statement:**

CMST 1061 is a General Education Humanities Course designed to familiarize the students with the fundamental concepts of communication. As a General Education Humanities Course, CMST 1061 will enable students to demonstrate an understanding of historical, cultural, and philosophical complexity that supports sophisticated discourse.

In this course, we will explore how we, as human beings, create socially significant messages which help us shape our identity, persuade others to take action, and shed light on the value systems of our culture. We will learn how individuals create and use messages to generate common meaning with others, to facilitate cooperative action, to perform social and cultural roles, and to reinforce or alter prevailing attitudes in our society.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act of 1973:**

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, please meet with me at some time during the first two weeks of class to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

**Considering a Major or Minor in Communication Studies?**

Business leaders and other professionals recognize the importance of developing communication skills. Such skills are beneficial to careers in business, government, law, social services, and the arts. Communication courses help students gain practical experience in such areas as public speaking, group decision-making, interpersonal relationships, performance, film, and media arts.

A **major** in Communication Studies requires 36 hours including 12 hours of core classes and 12

hours at the 3000 or 4000 level. A **minor** requires 15 hours with one core class and 6 hours at the 3000 level or above. More information is available at [www.lsu.edu/cmst](http://www.lsu.edu/cmst)

### **Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the Fundamentals of Communication. During the semester, we will concentrate on five fundamental areas of communication:

#### **Small Group (Professional) Communication**

Employers consistently expect quality communication skills in employees. In this section we will examine the role communication plays in work-related settings. We will discuss theories and techniques to help excel in working with others in order to achieve a common goal.

#### **Public Discourse**

Public discourse is central to the practice of citizenship. In this section we will explore how persuasive messages are constructed, presented to, and received by public audiences. We will examine such areas as political discourse, social issue posters, and persuasive advertisements.

#### **Communication in Human Relationships**

All human relationships are built through communication. In this section we will examine theories and techniques that help us understand and enable effective relationships with others. We will discuss areas such as managing conversations, apologizing, dealing with conflict, and compliance-gaining.

#### **Visual and Media Communication**

In our post-literate electronic world, humans increasingly communicate via still and moving images and image technologies. In this section we will explore practical approaches to communication in visual culture, film, and mediated arts.

#### **Art and Culture**

Humans communicate culture by everyday behaviors. In this section we will discover how we achieve unique identities through everyday behaviors, values, and norms. We will explore such areas as cultural storytelling, parody, and community-building rituals and festivals.

\*\*\***Please Note** that these areas are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Some communication concepts can fit into two or more of these categories.

Also, many topics exist under each area. There is simply not enough time to cover every aspect of every area.

**Course Goals:**

This course should help you read, write, think, and communicate critically. The goal is NOT simply to memorize terminology. You should certainly learn and understand the key concepts, but you should also know how to USE the concepts and relate the concepts to other subjects and other areas of life such as your personal life (know how to interpret and understand acts of communication), your social life (use the concepts to help you relate to others), and your professional life (help you communicate more effectively in the workplace).

**Six Kinds of Significant Learning:**

In this course, we will utilize six kinds of significant learning.

1. Foundational Knowledge: understanding and remembering important concepts and terminology

How: Individual Readiness Assurance Tests; Midterm and Final Exams

2. Application: applying the concepts; putting into action what you have learned and developing critical, creative, and practical thinking skills

How: Team-Based Learning Activities; Communication Challenge Assignments; Capstone Project

3. Valuing: learning how to recognize, develop, and reflect on feelings, interests, and values

How: Panel Critiques and Discussions

4. Human Dimension (Personal and Social): learning about yourself and others

How: Peer Evaluations

5. Learning How To Learn: encouraging the continuation of learning outside the classroom through self-directed inquiring about a subject

How: Learning Portfolio

6. Integration: understanding the connection between ideas and experiences and how they relate to other realms of life outside the classroom

How: Capstone Project and Learning Portfolio

**Additional Information on Assignments:****Individual Readiness Assurance Tests:**

Throughout the semester, you will be assigned homework readings on the material to be covered in the next class period. You will be given a 3-question multiple-choice test on the reading before meeting with your team to make sure you are familiar with the material that will be utilized during the team-based learning activity.

