



## G209 Communication Skills

3 credits. Prerequisite: B119 Bible Study Methods

👤 Saskatoon Campus 'A' Livestream 📺 Video on Demand

September 15 – December 12, 2025

Fall semester

Tuesday 9:00 AM–noon SK

(11AM – 2 PM ET, changes to 10AM-1PM ET Nov. 2/25)

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### Course Goals

#### Course Description

This course explores the theory and practice of communicating effectively with a variety of audiences, both in groups and one-on-one. Considering oral, visual, and written contexts we will deepen our understanding of language as a system for making meaning and practice and evaluate the use of image, story, and logic as tools for communicating clearly and concisely. The course emphasizes audience analysis, message design, and communication strategies across various platforms, including conversations, speeches, written, and online messages. Students will develop skills to inform, persuade, motivate, and engage their audience ethically and strategically.

#### Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Missions

This course prepares students for Christian leadership by equipping them 1) to listen carefully and critically to the ideas of others, 2) to convey their own ideas with purpose, clarity, and grace, and 3) to speak effectively in both private and public communications in both group and one-on-one situations.

#### Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



To demonstrate competency in *Skilled Communication*, students will

1. Apply principles of effective communication in written, oral, and visual formats both in-person and online.
  - *Assessment: Persuasion Analysis, Storytelling, Analysis and Articulation, Sensitive Issue Response*
2. Effectively research, plan, and write and revise a script for speaking.
  - *Assessment: Storytelling, Analysis and Articulation, Sensitive Issue Response, Reading Quizzes*
3. Deliver confident, organized, clear, and engaging presentations, including adapting the presentation to maximize audience engagement.

- *Assessment: Storytelling, Analysis and Articulation*
- 4. Effectively navigate difficult conversations to reach consensus.
  - *Assessment: Sensitive Issue Response, Reading Quizzes*

## **Course Work**

### **Required Readings**

Horkoff, Tara. *Writing for Success: 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian HSP Edition*. Victoria, BC: BCcampus, 2021. Creative Commons. <https://opentextbc.ca/writingforsuccessh5p/>

Schultze, Quentin J. *Communicating with Grace and Virtue: Learning to Listen, Speak, Text, and Interact as a Christian*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic 2020. ISBN 9781540961273. <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1192972651>

University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, *Communication in the Real World – An Introduction to Communication Studies*. 2016. ISBN: 9781946135070 <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/274>

### **Required Videos**

Peterson, Jordan. “Jordan Peterson | Full Address and Q&A | Oxford Union.” YouTube video, 1:15:49, posted by “Oxford Union,” June 24, 2018. [https://youtu.be/UZMIbo\\_DxJk](https://youtu.be/UZMIbo_DxJk)

Cuddy, Amy. “Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are.” TED Talk, June 2012 [https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_may\\_shape\\_who\\_you\\_are](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are)

### **Suggested Reading/Reference**

Lencioni, Patrick. *Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco: Wiley, 2004). ISBN: 787968056. <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/54938325>

Moxley, Joseph. "Writing Commons" (2012). *Textbooks Collection*. 5. <https://writingcommons.org/site-map/>

Roberts, Jasmine. *Writing for Strategic Communication Industries* (Ohio State Press Books, 2016). <https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/stratcommwriting/>

### **Course Assignments and Activities**

#### 1. *Persuasion Analysis* – 10%

Listen to one of the following podcasts. Outline the argument and critique the logical flow of the presentation. Describe the persuasive tools the speaker uses to win over and motivate his or her audience to action. Upload your report on Populi.

##### 1.1. Simon Senik -

[https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

1.2. Brené Brown - [https://www.ted.com/talks/brene\\_brown\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_vulnerability](https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_the_power_of_vulnerability)

1.3. Julian Treasure -

[https://www.ted.com/talks/julian\\_treasure\\_how\\_to\\_speak\\_so\\_that\\_people\\_want\\_to\\_listen](https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_how_to_speak_so_that_people_want_to_listen)

To successfully complete this assignment the student will 1) Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide and 2) Review the lesson and rubric in Populi.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1.
- **Assignment length:** 500 words.
- **Due date:** Oct. 2.

