The Basic Communication Course Syllabus as a Rhetorical Document: The Impact of Mediated Immediacy on Communication Apprehension with Instructors and Out-of-Class Communication

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' use of mediated immediacy in a syllabus to determine effects on students' communication apprehension with instructors and student out-of-class communication with instructors. Participants viewed either a basic course syllabus with high levels of mediated immediacy or low levels of mediated immediacy and then completed surveys. The results showed that syllabi high in mediated immediacy made students significantly less apprehensive to communicate with instructors and more likely to engage in out-of-class communication with them. Implications for the use of mediated immediacy in syllabus construction are discussed.

Keywords: basic course, mediated immediacy, syllabus, communication apprehension, out-of-class communication.

The basic communication course (BCC) plays a foundational role in general education, which comprises a significant number of first-year students. McKenna-Buchanan et al. (2020) note the importance of the BCC in a student's first year experience (FYE) and highlight the various instructional communication variables that support students. Thus, it is important to identify communication strategies helpful to the FYE and advance student success. As BCC instructors, we are in a unique position to acclimate students to their college experience. For example, Morreale (2020) noted that the basic course requirement in general education is steadily increasing and that most who enroll are first-year students (Morreale et al., 2010).

In college, a student's first encounter with the "actual academic setting" is the course syllabus (Slattery & Carlson, 2010; Thompson, 2007). Hence, it is important that the syllabus is carefully constructed in a way that communicates the intended outcomes. Given this view, the syllabus serves several important functions. Slattery and Carlson (2010) summarized the goals of a syllabus as serving motivational, structural, and evidential goals. Since students usually receive the syllabus on the first day of class, it sets the tone and can offer a warm and friendly, formal, condescending, or confrontational environment. In terms of motivation, Slattery and Carlson (2010) indicate students who read "less friendly syllabi may believe that their professor does not expect them to be successful, which can create a self-fulfilling prophecy" (p. 160). On structural goals, Slattery and Carlson posit that an effective syllabus offers a favorable academic structure for both faculty and students—"dates for papers, examinations, readings, and other assignments, as well as weights for these assignments, help faculty stay on schedule throughout the semester, while also helping students identify what they need to do to earn a particular grade" (p. 160). Additionally, syllabi provide evidential goals and serve as contracts between faculty and students (Matejka & Kurke, 1994; Smith & Razzouk, 1993), which is essential because it helps to avert lawsuits (Slattery & Carlson, 2010). Slattery and Carlson (2010) argue that when attempting to resolve conflicts, "administrators often consult the syllabus to determine whether the faculty member followed the rules that both professor and student 'agreed to' in the course" (p. 160). Since the syllabus is an important communication tool between an instructor and a student, it then becomes crucial to understand the role of the syllabus in setting classroom expectations and environment.

Because the syllabus functions as a communication document (Thompson, 2007) and as a rhetorical tool (Baecker, 1998); it becomes an important element for

investigation. According to Thompson (2007), students expect to receive a syllabus with details on assignments, class procedures, and requirements for a course on the first day in any classroom. Thompson further states that the teacher also orally presents the information to students while emphasizing key points in the syllabus. With this understanding, the syllabus "as a symbolic message" (Thompson, 2007, p. 54) communicates important information to students (Habanek, 2005). When a teacher discusses the syllabus and highlights the seminal issues, it informs vital communication decisions on the teaching and learning process (Thompson 2007).

Slattery and Carlson (2010) maintain that the syllabus constitutes an important element in the teaching process and found that scholarship regarding this important aspect of teaching receives less attention. Scholarship on the syllabus has been primarily focused on content and design (Matejka & Kurke, 1994) and how it should be presented (Thompson, 2007) rather than the tone of the syllabus.

This present study is concerned with the language BCC instructors use in their syllabi to initiate a supportive environment. When students come to college, they may get overwhelmed with their newfound independence, and their first encounter with the academic content should offer a way to find resources and support that will be of utmost benefit to their academic and personal health. The syllabus then becomes a crucial document in this endeavor. Thus, this study will investigate the impact of immediate BCC syllabi on first-year students' communication apprehension with instructors and out-of-class communication.

