**FAQs**

**How should I contact my instructor?**

The best way is by email. I will try to respond within 24 hours of receiving email, but it may take 48 hours. To meet with me in person, come to my office hours, or I’m happy to set up an appointment with you.

**What should I do if I can’t be in class?**

This class has a heavy participation component, so missing more than four (MWF) classes will lower your grade. If you have an unavoidable absence, please let me know in advance if possible. If you are working on a team project, communication and follow through with your team is critical.

**Can I take the final exam early?** No. By the ISU Registrar's policy, you must attend your final at the time scheduled by the university.  No finals are given early to accommodate early travel (see the third bullet point, here: <http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/students/exams>).

**Where can I get help for my projects?** You can meet with me during office hours or an appointment time, but there are additional options. The Writing and Media Center (<http://www.dso.iastate.edu/wmc>) offers one-on-one assistance for written, oral, visual and electronic communication projects.

**What can I expect to do during a major project?**

You can expect to do multiple pre-writing steps before turning in your final work, and you can expect these pre-writing steps to be worth points. Communication projects are much better when produced with a multi-step process, and deeper learning happens that way. Meaningful reflection is also key to deep learning and transfer of that learning to future educational and professional contexts.

English 312

Biological Communication—a Learning Community

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Instructor**: Kathy Rose | **Office**: Ross 449 | |
| **Day/Time**: MWF 9:00-9:50 | **Office hours**: MW: 10:00-11:00 (or by apt) |
| **Class Location**: MW: Ross 0025, F: Ross 0015 | **Email**: krose213@iastate.edu | |

During this semester, you will work individually and with your classmates to address and solve communication problems typically encountered by professionals in the **field of microbiology**. More specifically, you will develop skills in communicating with academic and public audiences as a scientific professional. In this course, you’ll learn to evaluate, analyze, and create various types of biology-related communication, and you’ll address more rhetorical and philosophical material relating to public science communication, advocacy, and ethics.

**Learning Objectives**

This is an advanced communication course. Through readings, class discussions, and assignments, you will learn to:

* Apply rhetorical principles to communicating with experts and the general public
* Differentiate the influences of context on communication
* Demonstrate good research strategies
* Implement principles of effective document design and the display of quantitative data for audience understanding and connection to the message
* Demonstrate collaborative planning and executing of communication
* Identify how ethical issues influence research and application in your discipline

**Texts and Materials**

Materials required for this course:

Pechenik, Jan A. *A Short Guide to Writing About Biology*. 9th ed. Indianapolis: Pearson, 2016.

A way to submit your written work in formats compatible with Microsoft Office.

A notebook for use as a Response Log (can be a digital file).

Moodle enrollment (check often for activities and requirements).

Funds to produce a full-size science poster.

**Major Projects**

**Professionalism**

**Respect for others.** In agreement with ISU's policies on student conduct, you are to carry yourself with respect for others and in ways conducive to maintaining a positive learning environment. members. For further details, see ISU's policies: <http://policy.iastate.edu/policy/SDR#a4>

**Participate**. Participation means being present mentally as well as bodily; it means among other things: (1) thoughtfully contributing to any online discussions or other work; (2) preparing for class, having your materials with you in class, and actively engaging in class discussions; (3) carefully completing any in-class assignments.

If you are digitally distracted during class, your participation points will suffer.

**Proofread**. Proofread *everything*, including emails. Word-processing programs have built-in spell- and grammar-check functions. Use them. Then check your work for mistakes the software program didn’t catch.

**Team work/Collaboration**. Members of work groups should be prepared, reliable, enthusiastic, helpful, open-minded, and supportive. You should resolve conflicts with tact. You are encouraged to disagree with other students, but such disagreements need to be based upon facts and documentation rather than prejudices and personalities. Every group member should participate and complete peer evaluations honestly.

Grade breakdown

**Discourse Community Profile—10%--due 9/9**

Primary and secondary research into a scientific career of your choice in order to explore methods of communication and current research happening in this field.

**Rhetorical Analysis—10%--due 9/30**

Analysis of how effective a scientific article is in achieving the goals of the author and what other effects it could potentially have on its audience. This will demonstrate your understanding of conventions of academic articles.

**Data Visualization Project—5%--due 10/12**

Interpreting and producing data effectively and ethically. *Teamwork project*.

**Poster Project—20%--due 10/31**

Creation of a proposal, a poster, and a presentation about research you have done. *Teamwork project*.

**ePortfolio and Blog—10 %--due during final**

Collection of work and interactive communication about important scientific issues through your personal website.

**Advocacy Project—20%--due 11/28**

A multi-step project about a science-related topic you care about for a public audience of your choice. *Teamwork project*.

**Response Log—15%--due at midterm and final**

**Participation—10%**

**Grading and Evaluation**

Your assignments will be assessed in five major categories: context, substance, organization, style, and delivery. These categories are further delineated into specific expectations. To earn an A in this course, you must demonstrate exemplary accomplishment of all assigned tasks. To earn a B, your work must be mature. C means your work met the demands of the assignment in an acceptable way.