2. *Storytelling* – 20%

Write a contemporary story retelling the events of one of the biblical passages listed in Populi. Ensure the story follows a typical story arc and has a clear point to make. In essence you're creating a modern parable. Record your 8-minute story on Padlet and upload your manuscript to Populi. View and comment on two of your classmates' stories on Padlet. Your comments should consist of 1) a specific example of a 'surprise' moment, 2) a suggestion for a wording improvement, and 3) reflections on the content and presentation of the story. Revise your manuscript based on your peers' comments and upload it to Populi within a week of posting your story.

To successfully complete this assignment the student will 1) Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide and 2) Review the lesson and rubric in Populi

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3.
- **Assignment length:** 8 minutes, manuscript length approximately 1200 words.
- **Due dates:**
  - Oct 24 – Manuscript and video
  - Oct 25-30 – Comments
  - Oct 31 – Revised manuscript

3. *Analysis and Articulation* – 45%

Choose one of the social issues covered in the latest two issues of *Faith Today* or suggest an alternate to your instructor. Research a Christian perspective on the problem and alternative solutions. Your research should include 3 books, 3 journal articles (peer-reviewed) and 3 credible online sources. Include a bibliography with your manuscript and use Horizon and MCS formatting for quotes and references. Using your research and including real-life examples, create an 8-minute presentation, including presentation software, to convince your fellow students to see things your way. You will share your presentation with the class. Be sure to rehearse your presentation because the time limit is firm (more than 7.5 minutes and less than 8.5). Submit a draft of your manuscript at least a week prior to your presentation. Edit your manuscript based on the instructor's feedback. You will upload both your edited manuscript and PowerPoint (presentation software) on Populi two days before your class presentation. All students are required to comment on VOD presentations.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 8-minute presentation, approximately 1200 words.
- **Due date:**
  - Topic and thesis statement – Nov. 10

- Submit a draft of your manuscript at least a week prior to your presentation. Edit your manuscript based on the instructor's feedback. You will upload both your edited manuscript and PowerPoint (presentation software) on Populi two days before your class presentation.
- Presentations as scheduled.

4. *Sensitive Issue Response* - 15

Complete the readings and associated lesson in Populi. Using one of the case studies listed in the Populi lesson, analyze the situation and people involved, then write emails to both parties involved informing them of your knowledge of the situation and the next steps you will take.

Using an AI editor, edit your original communication for a professional tone, then edit it again asking for a light-hearted tone. Create a 3-minute Padlet video comparing the three versions. Then choose the best of each to do a final draft. Upload all four versions to Populi.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2, 4.
- Assignment length: 300 words (for your original version).
- Due date: Dec 11.

5. *Reading Quizzes* - 10%

- Related learning outcome(s): #2, 4.
- Due dates:
  - Sept. 22
  - Oct. 6
  - Oct. 20
  - Nov. 17
  - Dec. 1

**Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements**

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have the *same assignment due dates* as in-class students. For the class presentation assignment, VOD students will be included in the class schedule for presentations.
- By Saturday at 11:59 pm [**SK time**] each week, VOD students will submit a 2-3 minute video report that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) includes at least one question you had after watching the class recording. *Note: you may need to watch the current class video before starting your work on the assignment related to that topic.*
- In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their VOD weekly submissions. These submissions are marked pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.
- The Extensions and Late Assignments policies apply to all VOD Report submissions.

**Estimate of Time Investment** (individual time investments may vary)

Readings	30 hrs	N/A	<b>Assignment Weighting</b>
Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	
1. Persuasion Analysis	4 hrs	Oct. 2	10%
2. Storytelling	8 hrs	Oct 24	20%
3. Analysis and Articulation	14 hrs	Nov 18-25	45%
4. Sensitive Issue Response	6 hrs	Dec 11	15%
5. Reading Quizzes	In class	As scheduled	10%
Total =		92 hrs	

All assignments are due at 11:59pm **SK time**, unless otherwise indicated.