FYE Student Challenges

The FYE is crucial to providing a strong foundation for academic success (Reason, Terenzini, & Domingo, 2006). According to Bowman (2010), the FYE constitutes a time of far-reaching transition for new students. Given this position, Noel et al. (1985) posit that college life proves demanding and stressful for first-year students. Scholars in educational psychology have long taken the charge to examine FYE challenges (Bowman, 2010; Chemers et al., 2001; Hawley & Harris, 2005; Reason et al., 2006; Tinto, 1993). As Bowman (2010) argues "adjusting to college can include tasks that are as mundane as doing one's own laundry for the first time or as complex as finding meaning in one's life and deciding on a future career" (p. 180). Since change can be unsettling (Chemers et al., 2001), students' transition from high school to college places significant demands on their acculturation to the college setting (Tinto, 1993). Since the syllabus remains their first encounter with the real academic environment on the first day in class (Thompson, 2007), it becomes

important to investigate how the syllabus could create a bond between students and instructors, fostering students' successful transition to college.

College Instructors-Students Interpersonal Relationships

Docan-Morgan and Manusov (2009) advance that "instructional outcomes may be understood as occurring, at least in part, within a relationship between teachers and students" (p. 156). These scholars further argue that a "key element that cuts across this diversity and that works to explain why many of the variables function as they do concerns the relationship between teacher and student" (p. 156). Describing the nature of this relationship, Dobransky and Frymier (2004) suggest that the college teacher-student relationship revolves around a shared control, trust, and intimacy. To scholars, this relationship involves communication behaviors (Graham, et al., 1992) and "educational friendship" (Rawlins, 2000, p. 5). Hence, it is important to include this discourse on syllabus construction to determine if teachers can create bonds with students using a syllabus that communicates friendship, trust, and affection.

Teacher Communication Behaviors

According to Pogue and AhYun (2006), student success is one of the principal concerns to instructors and as such, scholars of instructional communication have researched ways in which teachers and students work to actualize this important objective. Teacher immediacy has been widely studied in instructional communication focusing on teacher/student relationships and student success (Christophel, 1990; McCroskey et al., 1996; Richmond et al., 1987) and is frequently integrated in BCC training programs.

Teacher Immediacy

Teacher immediacy is formulated through both verbal and nonverbal behaviors that engender psychological closeness and affinity between teachers and students (Andersen, 1979). Mehrabian (1971) defined immediacy as behaviors which increase psychological closeness between communicators. Additionally, immediate teachers are viewed as friendly, open, and responsive to student needs (Andersen, 1979; McCroskey & Richmond, 1992). Given this view, a syllabus that expresses high immediacy could enhance affinity-seeking behaviors (Frymier & Thompson, 1992; Wanzer, 1998) between students and instructors. As such, instructors who intentionally include immediate statements in the syllabus may decrease student apprehension with instructors and influence communication with the instructor

outside of class. Because the syllabus is a rhetorical and tangible document, it is important to consider it as a mediated channel that students may refer to throughout the semester.

Mediated Immediacy

O'Sullivan et al. (2004) define mediated immediacy as the "communicative cues in mediated channels that can shape perceptions of psychological closeness between interactants" (p. 471). They identified two macro categories of mediated immediacy: *approachability* and *regard for other*. *Approachability,* according to O'Sullivan et al. (2004), includes "immediacy cues that signal to others that 'You can approach me'" (p. 472). Individuals induce others to perceive them positively by offering to be friendly and open (O'Sullivan et al., 2004). *Approachability* includes nine micro classifications of immediacy cues including: self-disclosure, expressiveness, accessibility, informality, similarity, familiarity, humor, attractiveness, and expertise. *Regard,* on the other hand, expresses immediacy behaviors that generally tell others that "I am approaching you" including personalness, engagement, helpfulness, and politeness (O'Sullivan et al., 2004). Together, then, the two macro categories give a range of immediacy-related classifications that "individuals can control in their efforts to shape others' perceptions of psychological closeness" (O'Sullivan et al., 2004, p. 472). In a similar manner, when these are incorporated into a syllabus, it is crucial to see how these immediacy attributes help students to initiate both in-class and out-of-class communication with instructors.

This study posits that when students perceive their instructors to be immediate, it motivates students to approach that instructor for help when they are facing a challenge. Given the literature on these teacher communication behavioral constructs, this study will examine how differing levels of teacher immediacy communicated through a BCC syllabus may influence the student apprehension while communicating with their instructor.

Student Communication Apprehension with Instructors

Communication apprehension is defined as "an individual's fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with others" (McCroskey, 1982, p. 165). More recently, scholars have examined the broader concept of communication apprehension in various contexts. This study will explore the context of student communication apprehension with instructors in and out of the classroom.

