

Journalism 150

Stand and Deliver: Presentation Skills

Why you should take this course

J150 helps prepare students for other college courses that require research, critical thinking and speaking skills, and it helps prepare students to effectively impart information in situations beyond the university.

You, no matter your education, will be part of a global economy and interconnected humanity. You will work in diverse professions, including business, government, non-profits, engineering, the arts, and health care, where you will contribute important stories to society. The ability to inform or persuade confidently through presentation is an incalculable skill no matter where you choose to direct your career. You will give few speeches in your life, but you will present information an inestimable number of times.

Journalists specifically have a growing challenge as more and more writers are asked to create digital video content, chair debates and give business pitches and proposal presentations. If your plan is to be a journalist, J150 will introduce you to effective presentation fundamentals, audience analysis, support technologies and structural development.

What you will learn

J150 is designed to help you meet the course and School of Journalism objectives specific to presenting information, and it's designed to help you meet KU's CORE learning objectives. When you complete J150, you will be able to:

1. Prepare and orally communicate structured material in an engaging and beginning professional way
2. Communicate effectively with different audiences and with different purposes
3. Understand and enhance your own communication style
4. Discern how visuals, including graphics, music, and video, inform and enrich presentations and choose software tools that develop and impart information clearly
5. Evaluate, critique and discuss the production of oral information

You will also have started KU's CORE Learning Outcome 2: "Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to generate, develop, organize, and convey ideas orally, using language, presentation skills, and other media (for example, digital texts, images, and graphs) to present those ideas clearly, confidently, and in a manner appropriate to specific communication situations."

Who will guide your learning

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Office hours will vary, so ask your individual instructor about specifics. GTAs have offices in 210 Stauffer-Flint, which is downstairs in the Journalism Resource Center.

How you will learn it

Giving solid presentations is a learned skill. To present well requires practice. To that end, you will present and you will evaluate others' presentations.

- **Individual presentation I**
Outline 10 points – Self-evaluation 25 points – Other student 25 points
Presentation delivery 75 points
- **Group Presentation**
Outline 15 points – Group evaluation 25 points – Other group 25 points
Presentation delivery 75 points
- **Individual presentation II (online)**
Outline 25 points – Self-evaluation 25 points – Other online prez 25 points
Presentation delivery 75 points
- **Final individual presentation**
Edited outline and supporting materials, including a leave-behind document 50 points – Self-evaluation 25 points
Presentation delivery 100 points

Homework: 125 points cumulatively

Professionalism profile, including your class participation and required blog posting and responses: 75 points

What materials you will need

1. Access to the J150 blog on Blackboard, where you will post presentations and evaluations and access to at least one presentation software, such as PowerPoint/Keynote/ Prezi
2. Rental time at Media Crossroads, which is \$5/30 minutes. Expect to take 30 to 60 minutes recording your online presentation.

What you must know and do to succeed

Although J150 has a common syllabus and similar assignments, instructors are entirely responsible for their classes and their students and may make adjustments specific to students in specific sections. Your individual instructor's rules and requests supersede all others.

- **Show up.**

J150 has an “of course” attendance policy. Of course you will come to class. Why wouldn't you? To avoid the nonsense often associated with “excused” and “unexcused” absences, know that **you have two free absences**. Use your freebies for sleeping, court dates, funerals, sick days or whatever. We don't have to know why you aren't in class. After you've used your freebies, your course grade may drop a full letter for the third absence – and a letter for every third absence following. Tardies count, too. Calculate that three late arrivals equal one absence. You **can't use your absences for presentation days**, though.

If you are sick, don't bring a doctor's note and expect an “excused” absence. It's just one of your absences. **If you are sick enough to miss multiple class days or suffer some catastrophic event that alters the course of your life, contact the AAAC office and ask counselors there to intervene on your behalf.**

- **Respect your classmates.**

In this class, it is important that you feel comfortable expressing ideas and opinions. We welcome and encourage you to share differing perspectives and diverse experiences and to be respectful of others whose viewpoints and experiences may not be the same as your own.

- **Pay attention to the policies.**

Disconnect from your phone and laptop when you come to class. Send and read your texts, Instas and snaps before class starts. There's a body of research that proves writing notes by hand, including doodling, helps students remember more of what they've seen and heard in class. We adhere to that premise. **Our “no screens” policy is a thing.**

Deadlines are absolute. We don't accept late assignments. Catastrophic events are the exception, but anything less than a catastrophe will earn you a zero. Don't expect to make up exercises, unless you and your instructor have discussed that option in advance. Don't get all sad-faced and whiney and tell your instructor you'll email it – unless that's what your instructor requests.

Type and double-space all your assignments, unless told otherwise by your instructor. This means no handwritten assignments.

Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance:

No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. **Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.**

The School of Journalism reserves the right to **cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class** or laboratory meeting.

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.

Copying or Recording - Course materials prepared by the instructors, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructors, are the individual instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to record lectures, on the condition that the individual making the recording only uses these recordings as a study aid. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

In the event of inclement weather, KU officials make the decision to cancel classes. To determine if weather may have caused officials to cancel classes, wait for an e-mail or text saying such. Or, check KU's website.

- **Don't cheat. Really.**

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communication does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Former Associate Dean (Babs) Barnett says:

“In this class, and in all journalism classes, honesty and integrity are critical. Any work you do must be original and reflect your own ideas, thoughts, and research. In a work setting, if you choose to violate professional standards, you will be fired. In this class, if you choose to violate the standards for academic integrity, you’ll fail the course, and you may be expelled from or denied admission to the School of Journalism.”

Ouch. Avoid the “I’m so disappointed” speech from your parents.