**Assessment Rubrics**

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

**Class & Reading Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Reading Due</b>	
<b>Sept. 16</b>	Intro and Syllabus Foundations for Communication Developing Confidence	CRW – Cptrs 1-3 Video by Cuddy	
<b>Sept. 23</b>	Rhetoric and Persuasion Analyzing Communication Storytelling Basics	CRW – 4-6 WFS – 10-11 Schultze – 7-8	Sept. 22 – Reading Quiz #1
<b>Sept. 30</b>	Gathering Evidence and discernment Supporting your “big idea”	CRW – 11-12	
<b>Oct. 7</b>	Developing a Speech/Message Truth and Ethics Assessing Your Audience	CRW – 8-10 WFS – 4	Oct. 6 – Reading Quiz #2
<b>Oct. 14</b>	Crafting Your Speech/Message Use of Presentation Software	CRW – 15-16 WFS - 5	
<b>Oct. 21</b>	Supporting Material Organizing Communication	WFS – 7-9 Video by Petersen	Oct. 20 – Reading Quiz #3
<b>Oct. 28</b>	Reading Week		
<b>Nov. 4</b>	Module B		
<b>Nov. 11</b>	Remembrance Day – no classes		
<b>Nov. 18</b>	Class Presentations	Schultze 1-6	Nov. 17 – Reading Quiz #4
<b>Nov. 25</b>	Class Presentations		
<b>Dec. 2</b>	Crucial Conversations Communicating in Crisis	CRW – 7, 13-14	Dec. 1 Reading Quiz #5
<b>Dec 9</b>	Course Evaluations Language and Style Conclusion		

- Revision week is December 15-19. Your instructor may also request revisions on some assignments before revision week.
- No resubmission of assignments will be accepted after December 19.

## **Academic Policies**

### **General Assignment Guidelines**

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

### **Extensions**

To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Request Extension Form* on the [MCS](#) or [Horizon](#) website and *before the due date*. Professors reserve the right to deny extensions. Generally, the sooner that a student asks for an extension, the more willing faculty tend to be in granting extensions. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

### **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned or extended due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. Late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. Repeated late submissions, including late submissions of revisions, will result in academic discipline, such as warnings, required coaching, or academic probation. Similar to standard human resource employment practices, students will receive warnings and conditions with increasing severity of academic discipline.

If an assignment is submitted more than four calendar days late, the student will receive a failing grade (0%) for that assignment until it is submitted (students must demonstrate competency by submitting and passing all assignments to pass a course). Upon submission, the assignment may not be graded until revision week. In addition, the student will receive the grade for the assignment with minimal feedback (only a brief rationale for the assignment grade) and no opportunity to submit revisions.

### **Assignment Completion**

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

### Assignment Revisions

Students can generally submit up to two revisions for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward achieving competency.

### Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment rubric. Once a student's assignment has met all competency requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. Assignments that do not meet competency will receive a 0. A final course grade is not calculated until the end of the course. Students pass a course (with a B- or higher) only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all competency requirements* for that course and, therefore, only after they have passed all assignments.

Horizon and MCS CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated <b>exceptional</b> achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
			A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated <b>good</b> achievement of all learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

If the student does not meet all competency requirements in a course and, therefore, does not pass all the assignments in a course, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at Horizon and MCS. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below according to the scale below.

BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student was <b>beginning to meet</b> one or more learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made <b>insufficient progress</b> toward meeting learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

### Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and

which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Horizon and MCS have a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage**

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Horizon](#) and [MCS](#) Student Handbooks.

### **Accessible Learning Services Information**

Horizon and MCS are committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institutions, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Accessibility services personnel (at MCS, the Director of Academic Success, Wendy Holmes at [wendy.holmes@mcs.edu](mailto:wendy.holmes@mcs.edu); at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at [rbekkattla@horizon.edu](mailto:rbekkattla@horizon.edu)). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks.

### **Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)**

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

### **Livestreaming Etiquette**

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

### **Use of Technology**

Horizon and MCS encourage the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

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