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Richmond et al. (2008) found that teacher immediacy reduces student communication apprehension and promoted perceptions of approachability.

Additionally, Teven and Monte (2008) reported a strong relationship between immediacy and caring, positing that "immediacy behaviors cue students' perceptions of teacher caring" (p. 16). Myers (2004) reported that perceived instructor caring is positively related to student willingness to talk to instructors. Myers also established that perceived instructor caring is positively related to student participation in out-of-class communication. Since immediacy behaviors signal to students that instructors are approachable and warm (Simonds et al., 2019), the syllabus may serve to reduce student apprehension while communicating with an instructor in and out of class. This communication may afford students the opportunity to access university resources and support they may need to successfully transition to college.

Out-of-Class Communication

Out-of-class communication (OCC) occurs both formally and informally between instructors and students outside of scheduled class time (Aylor & Oppliger, 2003; Myers, 2004). Formally, OCC between instructors and students include the "use of scheduled or impromptu office visits, e-mail messages, (and) telephone calls" (Myers, 2004, p. 131). Informally, OCC involves "students running into faculty on campus or at campus events, stopping to speak with faculty in the corridor, (and) seeing faculty off campus" (Myers, 2004, p. 131). Other scholars hold that when students engage in OCC, they do so to not only inquire about course-related information but also engage in self-disclosure and other informal discussions (Jaasma & Koper, 2001; Theophilides & Terenzini, 1981). According to these scholars, students also engage in OCC to seek advice, to ask instructors for favors, to discuss future career plans, and to share intellectual ideas. From Theophilides and Terenzini's (1981) perspective, an instructor's ability to communicate concern influences whether students engage in OCC. Given this view, students are more likely to talk to an instructor whose syllabus communicates warm and friendly attributes.

Additionally, OCC has been linked to Out-of-Class Support (OCS) (Jones, 2008), which can help college students manage and cope with stressful first year experiences. According to Jones (2008), OCS has also been conceptually compared to teacher immediacy, teacher caring, and teacher confirmation. Jones defines OCS as "teacher communication, occurring outside of the classroom setting, that demonstrates a responsiveness to students' needs; communicates caring; validates students' worth, feelings, or actions; and helps students manage and cope with

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stressful situations through the provision of information, assistance, or tangible resources" (p. 375). Jones and Schrodt (2012) suggest that instructors who engage in OCS are perceived by students as more caring and that OCS can increase student learning satisfaction and motivation to learn. Thus, OCS and immediacy may reduce apprehension while communicating with an instructor as well as communicate to students that the instructor is warm, caring, inviting and open to OCC.

Research Questions

RQ1: Will students have a different level of communication apprehension with BCC instructors whose syllabi are high in immediacy messages than with instructors whose syllabi are low in immediacy messages?

RQ2: Will students be more likely to engage in out-of-class communication with BCC instructors whose syllabi are high in immediacy messages than with instructors whose syllabi are low in immediacy messages?

Method

Participants

We obtained approval from the University's Institutional Review Board. One hundred and eighty students were conveniently sampled from a large-sized Midwestern University who had enrolled in the basic communication course, required of all first-year students at the university ($N = 180$). All participants were first year students either currently enrolled in the basic course or had completed the course the previous semester. The choice for this sample size was based on the need to achieve the appropriate power level of .80 in order to detect an effect of medium size at $p = .05$ (Keppel, 1991). Participation was voluntary, and participants were allowed to discontinue at any time.

Variables/Measures

The independent variable was mediated immediacy and was operationalized into two conditions—high and low. Wrench and Punyanunt-Carter (2007) created a CMC apprehension measure based on Richmond et al.'s (1998) Fear of Physician Scale and

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found their factor structure and scale reliability were satisfactory in this new application. Similarly, the current study used the Fear of Physician Scale to measure student communication apprehension with instructors. The modification was to replace "physician" with "instructor" in the scale items. This scale had five items that were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The items were: When communicating with this instructor, I would feel tense; When communicating with this instructor, I would feel calm; When communicating with this instructor, I would feel jittery; When communicating with my instructor, I would feel nervous; and When communicating with this instructor, I would feel relaxed. Using this measure informed how students' perceptions of the two syllabi influence their communication apprehension with their instructors.

