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# HSS 408-464: Designing Effective Online Communication

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## HSS 408S –Effective Online Oral Communication Syllabus –(Honors option available)

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Please always email for an appointment; I am on campus often, but have many meetings

### Overview

HSS 408 is a culminating experience that reviews the learning competencies from the Humanities classes taken as part of an NJIT student's degree work for graduation related to effective communication tied to a digital environment. The course provides instruction and practice to prepare students to demonstrate the use of skills such as effective written and oral communication, group work, argument and criticism, facility with digital media, and familiarity with working in digital environment. **The outcome of the course will be demonstration of student attainment in the core competencies through a final project essay that shows the level of improvement demonstrating the student ability to communicate his or her personal narrative effectively.** This class is organized as a 'game-style' virtual independent study set up with levels and missions for you to complete as you work towards the final goal using Moodle. To complete the mission in the course students participate in 'CREATED' that has them:

**Compose** original works or written, oral and video as part of a final essay

**Reflect** on creations of oneself and that of peers and experts

**Engage** with primary sources, peers, and experts to communicate, collaborate & critique

**Analyze** products, feedback, and class materials to create, revise and improve work

**Test** alternative versions as drafting, revision and production proceeds

**Explain** drafts and revisions towards a final product

**Demonstrate** attainment of course goals through a final essay

of work meeting the following

By completing the course students will demonstrate:

**SLO1** - An ability to communicate effectively in the written and oral form

**SLO2** –Clearly and effectively convey a message with oral and graphical means

**SLO3** – Effective use a range of digital tools

**SLO4** - Capacity for group work and peer review and constructive feedback

**SLO5** - Competency in digital communication through the completion of a final project

### Recommended Resources:

There is one text suggested but not required for the class that will be helpful to complete assignments. You can order the text through the NJIT bookstore or pick it up on campus.

Lipuma, J. (2013). Fundamentals of Undergraduate Education and Learning (FUEL) Dubuque: Kendall Hunt

### Other materials

Course material is intended to provide students with an understanding of forms of digital communication that are typically encountered in future chosen careers. This course will deliver course content and allow you to turn in reflection assignments, discussion forum posts, and larger project assignments as MS Word files. You **need to review the [submission guidelines](#)**

for general instructions about how to submit work and understand the comments that are returned. The course has several overarching goals that fit together to accomplish the learning objectives as well as provide you the needed skills to accomplish the final projects to demonstrate Learning Outcomes. To accomplish this, students will:

- **Demonstrate the use of clear communication techniques and correct tone and rhetorical form for specified situations**
- **Communicate effectively in a digital environment**
- **Identify targets and accurately understand what will work best for those targets**
- **Select and adjust appropriate scope and tone**
- **Critique oneself and others to develop judgment and improve final products**
- **Utilize technologies to communicate effectively - Kaltura, PowerPoint, Google apps, etc.-**
- **Critically judge quality to make and support arguments**

For more in depth or expanded information, feel free to consult other sources such as The Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>. All materials for the class will be available through the web or distributed via Moodle the online course management tool. Every attempt has been made to find free materials for the course. Most readings are available publicly through the Internet or through the NJIT database system. Lectures and instructional material will be presented in MS Word documents or with PowerPoint and Net casts, most of which will be available through NJIT or directly from the web. For assistance with writing, the Humanities department has assistants that may be contacted for assistance. You may also ask your professors Dr. James Lipuma for further assistance or more detailed information.

**To complete the tasks in this course, you must have a good quality microphone that can record to allow editing of class projects.**

You are strongly encouraged to buy or borrow from Media Services a quality USB headphone microphone such as a Logitech in order to complete the needed recordings for the class. Other software needed for the course should be free through NJIT or with a PC or MAC. Students are required to download and install a number of programs for this course. I have tried to identify

shareware/open source applications so that you do not have the burden of purchasing expensive software. If you already have a program that you are familiar with that is similar to one of the programs, feel free to use the item you already have.

### **From the Provost:**

“Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at:

<http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)”

Please note that Faculty and instructional staff should also refer to the “Best Practices” document developed and published on the Provost’s website (on the policies page) or directly at [http://www5.njit.edu/provost/sites/provost/files/lcms/docs/Best\\_Practices\\_related\\_to\\_Academic\\_Integrity.pdf](http://www5.njit.edu/provost/sites/provost/files/lcms/docs/Best_Practices_related_to_Academic_Integrity.pdf). Any actual or alleged violation of the University Code on Academic Integrity must be formally processed through the Office of the Dean of Students & Campus Life. Faculty and instructional staff should be proactive on upholding the academic integrity, but should not handle violations on their own.

