This syllabus provides more narrative and explanation than those you will receive in other classes. We want you to understand how all the parts fit together and gain some tools for decoding syllabi in your other classes.

**The Purpose of a Syllabus**

A course syllabus serves as a roadmap for the course, an organizational tool and a contract. As a roadmap, it lays out the structure of the course: what we want you to learn, what topics we'll cover and in what order. It also provides key dates and expectations for the entire semester. Your organization for the semester begins with the syllabus. Faculty are not responsible for reminding you about upcoming assignments, due dates, etc. All due dates are listed on the syllabus. Get dates marked on your calendar now for ALL your classes. As a contract, a syllabus is an agreement between the student and the instructor about course requirements and expectations. By continuing in the course, you are accepting these terms.

**COMR 1000**

**Course Overview**

This course is required of all first year COMM RAP residents. It provides a common foundation for thinking about the role of communication in our society as well as acting as a resource to help you make a successful transition from high school to college. The broad objectives of the course are: 1) to keep you informed about the program (goals, activities, resources, etc.); 2) to develop a deeper understanding of the role of communication in creating and sustaining community and society; and 3) to help you develop a stronger sense of who you are as a student, and as a member of the COMM RAP and of the University of Colorado – Boulder. Everything we do in this course relates back to one of these goals. We'll explore what it means to participate in community, how communication practices impact daily life and our future – both individually and collectively, and identify individual strategies for success. Along the way you'll have an opportunity to practice communication skills in multiple venues: team projects, “rap” sessions, reflective writing, class discussions, etc.

**Course Materials**

Course readings are located on the Desire to Learn (D2L) site (www.learn.colorado.edu). You are welcome to read them online. However, for some of the more challenging readings I encourage you to print out a hard copy and annotate it with your own notes. Always bring your notes on the reading to class with you as a reference point for discussion. And, bring paper and pencil to take notes.

A note on Desire to Learn (D2L).

We will take some time in class during Week 2 to explore D2L. It is widely used on campus and is a vital communication tool in this course. In addition to posting course readings on D2L, we will use it as the primary repository for assignments and feedback, and to post “breaking news” for the class. You will also be able to monitor your grades via D2L. You can sign up to get an automatic notification whenever something new is posted to the course site.
Readings

Generally the readings for the course are fairly short and approachable, i.e., they were written for the general public and not a specialized academic audience. However, they do require you to think about ideas and issues. And apply them to your own life. The best strategy is to complete the reading at least a few days before class so you have time to complete the assignment, generate questions, and let ideas percolate in your subconscious.

A week by week schedule is located at the end of this syllabus indicating the topic, reading and assignment for each week.

Clifton, Donald O., Edward Anderson and Laurie Schreiner. (2001/2006). StrengthsQuest: Discover and Develop Your Strengths in Academics, Career, and Beyond. New York: Gallup Press. [Abbreviated as SQ on the syllabus.] This text will be available to you online after you complete the StrengthsQuest assessment for week 6 of the course.


Undetermined. There will be an additional reading on dialogues in the last two weeks of the semester. It will be announced in class and available via D2L.

Assignments

Assignments in this course serve two purposes: 1) to help you process the reading before class in order to contribute to class discussion more effectively, and 2) to apply information from the readings to your own life.

There is something due almost every week. In addition to the class meeting, you should expect to spend 2-3 hours/week on this class – sometimes less, occasionally more. Late assignments will be accepted within the first 48 hours after class but will be noted as late.

A short description of the assignment categories is provided below. You will receive more detailed information about each assignment the week before it is due.

Applications. Most of these exercises require you to consider how something applies to your own life: a reading, something you’re learning about this campus, your own unique skill set. Thoughtful completion of these exercises will make your end-of-semester reflection and action plan easier. Application exercises count for 65% of your overall grade. Most of these will be due on the D2L system. When you submit something to D2L, it is time stamped so I will know whether it came in on time or not. Timely completion is critical. (See Assessment for more detail). While you will receive some feedback on these during the semester, the final grade is based on these as part of your overall portfolio for the class at the end of the semester.

Presentation and Peer Evaluation

The weeks before fall break are devoted to a team project that demonstrates community building and a communication plan. Your team will present to the class and turn in a written plan for your idea. Because you will work in a small group, you will have the opportunity to assess the contributions of each member of your team. Your grade for this assignment can be raised or lowered a full letter grade based on peer evaluations.

Challenge Paper

This is a three page paper requiring you to reflect on a personal experience, and integrate it with a reading and class discussions.
Final Reflection and Plan
At the end of the semester, you'll be asked to use course materials to create an action plan to accomplish goals.

Participation
There are two components to your participation in class: attendance and engagement. We only meet once each week. It is important to show up every week – even if you haven't completed the work. If you're not present, you lose the benefit of learning through discussion, problem solving, and other activities and we lose the benefit of your presence. Each of you provides a unique perspective that no one else can contribute.

Attendance counts significantly toward the final grade. (See Assessment). Although all sections of the course are completing the same readings and assignments, the sections are not interchangeable. If you miss your section, it is not an option to simply drop in to another section that week. You will have the opportunity to make up one missed class. The make up work must be completed within a week and arranged individually with your instructor. Arriving more than 5 minutes late equals an absence.