**Team-Based Learning Activities:**

You will be assigned to a 4-5 member team. You will work with this team throughout the semester completing Team-Based Activities, and the Capstone Project. Your participation within the team will be assessed at midterm and at the end of the semester by your other team members.

**Communication Challenge Assignments:**

There will be 5 Communication Challenge Assignments given during the semester (one for each of the 5 fundamental areas of communication). For each Communication Challenge, groups will be required to create and present a specific type of message to the distinguished panel of judges. The judges will discuss and critique each presentation and decide which group presented the most effective message. The winning group will receive 5 bonus points to be applied to either the midterm exam (challenges #1-#3) or final exam (challenges #4 and #5). Please note that these projects must be completed in a limited amount of time (hence the term, “challenge”), so good team-working skills are essential.

**Communication Challenge Panel Critique**

For each Communication Challenge, a team will be selected at random to critique the presented projects. Your panel will be graded according to the accuracy and thoroughness of your critique. Presenters, keep in mind that the panel decides the winner of the challenge, but I assign your grade.

**Learning Portfolio:**

The learning portfolio is designed to encourage you to explore the concepts outside of the classroom and apply them to your own life and experiences. You will be required to complete a total of 12 learning assignments for your portfolio. Your portfolio will be collected at midterm (6 entries) and again toward the end of the semester (6 entries). Specific requirements for this portfolio will be posted to Moodle.

**Capstone Project:**

Each group will be required to complete a capstone project that demonstrates your understanding of the fundamental concepts of communication.

Yes, group projects are often more frustrating and often involve uneven contributions from individual group members. However, working in groups allows for the opportunity to hone skills in cooperation, collaboration, and setting standards. It also allows for observing and

practicing communication skills.

All groups will present a retelling of the same fairytale (assigned by me). However, each group will be assigned a different communication pathway to travel down as you tell the story. Your group must incorporate the communication concepts from the assigned pathway and illuminate them in your final presentation. Each pathway should serve as a different lens through which to view the message inherent within the given fairytale. Thus, we will be able to experience the message from five different directions and obtain a fuller understanding of both the fairytale and the various means available to communicate the message to an audience. It will be a rich, rewarding, and hopefully entertaining experience.

**Capstone Project Panel Discussion:**

Each team will be assigned to lead a discussion of another team's capstone project. Suggested discussion questions will be supplied to you before the Capstone Project presentations. Again, you will be graded according to the accuracy and thoroughness of your discussion. By this point in the semester, you should be able to recognize and talk about the various communication concepts we have worked with throughout the semester.

**Missed Assignments and Exams:**

If you miss an in-class activity, IRAT, panel critique for the Communication Challenge or Capstone Project Panel Discussion **for a university excused absence (see PS-22) and provide valid written documentation**, you may complete an alternative assignment for those participation points. This alternative assignment must be requested and completed within one week of the missed assignment. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** It is your responsibility to request this assignment. It will not be automatically assigned to you. The alternative assignment will **NOT** be an option if more than one week has passed since the missed assignment or activity. **\*\*If you miss the midterm or final exam, you must provide valid written documentation of a university excused absence in order to make up the missed exam. (See PS-22) Otherwise, a grade of '0' will be assigned for that exam.**

\*\*\*Please note if you arrive considerably late for an activity (after the group has been working for an extended period of time) or leave before your group has presented, you will receive only **partial credit** for that activity.

**Research Participation Requirement:**

CMST 1061 requires a research participation element.

