

WRITTEN, ORAL & VISUAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES

Learning outcomes and requirements

6-6-24

The exchange of ideas through written, oral, and visual communications is critical to students' success. A student who is an effective communicator can appropriately and productively engage with various academic, professional, and public audiences. The integrative concepts of written, oral, and visual communication develop through courses that instruct students in the principles and practices of these communication competencies. Skills in these areas will also serve the individual throughout their lives, including in career, community, civic society, and social and leisure activities. Courses with communication competency attributes must have communication-related content and assignments worth a minimum of 20% of the overall grade. Courses with multiple competencies must meet the minimum percentage for each competency. Throughout, lists of examples of possible types of projects are for illustrative purposes and not exhaustive.

Courses including a Written (W), Oral (O) or Visual (V) competency will be given a corresponding attribute in Banner. Requirements for written, oral, and visual communication competencies will pertain to H, S, D, G, and F courses. For Q, N, and L courses, students will demonstrate their ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the discipline.

Written Communication:

Courses with the *Written Communication* attribute are expected to help students become more confident and competent writers. These courses strengthen students' expressive communication and develop skills in critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and rhetoric, building on the skills learned in basic composition classes by preparing students to develop written texts of varying lengths and styles that communicate appropriately and effectively across various settings. By acquiring the ability to reason and write in multiple ways, students strengthen their critical thinking and deepen communication skills critical to their personal and professional lives.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop foundational knowledge about the writing process and best practices.
2. Analyze different types of texts and audiences, and tailor one's writing accordingly.
3. Craft clear and coherent arguments, supported by evidence and logic.
4. Express ideas in an engaging manner.
5. Produce writing that reflects a recursive process of revision across multiple drafts.
6. Use sources in ethical ways to support written content.

Requirements:

- A. Writing assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignment(s) (i.e., the total of all writing assignments must be worth at least 20% of the overall grade).

- B. Written communication assignments must be tied to the purpose/requirements of the designation.
- C. Written communication must form the basis of at least 20% of course assignments, including the critique and development of written materials. The minimum required number of pages may be fulfilled in one or multiple assignment(s). Informal writing assignments (like journals or class notes) and group projects will not count toward the writing minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative word count/page minimum.
- D. Instructors must provide timely and actionable feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent written communication assignments within the course. A notation that instructor feedback will be provided must be specified in the syllabus.
- E. Lower-division courses must include a minimum of 1000 words (four pages) of written assignments emphasizing the writing process.
- F. Upper-division courses must include a minimum of 2000 words (eight pages) of written assignments emphasizing the writing process. One writing assignment must be at least 1000 words (4 pages) in length.
- G. Written communication assignments should allow students to demonstrate their ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the discipline.

Oral Communication:

Courses with the *Oral Communication* attribute teach students to effectively interpret, compose, and present information, ideas, and perspectives to various audiences, including the public. By honing their skills in presentations, interviews, active debates, critiques, and performances, students broaden their critical thinking and communication skills needed to function in an increasingly interconnected world. Students are also better prepared for success in the workplace given that employers list proficiency in oral presentation and communication as top-rated skills.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop foundational knowledge about the oral communication process and best practices.
2. Listen to, interpret, and critically evaluate public communication from diverse perspectives.
3. Apply theories of communication to make ethical rhetorical choices that achieve selected communicative purposes (such as informing, persuading, commemorating).
4. Develop and deliver audience-centered presentations and adapt to the needs of distinct speaking situations.
5. Employ verbal and nonverbal techniques for effective delivery in an oral presentation.
6. Ethically integrate credible and relevant supporting materials to craft cohesive messages.

Requirements:

- A. Oral communication assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignments. (i.e., the total of all oral communication assignments must be worth at least 20% of the overall grade).

- B. Oral communication assignments must be tied to the purpose/requirements of the designation.
- C. Oral communication must form the basis of at least 20% of course assignments, including the critique and development of oral presentation materials. The minimum oral communication requirements may be fulfilled in one or multiple assignment(s). Presentations may be live or recorded. Informal and group presentations will not count toward the oral communication minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative minimum.
- D. Instructors must provide timely and actionable feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent oral communication assignments within the course. A notation that instructor feedback will be provided must be specified in the syllabus.
- E. Lower-division courses must include a minimum of ten minutes of planned or scripted presentations, which must occur through two or more assignments.
- F. Upper-division courses must include a minimum of fifteen minutes of planned or scripted presentations which must occur through two or more assignments.
- G. Students must apply their learning by engaging in presentation critiques that include criteria such as rapport with the audience, voice, projection, and audibility; clarity of purpose; originality of ideas; organization; persuasiveness of evidence; and ability to respond to questions.
- H. Oral communication assignments must allow students to demonstrate their ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the discipline.

Visual Communication

Courses with the *Visual Communication* attribute will instruct students in the analysis, structure, theories, and principles of visual images to provide students with the analytical skills they need to communicate through visual means and be thoughtful consumers of visual materials. Courses enable students to understand how still and moving images, art, architecture, and illustrations inform and persuade people. Students will be able to analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in producing and using visual materials. By preparing students to analyze and communicate through visual media, these courses strengthen the critical thinking, visual literacy, and communication skills needed in an increasingly digital landscape.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop foundational knowledge about the visual communication process and best practices.
2. Apply appropriate visual literacy vocabulary/terminology as it relates to course media.
3. Recognize the role of textual information in providing access to image content and identify types of textual information and metadata typically associated with images (such as captions or other descriptions, personal or user-generated tags, creator information, repository names, title keywords, descriptions of visual content)
4. Use appropriate tools to accurately portray visual images.

5. Produce visual media and analyze its role in the presentation of ideas or concepts (such as the following non-exhaustive list of examples: photographs, sculpture, video, films, new media, presentations, or papers)

Requirements:

- A. Visual communication assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignments. (i.e., the total of all visual communication assignments must be worth at least 20% of the overall grade).
- B. Visual communication assignments must be tied to the purpose/requirements of the designation.
- C. Visual communication must form the basis of at least 20% of course assignments, including the critique and development of visual materials. The minimum visual communication requirements may be fulfilled in one or multiple assignment(s). Informal and group projects will not count toward the visual communication minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative minimum.
- D. Instructors must provide timely and actionable feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent visual communication assignments within the course. A notation that instructor feedback will be provided must be specified in the syllabus.
- E. Lower-division courses must facilitate the production of visual content through one or more visual communication projects (such as an infographic, visual analytics, a website, story mapping, a short video, a research poster, virtual reality, art or design pieces, set or costume design).
- F. Upper-division courses must facilitate the production of visual content through two or more visual communication projects (such as an infographic, visual analytics, a website, story mapping, a short video, a research poster, virtual reality, art or design pieces, set or costume design).
- G. Visual communication assignments must allow students to demonstrate their ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the discipline.