Here’s the journalism school’s official policy statement: “The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. In this course, the penalty for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification is a failing grade for the semester. Additional penalties can include expulsion from the School of Journalism. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of this course.”

The KU University Senate defines plagiarism as “knowingly presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.” The University defines fabrication and falsification as “unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.”

Here’s some clarification from former Associate Dean Barnett:

Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else’s ideas, thoughts, or words, and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it was your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person’s ideas, opinions, and words into the documents you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due. “Recycling” past presentations from other students and presenting them as your own falls into the category of plagiarism.

Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. This can include making up an entire presentation or embellishing a fact, quote, or statistic to make it sound better. Don’t do it.

- **Use your resources.**

The Bremner Editing Center in the journalism school, on the first floor of Stauffer-Flint Hall, is a resource for your writing and editing needs. Professor Lisa McLendon and her staff can meet with you individually to help you with writing particular to effective communication, including grammar in presentation slides and transitioning through ideas.

Media Crossroads, an interactive, multimedia center designed to educate, innovate and communicate, is in Anschutz Library. It's a place for you to put your presentations to video, or talk through a visual idea with peers. During the semester, MC will have evening walk-in hours for student use.

- **Know where to go and whom to talk with if problems occur.**

Occasionally, grievances arise. Talk to your individual instructor first. If the issue came to be because you didn't read the syllabus, go back and review the details. If you are uncomfortable discussing an issue with your instructor, feel free to make an appointment to see Associate Dean Scott Reinardy in the dean's office, Room 200 SF.

The Office of the Vice Provost for Student Success coordinates the University response to campus and individual student emergencies. The Office of the Vice Provost is also the contact when students are involved in a serious incident away from the Lawrence campus. The Office will offer information, counseling, and support to students, their families and others affected by the incident.

To report an extended illness or accident that keeps a student away from class, contact the **Academic Achievement and Access Center** at (785) 864-4064, www.achievement.ku.edu.

Student Access Services, part of the Academic Achievement & Access Center, works with all units to help students with disabilities - be they physical, medical, sensory, psychological, or related to attention or learning.

- **Understand the grades you earn.**

Presentation skills aren't a science. J150 is designed to help you learn the basics of a good presentation, but intangibles that add to the effectiveness of a presentation – charismatic delivery, soul-opening insights and visually arresting creativity – can't be included in a presentation checklist.

No paint-by-numbers method exists for earning an A grade on a presentation – in class or in life.

We will focus on broad objective criteria to make grading distinctions when evaluating your work.

OUTSTANDING (A)

An A-grade presentation must be memorable – a stand out – among presentations. It must meet the assignment's parameters of length, content, and **relevant supporting materials**. It must present a compelling introduction that establishes the purpose and goal of the presentation. It must feature new information or an intriguing anecdote. It must demonstrate effort beyond others in the class, particularly in its polished delivery and absorbing substance.

GOOD (B)

A good presentation accomplishes the high points of an average presentation. It conforms to the length and time limit, it's free of grammar, pronunciation and usage errors, and it demonstrates a clear central purpose and goal. Its organizational strategy is clear. The presenter attributes all information that requires attribution, sustains focus through logical organization and compelling transitions and expresses ideas fluently and precisely, using effective vocabulary and sentence variety. The presenter is practiced, but not perfunctory.

AVERAGE (C)

An average presentation demonstrates knowledge of the conventions of presentation skills, but errors occur. Just as a good presentation does, an average presentation conforms to the length and time limit, is mostly free of grammar, pronunciation and usage errors, and demonstrates a clear central purpose and goal. Its organizational strategy is somewhat clear. The presenter attributes all information that requires attribution, sustains focus through logical organization and understandable transitions and expresses ideas fairly well, using effective vocabulary and sentence variety.

WEAK (D)

A weak presentation fails to meet some of the basic criteria of the assignment. It may lack a clear central idea or organizational strategy. The presenter fails to offer external support for ideas. The presentation is unprepared or unrehearsed, or it is inappropriate for the assignment and/or audience. Weakness in the presentation may be demonstrated by poor grammar and language use – both orally and within any written materials.

FAILING (F)

A failing presentation provides the audience with inaccurate information, appears to have no focus, provides little or no evidence what sources were used to gather information, exhibits a serious lack of organization and exhibits severe problems in sentence structure that persistently interfere with meaning. It contains pervasive errors in language use. Work not ready on deadline.

Grading Scale

A=93% A-=90%

B+=89% B=84% B-=80%

C+=79% C=74% C-=70%

D=65%, F = below 65%

Students often ask questions about “rounding up” grades—that is, if the final grade contains a fraction, students want to know what happens.

Nothing happens. There has to be a line somewhere.

We don’t round up.

It’s your responsibility to keep track of the grades you earn. Your individual instructor will post grades on your Blackboard lab site. Keep all papers and handed back to you in case there is a discrepancy between the recorded grade and what you were given.

- **Don’t disrespect the “duh” details**

1) Fulfill the specific requirements of the assignments. The most obvious sign of a poorly prepared presentation is that it doesn’t address what we asked you to address within a given assignment. **Manage your time** so you can hit all the bases.

2) Complete all the things we ask of you in the class. Yes, the blog is important. Yes, other students’ presentations should be thoughtfully assessed. Despite differences in point values, everything in J150 works together. No one thing is greater or lesser than another.

Even the details, such as an outline, have a purpose. Among other things, they are intended to get you to work on your own presentation rather than just winging it.

3) Remember a presentation is not an essay read aloud. **It’s not a speech.** If you read your presentation word-for-word, we will know you haven’t prepared or rehearsed. It’s an easy way to bomb out of J150.

4) **Type and double-space** your class assignments, so we may insert comments.