

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

COMS 542

COMMUNICATION IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a practical and theoretical course designed to strengthen communication competencies of students in the Christian ministry environment. Students will interact with and apply basic concepts of communication theory, evangelism, spiritual growth, interpersonal interaction and problem solving, and information through speech giving in the ministry context.

RATIONALE

It is important that effective communication skills be used in the ministry context. Specific concepts of theory will be applied from communication theory in general, interpersonal communication, small group communication, listening, language use, nonverbal communication, leadership, public speaking, and organizational communication in the ministry contexts of personal evangelism, small group communication settings, public speaking settings, and work in the ministry based organization.

I. PREREQUISITES

none

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASES

Click on the following link to view the required resources for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with internet access (broadband recommended)
- B. Microsoft Word
(Microsoft Office is available at a special discount to Liberty University students.)
- C. Digital video recorder or similar device (available through MBS)

IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Identify and explain the relationship that exists between effective ministry and effective communication in ministry contexts.
- B. Evaluate and apply principles of effective communication to his or her personal communication styles in various ministry contexts.
- C. Identify where they are spiritually and apply this knowledge to communicating their spiritual journey to others in a dyadic situation.

- D. Classify effective methods of communication to use when presenting the Gospel of Christ to different people.
- E. Practice good IPC skills as an interviewer and interviewee in dyadic communication encounters.
- F. Practice good communication skills as a member and leader in an inductive Bible study.
- G. Demonstrate use of accepted organizational structures, language use, and nonverbal behaviors in oral communication activities related to ministry contexts.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings
- B. Reflection Papers (4)
Students will write four 3-page reflection papers based on the reading assignments. The topics are as follows: Personality-based Evangelism, Falling In Love With God's word, The Critical Journey, and Preaching That Connects. These papers will be due throughout the duration of the course.
- C. Inductive Bible Study Preparation
Students will select a passage of scripture and prepare notes for an inductive Bible study. This assignment will walk the student through the process of framing scriptural context, analyzing key words, researching other scholarly materials, internalizing the passage, and actualizing scripture in order to change behavior. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 2.
- D. Research Paper
Students will write a 10-page paper that addresses the question: How can I reach people for Christ who have a post-modern mindset? Each student will read ten total articles from the D.A. Carson text and use these writings as a base for the discussion in the paper. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 3.
- E. Small Group Assessment
For this 6-page paper, students will be reviewing a video-tape of a Bible study. Students will be categorizing communication behaviors, both verbal and non-verbal, and come to conclusions about the role each plays. Goals for improving communication will be developed. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 4.
- F. Peer Interview: Sharing Your Spiritual Journey
Students will take turns interviewing one other classmate regarding their spiritual journey. The interview will involve answering questions about spiritual experiences and future goals, as well as where the student is currently in his or her spiritual development. The interviewer will compile his or her notes into a 1-page summary for submission. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 5.

G. Spiritual Growth Evaluation

Students will write a 3–5-page analysis which summarizes their personal spiritual journey and includes a reflection on the peer interview. The paper will analyze the student's level of self-disclosure, comfort zone, and preferred communication techniques. It also requires the student to consider whether or not the peer interview could serve as a tool for spiritual growth and development if converted into a long-term accountability scenario. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 5.

H. Group Project: A Church In Transition

Beginning in Module/Week 3, students will take on the role of member of an ad hoc committee commissioned by the church in order to develop a five year plan in which they address where the church will be in five years. The group will also create a methodology with a time-line on how to get there. Using the Group Discussion Board, the committee will analyze the problem(s) presented, identify solutions, and create a plan for implementing the best answer to the church's dilemma. By the end of Module/Week 6, one representative will submit a 5-page summary of the group's ideas and decisions.

I. Informative Speech

Students will give an 8–10-minute informative speech in front of a small group from church or in front of the congregation. The student will record the speech with a digital video recorder and post it on YouTube for the instructor to view. As a visual aid, students will also create a PowerPoint presentation to accompany the speech. Students will also provide a bibliography that includes at least six sources. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 7.

J. Persuasive Speech

Students will give an 8–10-minute persuasive speech in front of a small group from church or in front of the congregation. The student will record the speech with a digital video recorder and post it on YouTube for the instructor to view. As a visual aid, students will also create a PowerPoint presentation to accompany the speech. The purpose of this speech is to help people recognize a need in the church, community, etc., and persuade a certain course of action within the church to fulfill that need. This assignment is due by the end of Module/Week 8.

K. Students will take a Mid-term and Final Exam over selected reading from the Wallace text. The exams will be open-book and open-notes, containing fifty true/false and multiple-choice questions. Students will have 90 minutes to complete each exam.

VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES**A. Points**

Reflection Papers (4 at 60 each)	240
Inductive Bible Study Preparation	70
Research Paper	100
Small Group Assessment	70
Peer Interview: Sharing Your Spiritual Journey	70
Spiritual Growth Evaluation	50
Group Project: A Church In Transition	60
Informative Speech	100
Persuasive Speech	100
Exams (2 at 70 each)	140
Total	1000

B. Scale

A = 940–1000 A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859
 C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 F = 759 and below

C. Late Work Policy

Late work will be accepted, but the grade will be reduced by one letter grade per week, starting on the day after the assignment is due. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course, even if a grade reduction for lateness has occurred to the point of receiving an F on the assignment.

D. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

COMS 542

Textbooks: Carson D.A. *Telling the Truth: Evangelizing Spiritual Seekers in Life-Changing Discussions* (2003).
 Ferrin, Keith. *Falling in Love with God's Word: Discovering What God Always Intended Bible Study to Be* (2003).
 Galli, Mark and Craig Larson. *Preaching That Connects: Using the Techniques of Journalists To Add Impact* (1994).
 Hagberg, Janet O. and Robert A. Guelich. *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith* (2005).
 Johnson, Jeffrey A. *Got Style? Personality-based Evangelism* (2005).
 Wallace, Samuel P., et al. *Communication Principles of Tradition and Change* (2009).

WEEK/ MODULE	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Wallace: chs. 1-3 Johnson: all chapters Carson: parts 1 & 2 (10 essays)*	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions Reflection Paper 1	0 0 60
2	Carson: parts 3-5 Ferrin: all chapters Wallace: ch. 6	Reflection Paper 2 Inductive Bible Study Preparation	60 70
3	Carson: parts 6-8 Wallace: chs. 4 & 5 Poole – Seeker Small Groups	Research Paper	100
4	Wallace: chs. 9-11 1 presentation	Small Group Assessment Midterm (based on Wallace text)	70 70
5	Wallace: chs. 7 & 8 Hagberg: all chapters	Reflection Paper 3 Peer Interview: Sharing Your Spiritual Journey Spiritual Growth Evaluation	60 70 50
6	Wallace: ch. 12 & Appendix ABC	Group Project: A Church In Transition	60
7	Wallace: chs. 13-15 Galli: all chapters	Reflection Paper 4 Informative Speech	60 100
8	Wallace: ch. 16	Persuasive Speech Final Exam (based on Wallace text)	100 70
TOTAL			1000

NOTE: Each course week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on Friday.

* Only 10 total essays are to be read either from parts 1 & 2, with at least one essay from each part.