Exams for courses delivered on-line must be scheduled in ways accounting for the fact that students may be living in different time zones and most of them have full-time jobs. If an exam is scheduled on a particular day and time, the time should be in the evening (i.e., starting at 6 p.m.). All instructing staff members are encouraged to make use of the course profile tool that is developed to conveniently provide general information about their course. This tool can be accessed at <https://courseschedules.njit.edu/> In order to insure consistency and fairness in application of the NJIT policy on withdrawals, student requests for withdrawals after the deadline (end of the 10th week of classes) will not be permitted unless extenuating circumstances are documented. The course instructor and the Dean of Students are the principal points of contact for students considering withdrawing from a course.

When a student invokes extenuating circumstances for any reason (late withdrawal from a course, request for a make-up exam, request for an Incomplete grade) the student should be sent to the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students will be making the determination of whether extenuating circumstances exist or not and will be notifying the instructor accordingly. Instructors should never request or accept medical or other documents from students; such documents need

to be submitted by the student to the Dean of Students. Except for cases determined by law, an instructor is not required to accommodate student requests even when extenuating circumstances are certified by the Dean of Students; however, all efforts should be made to ensure a student-friendly environment.

Early and periodic testing, assessment, and feedback are important. Tests should be returned in a timely fashion so that students know their status in the class. At least two tests and/or significant assignments must be scheduled, graded and returned before the deadline for withdrawal. Typically, the final examination in all courses constitutes approximately one third of the total grade for the course, and students need to be able to schedule their preparation for it. Therefore, it is important that any and all final exams (including the ones for online courses) be given during the university final exam period. Modifications by instructors to the final exam schedule must be approved in writing by the Department Chair. Reporting of final (course grades): Instructors are required to electronically submit final (course) grades no later than 48 hours after the last day of final examinations. Grades for Fall 2018 courses are due on December 23, 2018 and for Spring 2019 courses on May 18, 2019. Late submission of grades causes serious problems for students wishing to take Winter and Summer session courses and for the determination of the students' Academic Standing.

The grade of Incomplete ("I") may be given in rare instances where a student, and for documented (by the Dean of Students) reasons, could not complete parts of the work of the course. When giving a grade of "I", the instructor must notify the student (and copy the Department Chair), in writing, of the exact work to be completed and the date by which it must be submitted. The "I" grade must be removed in the next regular semester; otherwise, the "I" is automatically changed to a failing grade. Instructors should not accept work by a student after the end of the semester following the one in which the Incomplete was issued, unless the Dean of Students certifies extenuating circumstances, the instructor is willing to process a late change of grade and the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Student Services pre-authorizes such a change.

Professors should post their scheduled office hours for each course on the web and at their office, and should be available during those hours.

All classes should meet at their scheduled time and location, and should last for their entire scheduled duration. Classes should not be cancelled without the consent of the Department Chair, and no classes should be scheduled during the university common hours (Wednesdays 2:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m., and Fridays 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.). Any use of the common hour for classes must be approved by the Provost. Any changes in the designated date, location and time of any class may be made only in consultation with the Registrar's Office and with approval of the Chair and Dean.

Instructors must submit verification of presence for their students by the deadline specified in the memo on this issue, sent separately.

# Policies for Lateness and Penalties

This is an online course, requiring you to complete lessons, participate in forums, and posts that occur throughout the semester. Each discussion posting will have an opening and closing date after which work will not be accepted. Major assignments and projects will have a due date. Work submitted after this date will not be accepted unless a prior arrangement has been made with the professor or the NJIT Dean of Students provides written excuse for lateness.

The assignments handed in for this course are expected to be University-level work and must follow instructions and the supplied [submission guidelines](#). There should be no contractions, spelling errors, punctuation errors, or mistakes in grammar. Mistakes of these types are fatal errors and are penalized 20%. In addition, you must follow [submission guidelines](#) for formatting the work and naming the file correctly. Failure to follow instructions or [submission guidelines](#) will result in a loss of 10% of the grade. Basic Netiquette rules will be followed: <https://www.education.com/reference/article/netiquette-rules-behavior-internet/>

All assignments handed in for this course should be original and the sole work of the student. The rules and procedures set down in the student handbook as administered by the Dean of Students office will be used to judge plagiarism. **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE**. If you are unclear about the rules, please see the NJIT student handbook/Code of Student Conduct. [www.Turnitin.com](http://www.Turnitin.com) will be used to check for plagiarized work.