**\*\*\*Research Participation Requirements must be completed by Tuesday, Dec 2.**

**See Next Page for Details:**

### **Research Participation Requirement:**

The material you will learn in this course is the product of research. The goal of the research participation requirement for the Department of Communication Studies is to help you gain knowledge about the process by which scholars attempt to understand human behavior. All students taking CMST 1061, 2010, 1150, and 2060 must complete a research participation requirement. For each course in which you are enrolled, you must complete 2 research credits. You can fulfill your requirement by:

1. Participating in research studies conducted in the Department of Communication Studies. All studies that last between 0 and 30 minutes will count as one credit. Any study that lasts between 31 and 60 minutes will count as two credits. Study descriptions will specify the number of credits a student can earn for completion. There will be several survey and experimental studies conducted throughout the semester. These studies are held on campus at various times and in various locations or are administered online. All available studies are approved by the Institutional Review Board at LSU.
2. Participating in an organized departmental function such as debate. Only departmental sanctioned events will count toward a student's research participation requirement.
3. Serving as a research assistant for a faculty member in the Department of Communication Studies. The number of credits and requirements for those credits differ by faculty.

The research participation requirement is worth 3% (30 points) of your total grade. You will receive your 3% (30 points) if you accumulate 2 research credits during the given semester. Please note that all research participation credits must be completed and allocated by Tuesday of dead week.

ALL available options to earn credit are posted on an electronic bulletin board located at <http://lsuhumanresearch.sona-systems.com/>. When you go to this website, you will first have to request an account. Students must request a new account every semester regardless of whether you have requested an account in a previous semester. Once you have secured an account for this semester, you will be able to log in and see the options available to you for your various CMST courses. The Psychology Department also uses this site for its research requirement. You cannot complete Psychology research for your CMST research participation requirement.

Please note that various ways to fulfill your research participation requirement will appear on this site throughout the semester. You are encouraged to check the system on a regular basis for current credit options that fit your interests as well as your schedule.

Detailed instructions on how to request an account and to navigate the system once logged in can be found on the homepage of the Department of Communication Studies. Go to <http://app1003.lsu.edu/artsci/cmstweb.nsf/index>. Then click on RESEARCH and STUDIES. Scroll down to find the document titled "RPS - Instructions for Students."

You are encouraged to create an account during the first week of classes so that any problems that arise can be remedied early. If you have questions about this requirement or the online system that keeps track of credits, please email [researchadmin@lsu.edu](mailto:researchadmin@lsu.edu).

## Course Assignments and Point Values

**100 points** = Midterm Exam

**150 points** = Final Exam (cumulative)

**120 points** = Team-Based Learning Activities (12 @ 10 points each)

**108 points** = Individual Readiness Assurance Tests (IRAT) (12 @ 9 points each)

**125 points** = Communication Challenge Assignments (5 @ 25 points each)

**025 points** = Communication Challenge Panel Critique

**144 points** = Learning Portfolio (12 entries @ 12 points each)

**020 points** = Peer Evaluations (written evaluation of your group members at midterm) (you are graded according to your written evaluation of others)

**018 points** = Peer Evaluations (your group members' evaluation of you for the semester) (you receive points based on your group members' evaluations of your performance)

**030 points** = Research Participation Requirement (2 credit hours @ 15 points each)

**135 points** = Capstone Project

**025 points** = Capstone Project Panel Discussion

**Total Points for Class = 1000 points**

### Course Grading Scale:

1000-920	=	A
919-840	=	B
839-760	=	C
759-680	=	D
679-000	=	F

**\*\*\*NOTE: PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THE 8 POINT GRADING SCALE IS USED FOR ALL CMST 1061 CLASSES.**

**Moodle:**

Please check Moodle on a daily basis for announcements and assignments. Remember, you syllabus, written exercises, additional lecture notes, and other information will be posted here. It is your responsibility to access this information. Also, please keep a check on your posted grades throughout the semester and let me know **immediately** if there has been an error in grading. You MUST notify me of a grading error within 2 weeks of the grade being posted to Moodle. Otherwise, the grade in question will remain as it appears. (This includes grades on written exercises, in-class activities, exams, etc.)