There are four out of class events you are required to attend:
1) an activity or event away from Buckingham and COMM RAP (before week 8);
2) a StrengthsQuest workshop (Oct 21, 23, Nov 5, Nov7);
3) a Rap session in the hall; and
4) a presentation by Brenda Allen at 6 p.m. on October 17.
These events count toward overall attendance.

Engagement. Learning is an active process. It is marked by physical and cognitive engagement. You can demonstrate engagement in multiple ways:
Completing assignments on time.
Listening carefully in class.
Arriving with an open attitude toward learning.
Staying involved by taking notes, both of what is said, and of things that cross your mind during class and discussion.
Giving respectful attention to the instructor and/or other students when they are speaking. I expect much of your learning to come from each other.
Asking questions, make comments, raise objections, or provide observations about topics in the course, particularly those that link the classroom material to the world outside the classroom.
Being an active participant in discussions. Engage in discussions with energy and enthusiasm. (See Ground Rules for Discussion). If you have extreme difficulty speaking in class, please see me and we’ll work out other ways for you to demonstrate engagement.

Assessment
This course is heavily weighted toward showing up every week and engaging with the material. Exams and papers do factor in but simply coming to class and completing the work is a major element of this course. (see below)

% of course grade
65 Applications
15 Presentation and Peer Evaluation
10 Challenge Paper
10 Final reflection and action plan

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Overall Course Grades
A – No absences.* Completed all assignments on time. Written work and class participation demonstrate insight and thoughtful processing of reading and course concepts.

B – No more than 1 absence. * Completed all assignments on time. Majority of assignments completed to at least a satisfactory level (check or higher). Regular engagement and participation in class.

C – No more than 2 absences.* All assignments completed and no more than 1 late assignment. Some engagement/participation in class.

D – No more than three absences.* All assignments completed. Limited/minimal participation in class.

F – Five absences (total for the semester) is an automatic fail. If you hit five, there is no option to do the “make up” work.

* You have the opportunity to make up one absence. The “make up” work must be completed within one week. Please note that I will be flexible for major life events, e.g., you contact mono.

Extra Credit. There are no opportunities for extra credit.

My Policies
• I expect you to create and maintain a respectful atmosphere in the class so everyone feels safe to express experiences, feelings, perceptions and beliefs. (See discussion ground rules below)
• Cell phones, laptops, i-pods, etc. need to be turned off and stowed away during class.
• You are responsible for knowing the information on the syllabus and for announcements made in class, including changes to the schedule.
• Material distributed in class is available on D2L or in my office if I don’t have an electronic version. I don’t bring old handouts, uncollected assignments, etc. back and forth with me each day. You can pick these up from my office.
• If you miss a class or arrive late, please contact another student in the class first to find out what you missed. You are welcome to come see me if you have additional questions after reviewing the notes and materials from class.
• Arrive on time. We only have 50 minutes once a week. Late arrivals are disruptive to everyone. Arriving more than 5 minutes late equals an absence.

Communication
• Because my office is in Buckingham, I am in the hall most of the day during the week. If my door is open, you are welcome to stop in. However, please understand if I suggest we set up a separate appointment because I’m in the middle of something else, on a deadline or on my way out the door. Generally, right before class is NOT the best time to deal with individual concerns. I am often trying to get equipment set up, deal with technical difficulties, start class on time, etc. After class is usually better.
• Email and face-to-face are the best way to communicate with me outside of class. I will try to respond to email within 24 hours during the week (M-F). It may take longer over holidays and weekends.
• Sign up to receive notifications of updates to the course D2L site. That is where I will post any important information that comes up between classes.
• I will use your official CU email for individual communication. If you are using another email account, check that it is being forwarded properly.
• You have a contact list for your classmates.
Ground Rules for Discussion

“It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”
- attributed to Aristotle, a Greek philosopher who lived 384-322 BCE

In agreement with Aristotle, I suggest the following ground rules for discussion:
1) You have the right to speak for yourself and share what you believe to be true based on your experiences and beliefs. But you may not belittle others whose experiences and beliefs are different than yours.
2) Come with an open mind (“travelers’ eyes”). You may not always agree with everyone but do your best to understand their point of view.
3) If you have made your opinion clear and others disagree, agree to disagree and allow class discussion to move on rather than attempting to change the opinions of others.
4) Refrain from saying that the feelings, experiences or beliefs of others are wrong or incorrect. These are not objective facts. They can’t be wrong. However, you are welcome to share that your experiences are different and that you are having a hard time understanding someone else’s perspective.
5) Watch for evaluative statements trying to hide as questions. “Don’t you think it’s wrong to…” is not the start of a question. It is the beginning of a judgmental statement. Focus on using “I statements” when you disagree with someone.
6) Some of us are “talkers” and others less so. Some feel more comfortable jumping into a conversation than others. When you are speaking, be aware of other signaling that they would like to add to the conversation.
7) Is there anything you would like to add?

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

I strongly support all of these policies. Please come talk to me if you are impacted by any of the following issues in any way.

(1) **On Disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see guidelines at: http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/go.cgi?select=temporary.html

(2) **On Religious Observances:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, {{insert your procedures here}} See full details at: http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

(3) **On Classroom Behavior:** Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at: http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at: http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

(4) **On Discrimination and Sexual Harassment:** The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact
the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at: http://www.colorado.edu/odh

(5) On the Honor Code: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at: http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at: http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/