Department of Mass Communication and Journalism

Comilla University, Cumilla, Bangladesh

Course Outline at a Glance

Course Title: Communication and Presentation Skills | Code: 0321 MCJ 108 | Credit: 4

Rational of the Course

In the current media landscape of Bangladesh, journalists must transition from basic information relay to strategic, evidence-based communication. This course addresses the fundamentals of personal, group, and public communication while integrating modern technological shifts. Students will explore the rise of digital and Generative AI-driven platforms, the necessity for democratic resilience following recent political upheavals, and the requirement for ethical negotiation in hostile reporting environments. By mastering reasoning, rhetoric, visual literacy, and self-presentation, learners are prepared to represent their professional lives with dignity and analytical acuity.

Course Topics

Week 1: Communication Foundations

This week defines the nature and types of communication while examining the various models of interaction. Students will analyze cultural nuances of hierarchy in Bangladesh and their impact on message transmission.

Week 2: The Literacy Pillars

Instruction focuses on distinguishing between hearing and active listening as a core professional competency. Students will engage in practical drills for articulation and understand the differences between writing for the ear versus the eye.

Week 3: Visual Literacy & Glossaries

This week explores the power of imagery in journalism and the construction of meaning through visual symbols. Students will also be introduced to the essential news and media glossary required for professional fluency.

Week 4: Classical Rhetoric

Learners will deconstruct Aristotle's rhetorical devices—Ethos, Pathos, and Logos along with Rhetoric to Alexander—within contemporary media messages. Student will discuss rhetorics used by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and other religious figures. The focus is on using these classical tools to enhance credibility and emotional resonance in public address.

Week 5: Articulating Argument

This week applies the Toulmin Model of Argumentation to journalistic and academic writing. Students will learn to identify logical fallacies (from ad hominem to hasty generalization and many other fallacies) and provide strong evidentiary support for their claims. Students will learn ancient Greek (Aristotle, Plato) and Rogerian argument on reasoning.

Week 6: Persuasion and Propaganda

Students analyze the ethical boundaries between legitimate persuasion and deceptive propaganda. They will evaluate how these techniques are deployed in political communication and advertisement.

Week 7: The Presentation of Self

Based on Erving Goffman's theory, this week focuses on professional presence, including appearance, clothing choice, and non-verbal etiquette. Students will practice presenting themselves to the world with confidence and professionalism.

Week 8: Group Dynamics & Leadership

Instruction covers the complexities of communication within teams and small groups. Students will develop competence in managing group roles, fostering collaboration, and exercising communicative (and emergent) leadership.

Week 9: Journalism-Specific Genres

Learners will practice organizing press briefings, moderating conferences, and writing professional press releases. Emphasis is placed on the structural requirements and formal language of institutional communication.

Week 10: Presenting News across Media

This week focuses on the distinct techniques required for presenting news in electronic, online, and print formats. Students will perform news reading exercises, news presentation, PTC and analyze convergent newsroom workflows.

Week 11: Conflict and Ethical Negotiation

Students explore theories of conflict resolution and apply them to journalistic interviewing and public relations. Special attention is given to maintaining professional resilience in hostile environments.

Week 12: Digital Platforms & Footprints

Instruction covers the impact of algorithmic news consumption and social media on individual reputation. Students will learn to manage their digital footprints responsibly while engaging in public digital discourse. Students will learn theory of Collective Identity in the digital world through Alberto Melucci's lens.

Week 13: AI in Communication and Presentation

This week explores the usage of Generative AI tools for prompt generation and presentation content assistance. Students will conduct human-led ethical audits of AI-assisted messages to ensure integrity. Prompt engineering and future of human communication will be discussed.

Week 14: Peace, Ethics & Social Impact

The final week focuses on peace journalism models and communication strategies for social harmony. Students will evaluate ethical frameworks for de-escalation in a polarized global environment.

Core Reading Materials

1. Harvard Business Review Press. (Latest Ed.). *Writing, Presenting, and Communicating with Confidence.*
2. Hasan, M. (2023). *Win Every Argument: The Art of Debating, Persuading, and Public Speaking.* Henry Holt and Company.
3. Toulmin, S. E. (2003). *The Uses of Argument* (Updated ed.). Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1958).
4. Greene, John O., & Burleson, Brant R. (2003). *Handbook of Communication and Social Interaction Skills.* Routledge.
5. Siddons, Suzy. (2008). *The Complete Presentation Skills.* Kogan Page.
6. Trewin, Janet. (2003). *Presenting on TV and Radio.* Focal Press.

Supplementary Readings

1. Dow, Jamie. (2015). *Passions and Persuasion in Aristotle's Rhetoric.* Oxford University Press.
2. Goffman, Erving. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* Anchor Books.
3. Steele, Jeffrey. (2010). *Email: The Manual.* Penguin.
4. Lucas, Stephen E. (2024). *The Art of Public Speaking* (13th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
5. যুক্তিফাঁদে ফড়িং (২০২১), চমক হাসান। আদর্শ প্রকাশনী। ঢাকা।

Further Readings

1. Shipside, Steve. (2006). *Perfect Your Presentation.* Infinite Ideas.
2. Aristotle. (2007). *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (G. A. Kennedy, Trans.). Oxford University Press.
3. UNESCO. *UNESCO Manual for Journalists in Hostile Environments.*

Academic Note: The course content may be periodically elaborated or supplemented with timely and relevant topics in response to emerging developments, contemporary issues, and students' evolving intellectual needs, ensuring academic relevance, critical engagement, and the best possible learning outcomes while maintaining the course's core objectives.