Meeting deadlines is part of the real world and vital to success in one's career. Be sure to read the assignments carefully and follow directions provided.. It is your responsibility to keep up with course materials and complete assignments. The dates given are the last possible time to complete the work. Please start early and submit work. Not all the missions are open at the start of the class and as due dates pass, missions tasks will close—**No late work accepted without prior consent from the professor--grade =0**. The tasks on Moodle should be progressed through in order as each assignment ties into the next. NOTE: grades in the online gradebook are unofficial and intended for the students to be able to track progress. Grade breakdown and weights are given below.

## Links to Mission Briefings

Due	Point	Topic level and mission assignments
1/22		Classes Begin
1/28	1	Verify Presence
2/1	6	Opening Quiz

2/4	18	Opening Discussions
2/11	60	Opening Essay
2/15	80	Level 1 Mission 1: Content Check
2/25	25	Level 1 Mission 2: video with images
3/4	140	Level 1 Big Boss Memo
3/11	100	Level 2 Mission 1 Content quiz
3/15	20	Level 2 Mission 2 Discussions
<b>SB</b>	<b>SB</b>	Spring Break
3/29	20	Level 2 Mission 3
4/8	100	Level 2 Mission 4: Plan
4/22	100	Level 2 Big Boss
4/29	100	Level 3 Reflections
5/13	230	Level 3- Big Boss Final Essay

To excel in this course, you are expected to be able to locate and use web AND library resources effectively and to cite them correctly. [Davida Scharf](#) is the librarian who provides assistance to the students and faculty in the Humanities. Contact her at [scharf@njit.edu](mailto:scharf@njit.edu) and take advantage of her expertise. For DIY help, consult the [Communications Research Guide](#) and other forms of [Research Help](#).

The grades for this class are based on a total of 1000 class points

**A = 910+**

**B+ 909-860**

**B = 859-810**

**C+ = 809-760**

**C = 759-700**

**D =699-600**

## F = 599 -0

This course is offered as a standard section during the fall and summer sessions but has been offered in an Honors format and may be enhanced if consent from the Honors College is obtained and prior arrangements and paperwork are completed by the student with the appropriate professor and the Honors College. Honors students are required to complete additional work and are assigned additional tasks in accordance with the guidelines listed at: <http://honors.njit.edu/academics/guidelines-concurrent.php>

Details for tasks are given on Moodle along with resources to promote learning. Moodle forums are used to facilitate class interaction. Dates are given in the calendar above for when your posts must be completed to count for credit. The forums will be left open to promote further discussion and class interaction after the initial due date so that I have some time to enter grades. Forum posts ask for your opinion based upon the class materials and help you reflect on the work being covered in the text and videos. Each topic is designed to encourage discussion by all class members and will be graded on both your post and your replies to the posts of others. In some cases, the forums specifically ask you to post more than once or respond to posts of others. In other cases, you are presenting your ideas and opinions without a specific prompt for you to answer related to the work of others in the class. In all cases, you must provide details and examples drawn from your own experience and the class materials in your posts and replies to further the discussion of what is presented and engage in a discourse with the class.

Each forum is graded on a number of factors. Full credit will be given for work in the forum that has posts and replies all with good discussion and details on topic including evidence and examples to support ideas in the discussion. The most important thing is for you to participate and present ideas that are relevant to the topics given in the tasks. Grades are earned for both quality and quantity of posts, so telling everyone in class 'good work' or just answering a question with 'yes' will earn some credit but not full credit for the task

The tasks on Moodle should be progressed through in order as each assignment ties into the next. I will provide feedback for each assignment along the way as we move through the class. I may not engage in all the forums as I do not want to force my ideas on the class but I am reading what is written. You are asked to work at your own pace but there are deadlines for each section so that you do not fall too far behind.

### **Effective Communication/Fatal Errors**

All tasks will share the same fatal errors: ***Following Directions, Basic Writing, & Communication***. A fatal error is anything that should already have been learned and mastered before taking a 300 level writing course in college such as following directions and mastery of Basic English conventions. Making any fatal error costs you all the points so that this is an all-or-nothing situation. Areas where fatal errors occur are:



**Following Directions:** filename and document format must follow class [submission guidelines](#) and be submitted correctly as specified in Moodle meeting due dates, and format.

**Basic Writing—grammar syntax, proofreading:** The work should be almost entirely free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors since all students should have mastered basic writing prior to entering the course. If there are more than two (2) errors in any one category, or errors in more than one category, no credit will be given for that portion of the assignment. Fatal errors include mistakes in the following: Article use, Subject-verb agreement, Tense agreement, Sentence fragments, Run-on sentences, Spelling, proofreading, Wrong Word Choice

**Communication—Ideas are presented clearly and comprehensibly:** Words are chosen for their precise meaning using an appropriate level of specificity. Sentence style should fit the target and purpose. Sentences should be varied, yet clearly structured and carefully focused.