**Letter Grades, Corresponding Percentages**

**A 93-100 B- 80-82 D+ 67-69**

1. **90-92 C+ 77-79 D 63-66**

**B+ 87-89 C 73-76 D- 60-62**

**B 83-86 C- 70-72 F 00-59**

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| ***Please be aware that small changes may occur in assignments and deadlines in order to best meet the needs of the class.*** |  |  |
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*Grading Criteria*

All major projects will be assigned letter grades according to the following criteria:

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| --- | --- |
| **A** | **Exemplary Accomplishment.** Shows excellent analysis of the assignment and provides an imaginative and original response. Successfully adapts to the audience, context, and purpose of the assignment. Contains very few mechanical errors and requires little or no revision. The piece is ready to be presented to the intended audience. |
| **B** | **Mature Work.** Shows judgment and tact in the presentation of material and responds appropriately to the requirements of the assignment. Has an interesting, precise, and clear style. Contains minor mechanical errors and requires revision before the assignment could be sent to the intended audience. |
| **C** | **Competent.** Meets all the basic criteria of the assignment and provides a satisfactory response to the rhetorical situation. There is nothing remarkably good or bad about the work, and equivalent work could be sent out in the professional world following revisions to the organization, style, or delivery of the assignment. |
| **D** | **Developing.** Responds to the assignment but contains significant defects in one of the major areas (context, substance, organization, style, or delivery). The assignment could not be presented to the intended audience without significant revision. |
| **F** | **Formative.** Provides an inadequate response to the assignment and/or shows a misunderstanding of the rhetorical situation. Contains glaring defects in one or more of the major areas (context, substance, organization, style, or delivery). The project could not be presented to the intended audience without intensive revision or completely starting over. |

**Attendance and Grades**

The attendance policy for the ISUComm Advanced Communication program is consistent across courses and sections. Absences damage your grade and create the probability that you will need to drop the course. Much of what occurs in Advanced Communication courses cannot be rescheduled, made up, or accepted late—regardless of the reason for missing class. To ensure that you stay on schedule individually and as a team-project member, the co-directors of the Advanced Communication program enforce these policies:

* **Missing more than four classes (MWF) will lower your grade, and excessive absences (three weeks of classes) will result in a failing grade for the course.** Specifically, if your absences total 5 to 8 MWF classes, your class grade will decrease two increments. For example, a B+ becomes a B-; a C becomes a D+. This decrease happens for the *range* of 5 to 8 MWF absences, not for each individual absence within the range. Even so, the impact on your grade is significant once you exceed your allotted absences.
* **After a total of 9 MWF absences, you must drop the course, or you will receive an F.** Even with a valid reason to miss, you can accumulate so many absences in a semester that your work and classroom experience are too compromised for you to remain in the class.
* **If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be counted absent.**
* **If you have medical condition that will affect your attendance, you must speak to the Disability Resources Office (DRO) at the beginning of the semester to officially request an accommodation**; however, we cannot approve an *indefinite* number of absences or late arrivals. We will work with the DRO to arrive at an accommodation that allows you to be successful without altering the rigor and basic requirements of the class.
* **Do not schedule travel that requires you to leave campus early for fall break or for semester break**, as leaving early could conflict with your class or your final exam. Your instructor cannot make individual arrangements for you.
* **If you will have athletic absences, you must present them to your instructor at the beginning of the semester**; your instructor will consult with the codirectors of the Advanced Communication program. If your absences will be numerous and will interfere with your participation in the class, your instructor will advise you to drop the class and enroll in it during a semester when you can attend regularly.
  + Remember that missing 3 MWF classes means missing a week of class. Absences add up fast and do compromise your ability to be successful in the course. You may need to take the class in a semester when your sport is not active.
  + If the time of day for the class is not convenient for you, speak to your adviser immediately about changing to another section. **If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be counted absent.**
  + **Missing during group work or on the day of your oral presentation means taking an F for that activity**.
  + When classes are cancelled for scheduled conferences, **missing a scheduled individual or group conference counts as an absence.**

**Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism is a serious legal and ethical breach, and it is treated as such by the university. I will not tolearate plagiarism in any form. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive an automatic 0 on the assignment. Depending on the severity of the plagiarism, you may also fail the entire course. In addition, I will report the incident to ISU’s Office of Student Conduct.

Plagiarism occurs when a writer, speaker, or designer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, images, or other material without fully acknowledging its source by quotation marks, in footnotes or endnotes, or in lists of works cited. All work you submit in this class is to be 100% your own work (in collaborative contexts, generated 100% by you and your teammates). As is true of all work done at the university, any secondary sources (articles, images, music, interviews, websites, or other electronic media) used in this class must be properly cited.

**Disability Accommodation**

Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) form from the Disability Resources office, located in the Student Services Building, Room 1076. Phone (515) 294-7220 to set an appointment.

**Diversity Affirmation**

Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran.  Inquiries can be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity, 3350 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-7612.

**Harassment and Discrimination**

Iowa State University strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment based upon race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a U. S. veteran. Any student who has concerns about such behavior should contact his/her instructor, Student Assistance at 515-294-1020 or email [dso-sas@iastate.edu](mailto:dso-sas@iastate.edu), or the Office of Eual Opportunity and compliance at 515-294-7612.

**Religious Accommodations**

If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and your instructor or supervisor will review the request. Your or your instructor may also seek assistance from the Dean of Students Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

**Reporting Grievances**

If you become concerned about anything that happens in this class, please talk with me, email me, or drop a note in my mailbox. If you feel uncomfortable speaking with me, contact the Co-Directors of Advanced Communication, Jenny Aune (jeaune@iastate.edu) or Jo Mackiewicz (jomack@iastate.edu).