The scale used to measure OCC was developed by Knapp and Martin (2002) as cited in Myers et al. (2005) and consists of 9 items on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Participants were asked to respond to the items as they pertained to the hypothetical instructor after reading the syllabus. The items are: I often talk to my instructor during his/her office hours; If I see my instructor on campus, I often talk to him/her; I rarely talk to my instructor outside of the classroom; If I see my instructor in the hallway, I often stop to talk to her/him; I only talk to my instructor outside of the classroom once in a while; I frequently talk to my instructor outside of the classroom; When I see my instructor off campus, I usually spend some time talking to him/her; When I see my instructor in public, I avoid talking to him/her; and I never talk to my instructor outside of the classroom.

Procedures

To develop the high and low immediacy stimuli for this study, we initiated a call to the Basic Communication Course Director listserv for sample syllabi statements that communicate immediacy and have qualities that encourage students' communication with instructors. We used Slattery and Carlson's (2010) classification of the syllabi as serving motivational (included in the teaching philosophy section of the syllabus), structural (course policies section), and evidential purposes (syllabus contract section) to create a framework for the syllabi used in this study. Additionally, we analyzed the collected syllabus statements for evidence of O'Sullivan et al.'s (2004) categories of mediated immediacy: *approachability* (self-disclosure, expressiveness, accessibility,

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informality, similarity, familiarity, humor, attractiveness, expertise) and *regard for other* (personalness, engagement, helpfulness, and politeness).

After creating the high immediacy BCC syllabus (see Appendix), we used this framework to create a low immediacy BCC syllabus for each of the corresponding statements. For example, our high immediacy statement on instructor availability read:

> It is my personal ethos, to practice compassion with every person I come into contact, which includes my students. Know that my office door is always open, and you may come chat with me about anything you are struggling with regarding my course. I will do my best to help you succeed.

Whereas, our corresponding low immediacy statement read:

> My office hours are listed above. Those are the only times I'm available for individual discussions and I don't take appointments. Be prepared to show up early and wait in line for the chance to see me. Often the hour ends before I can meet with everyone in line so plan accordingly.

A manipulation check using O'Sullivan et al.'s (2004) Mediated Immediacy scale revealed a statistically significant difference in perceptions of immediacy between the two syllabi, $t(34) = 4.49$, $p < .001$, with respondents rating the high immediacy syllabus higher ($M = 54.25$, $SD = 13.91$) than the low immediacy syllabus ($M = 32.81$, $SD = 14.64$). The two syllabi were then incorporated into a Qualtrics survey and subsequently placed on a research pool where students took the survey for extra credit points. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions and subsequently answered the survey questions.

Results

To address the study's research questions, first, a Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the relationship between participants' student communication apprehension with instructors (Cronbach's alpha = .86) with likelihood to engage in OCC with their instructors (Cronbach's alpha = .89). There was a moderate, positive correlation ($r = .537$, $n = 160$, $p < .001$). Due to the high

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correlation between dependent variables, an omnibus MANOVA was conducted. Box's M was used to test for homoscedasticity at $p = .05$. The Box's test (Box's M = 9.46) indicated that equal variances could not be assumed: $F(3, 11899047.12) = 3.11$, $p = .025$. Therefore, Pillai's trace was used as the test statistic. The Pillai's trace indicated significant group differences between independent variable groups in the omnibus analysis: $V = .327$, $F(2, 154) = 37.37$, $p < .001$, multivariate partial $\eta^2 = .327$.

Following the significant omnibus test, univariate ANOVA results were analyzed using $p = .05$. Significant differences were found between high ($M = 11.69$, $SD = 3.39$) and low ($M = 16.79$, $SD = 4.60$) immediacy syllabi for student communication apprehension with instructors, $F(1, 155) = 63.60$, $p < .001$, multivariate partial $\eta^2 = .291$. Significant differences were also found between high ($M = 29.06$, $SD = 5.96$) and low ($M = 21.59$, $SD = 6.29$) immediacy syllabi for OCC $F(1, 155) = 58.25$, $p < .001$, multivariate partial $\eta^2 = .273$.

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of syllabus immediacy on students' communication apprehension and OCC with BCC instructors. The first research question asked if students would have differing levels of communication apprehension with instructors who had a syllabus high in immediacy than one low in immediacy. A difference was found with the high immediate syllabus leading to lower communication apprehension. The second research question asked if there would be a difference between a syllabus high in immediacy and a syllabus low in immediacy on OCC. Results revealed that students would be more likely to communicate outside of class with BCC instructors whose syllabus was high in immediacy versus one whose was low in immediacy.