**E-Mail:**

If you e-mail me with a question about an assignment or any other question concerning the class, please allow at least 24 hours for a reply. If you e-mail me the night before an assignment is due, there is no guarantee I will read and respond to your e-mail before class time. There is also no guarantee that I will check my e-mail over the weekend. If you have an assignment due on Monday, please do not wait until Saturday or Sunday to e-mail me with questions.

**Attendance:**

I do not have a formal attendance policy in this class. However, if you are not in class, you are not participating. This can adversely impact your team, your learning, and your peer evaluations.

A large number of “unexcused” absences can have an impact your final grade in the course. I also take notice of students who come to class on a regular basis and those who do not. Your attendance (or lack thereof) can have an impact on your final grade if you are on the border (1-2 points) of a higher letter grade at the end of the semester. PS-44 states: “While it is appropriate (and indeed inevitable) that the instructor should exercise subjective judgment in determining grades, particularly in “borderline” cases, the judgment should be based solely on academic considerations. Because class absences are likely to affect a student’s mastery of course content, they may be considered among these “academic considerations” in determining the final course grade. Therefore, instructors, at their discretion, may also include “unexcused” absences as component of the course grade, as long as attendance policies are spelled out clearly in the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester.”

**\*\*\*Note that the day before and the day after a scheduled university holiday are REGULAR CLASS DAYS. Classes will be held and assignments will be due. Please make travel plans with this in mind. Vacations are NOT university excused absences.**



## Calendar of Assignments

M	8-25	Syllabus
W	8-27	What is Communication?
F	8-29	Continued
M	9-1	<b>No Class: Labor Day</b>
W	9-3	<b>Small Group (Professional) Communication</b> (Consult Moodle for Reading Assignments)
F	9-5	Continued
M	9-8	Continued
W	9-10	Continued
F	9-12	Continued
M	9-15	<b>Communication Challenge #1</b>
W	9-17	<b>Public Discourse</b> (Consult Moodle for Reading Assignments)
F	9-19	Continued
M	9-22	Continued
W	9-24	Continued
F	9-26	Continued
M	9-29	<b>Communication Challenge #2</b>
W	10-1	<b>Communication in Human Relationships</b> (Consult Moodle for Reading Assignments)
F	10-3	<b>No Class: Fall Holiday</b>
M	10-6	Continued
W	10-8	Continued
F	10-10	Continued
M	10-13	<b>Communication Challenge #3</b>
W	10-15	<b>Learning Portfolio Due; Review</b>
F	10-17	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
M	10-20	<b>Visual and Media Communication</b> (Consult Moodle for Reading Assignments)
W	10-22	Continued
F	10-24	Continued
M	10-27	Continued
W	10-29	<b>Communication Challenge #4</b>
F	10-31	<b>Art and Culture</b> (Consult Moodle for Reading Assignments)

M	11-3	Continued
W	11-5	Continued
F	11-7	<b>Communication Challenge #5</b>
M	11-10	<b>Capstone Project Assigned (Fairytale and Pathways Assigned)</b>
W	11-12	Workshop
F	11-14	Workshop
M	11-17	Workshop
W	11-19	Workshop
F	11-21	<b>Capstone Project Presentations</b> (Professional Communication in Small Groups)
M	11-24	<b>Capstone Project Presentations</b> (Public Discourse)
W	11-26	<b>No Class: Thanksgiving</b>
F	11-28	<b>No Class: Thanksgiving</b>
M	12-1	<b>Capstone Project Presentations</b> (Human Relationships)
W	12-3	<b>Capstone Project Presentations</b> (Visual and Media)
F	12-5	<b>Capstone Project Presentations</b> (Art and Culture); <b>Learning Portfolio Due</b>

**Final Exam:**

1061-4 (10:30-11:20): Thursday, Dec. 11, 12:30pm-2:30pm

1061-11 (1:30-2:20): Friday, Dec. 12, 10:00am-Noon