More generally, the results from this study suggest that a BCC syllabus that communicates high immediacy influences students to engage in communication with their instructors. Instructor immediacy has been found to impact teaching effectiveness positively (Andersen, 1979), engendering psychological closeness between communicators. The current study adds to this by demonstrating the effects of mediated immediacy communicated through a syllabus.

Furthermore, immediacy could enhance affinity-seeking behaviors between students and instructors (Frymier & Thompson, 1992; Wanzer, 1998). Since this has been established, a syllabus that communicates high levels of immediacy is best positioned to foster and facilitate students to approach and interact with instructors

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out of class. Students may go to the instructor during office hours or by utilizing communication technologies—email, Zoom, Skype, among many others. Because the syllabus is often transmitted to the students on electronic learning platforms such as Sakai, Canvas, or even sent to the student as an email attachment, mediated immediacy occurs.

In this case, a BCC syllabus that expresses immediate cues motivates students to discuss issues with instructors when they engage in OCC. This ensures that the teaching and learning process is continuous, and the overall success of the student is comprehensively monitored and assured. Thus, this study is consistent with previous research (Teven & Hanson, 2004). For instance, Teven and Hanson acknowledge that when instructors showcase immediacy, students perceive them as credible and dependable. Consequently, students will be less apprehensive to interact with instructors who exhibit these behaviors on their syllabi.

Practical Implications

Overall, the results of this study offer numerous implications for BCC instructors interested in understanding how a syllabus with immediate messages primes students to perceive them as dependable partners in the FYE setting. In the first place, BCC instructors should consider revising their syllabi and including immediate cues in their syllabus. With syllabi lacking immediacy, students facing genuine problems may be more likely to keep to themselves—a situation that hampers their academic progress or even causes them to drop out of college, which is a greater risk for first year college students. Instructors can use immediate syllabus statements to reduce apprehension and increase OCC. This communication serves to guide students toward the necessary campus resources they need to succeed. In other words, the BCC instructor's syllabus is a conduit to communication that leads to student success.

Moreover, since college instruction could be hybrid or solely online, a well-constructed syllabus that embodies mediated immediacy encourages students' interaction with instructors. While we anticipate that some instructors may think students do not read the syllabus, our study shows the value of a carefully constructed syllabus. As such, the syllabus can encourage communication between student and instructor when immediate messages are communicated. A BCC instructor's pedagogical choice to include immediate statements in the syllabus communicates that they are approachable and also respect the concerns of students

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(O'Sullivan et al., 2004). Additional examples of immediacy cues in the current study are included in the high immediacy syllabus (see Appendix) using O'Sullivan et al.'s (2004) mediated immediacy categories (included in parentheses). Instructors who incorporate these immediacy cues will have students begin to perceive the BCC instructor as someone they could confide in. This prompts them to initiate contact with the instructor and makes them comfortable with instructor communication out of class.

Finally, our study encourages instructional communication and BCC scholars to rethink the importance of the syllabus in college instruction. Teaching and learning centers on various campuses should endeavor to organize refresher courses on syllabus preparation for instructors. Administrators should encourage instructors to include immediacy cues into their syllabi. The motive here is not to encourage instructors to pamper college students; rather, students, especially those new to college, must be well-socialized into college life and encouraged to communicate with their instructors. The syllabus is one of the essential documents they encounter before they enter the college classroom for their first college instructional experience. In this direction, the syllabus should signal to students that the instructor is approachable, available, and warm. Like Schrodt and Witt (2006) maintain, college instructors should consider "increasing" their use of immediacy cues to "reduce perceived psychological distance with students" (p. 17).

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the contributions of this study, it has limitations. Although we used hypothetical scenarios, other scholars of instructional communication have seen success with this approach (Plax et al., 1986; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Turman & Schrodt, 2005). Further, we only explored one independent variable, mediated immediacy. While other independent variables such as credibility and clarity have been demonstrated to aid in student learning, our study, nonetheless, helped us understand the link between the easily adopted behavior of including mediated immediacy statements in a syllabus and students' communication apprehension with instructors and their OCC behaviors. We also only looked at two conditions of immediacy; future research could examine a moderate level of immediacy in addition to high and low due to Comstock et al.'s (1995) findings about curvilinearity in immediacy.

Future researchers might consider using real classroom scenarios to see whether they will be any significant difference in results. In addition, future studies in instructional communication should consider doing a longitudinal study to determine how these relations differ over time during the course of a semester. In this way, we would be able to determine whether students' initial perception of an instructor correlates with varying times in the semester. Scholars would then identify how instructors could maintain consistency and reflect on their immediacy practices to ensure that students are communicating with instructors during an entire semester.

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Appendix

High Immediacy Syllabus

COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY (COM 110)

Instructor: Jordan Wright   Student Hours (Approach): M/W/F 1-2 P
Office: Fell 427   Phone: 123-456-7890
Email: Jwright123@ilstu.edu   Section: 012
Classroom: Fell 158   Meeting time: M/W/F 10:00 AM

TEXTS

Simonds, C. J., Hunt, S. K., & Simonds, B. K. (2018). *Engaging communication*.
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COMMUNICATION AS CRITICAL INQUIRY (COM 110) COURSE GOALS

Communication as Critical Inquiry (COM 110) seeks to improve students' abilities to express themselves and to listen to others in a variety of communication settings. The course emphasizes participation in a variety of communication processes to develop, reinforce, and evaluate communication skills appropriate for public, small group, and interpersonal settings. In short, the course is designed to make students competent, ethical, critical, confident, and information literate communicators.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The two key values that I believe are crucial to a healthy classroom setting are trust and respect. My goal is to create a comfortable environment for all parties where there is a feeling of community instead of competition. You are working together, not against each other, for grades. As students, the more comfortable you are with your classmates, the easier (and more fun!) the semester will be. We are a team, and we need to rely on each other in order to be successful. (Reduce Psychological Distance)

     I am here to help you and make this class beneficial for all of us (Reduce Psychological Distance). Communication is key in all classes, careers and relationships. I want to communicate well with each of you, so please be sure to communicate with me as much as you may need. I am very excited for this class, and

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will come prepared and excited to teach. I ask that you bring your best attitude and desire to learn to this class as well. Together, we will make this class beneficial and have a good time doing it. (Accessibility/Expressibility/Informality)

Got butterflies? Don't worry; my goal is to help you teach those rascals to fly in formation. Butterflies are not a bad thing; we just need to train them to work for us. I know that you will be surprised at the confidence you will develop. You just might even be surprised at how much fun speechmaking can be! (Informality)

Finally, it is my personal ethos, to practice compassion with every person I come into contact, which includes my students. Know that my office door is always open, and you may come chat with me about anything you are struggling with regarding my course. I will do my best to help you succeed. (accessibility)

COURSE POLICIES

I will be available during my stated office hours in person, by phone, or online, or I will post a change in office hours and offer an alternate time. I will respond to your emails within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours during the weekend. I will work with you to arrange times outside of my office hours whenever needed. However, give me at least one day's notice during the week. I encourage you to come to me for help. We all learn faster by asking questions (Engagement).

Please do not hesitate to ask questions, or ask for help, in or out of class. (Accessibility) (Unless there is a privacy issue at stake, in-class is often best, since your classmates may have the same questions or concerns that you do, and then you are helping them, too.) If you have any special needs that it would help for me to be aware of, please let me know (Reduce Psychological Distance, Helpfulness).

Attendance is the key to success. However, I understand that "life happens", therefore you will be allowed 3 free absences that you may use whenever you like throughout the semester. Your free absences are there for you to use for things that might come up, think of them as personal days. Use them for a flat tire, rescuing a friend in need, you have a tummy ache, a headache, a backache, you get the idea--- you have two free absences, plan on using them well. (Humor, Informality, Similarity)

Professional courtesy includes respecting others' opinions, not interrupting in class, being respectful to those who are speaking, and working together in a spirit of cooperation. We are a support system for one another. This classroom space will be one of mutual respect, understanding, and social support. The more supportive we

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are of one another, the more comfortable each of you will be in front of the classroom (Politeness).

SYLLABUS CONTRACT

I have read the syllabus for Jordan Wright's COM 110 class and agree to the course policies and acceptable classroom behavior.

Signature:

_____

Name (please print):

_____Date_____

Major(s)/Minor(s):

_____

Please list at least 3 hobbies/extracurricular activities you enjoy:

What is your dream job?

What is one thing about you that you want me to know about you?

What is one thing you want to know about me?

Please list any food allergies you have (sometimes I get inspired to bring in snacks):

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