

# Public Discourse—COM 120

BH 315—TTH 8:00-9:50

Professor Leila Brammer

*Email:* Lbrammer@gustavus.edu

*Office Hours:* Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:20 and by appointment

*Office:* BH 365

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## Required Texts

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Public Discourse manual (available in the Bookmark). Bring to class everyday.

## Course Description

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The objective of this course is to provide students with an introduction to the principles of public discourse and civic engagement. The focus will be on a practical background in recognizing, analyzing, and constructing arguments in the public sphere. Readings, class time, and assignments will focus on the skills and concepts necessary for successful application of the principles to a civic engagement project.

## Course Policies

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- (1) **Attendance:** Attendance is expected on all days. Because this course is highly participatory, attendance is crucial for effectively developing and utilizing principles of public communication and completing the assignments; i.e. attendance is directly linked to success in this class. Those not in attendance on presentation days will have **5 points deducted** from their grade; those late will have **2.5 points** deducted.
- (2) **Assignments:** All written and oral assignments must be completed by the date assigned. **No late assignments will be accepted**, except in cases of **extreme, documented emergency**.
- (3) **Plagiarism:** Students must document material drawn from other sources using the most recent citation guidelines from a recognized style manual. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any incident of plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course.
- (4) **Honor Code:** Students agreed to the following when they registered for this class:

“As a community of scholars, the faculty and students of Gustavus Adolphus College have formulated an academic honesty policy and honor code system, which is printed in the Academic Bulletin and in the Gustavus Guide. As a student at Gustavus Adolphus College I agree to uphold the honor code. This means that I will abide by the academic honesty policy, and abide by decisions of the joint student/faculty Honor Board.” It is expected this code is followed in this classroom.

The following will be written in full and signed on every examination and graded paper:

“On my honor, I pledge that I have not given, received, or tolerated others’ use of unauthorized aid in completing this work.”

The College Honor Code is in effect for all assignments in this course.

## Grading

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Participation	60 points
Civic Engagement Project	240
Problem Proposal (5 points)	
Problem Analysis (40 points)	
Problem Analysis Presentation (25 points)	
Plan (50 points)	
Action Proposal (15 points)	
Public Advocacy Presentation (50 points)	
Action (20 points)	
Final Reflection Paper (15 points)	
Project Website (20 points)	
Total	300 points

### ***Participation***

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Each class period, students will productively participate in small group and large group discussions. Class discussion provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate comprehension of the material, apply concepts to your own experience, engage meaningful connections between this course and others, and practice concise, sophisticated oral communication. Students are required to identify main points, explain main concepts, and provide relevant examples of the concepts and issues addressed in the readings. Students are required to bring their coursepack to class everyday and complete the daily coursepack exercises.

### ***Grading Scale***

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A 94-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%
A- 90-93%	B 84-86%	C 74-76%	D 63-66%
	B- 80-83%	C- 70-73%	F 0-63%

*\*\*Students must receive a grade of C- or higher for the course to count toward completion of the Communication Studies major. Students need a grade of D or better for the course to count toward graduation.\*\**

### ***Writing Policy***

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Clearly expressing your ideas in writing is essential for success in this course and beyond it. You are expected to proactively address argument, research, stylistic, and grammatical issues raised in feedback to your work. Read and reflect on the comments and set goals for the aspects of your writing that need improvement.

The Writing Center is available for help on papers and speech outlines. The Center also has a part-time tutor for ELL instruction. Students can schedule appointments by contacting the Writing Center. <http://www.gustavus.edu/writingcenter/>.

Support for English learners and multilingual students is available through the Academic Support Center's Multilingual Learner Academic Specialist, Jody Bryant ([jbryant2@gustavus.edu](mailto:jbryant2@gustavus.edu) or x7197). In addition, English learners and multilingual students can seek help from peer tutors in the Writing Center ([www.gustavus.edu/writingcenter/](http://www.gustavus.edu/writingcenter/)).

### ***Disabilities***

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Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss necessary accommodations and/or contact the Disability Services Office at x7027

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*Students enrolled in COM 120 are responsible for the information in this syllabus. Refer to it regularly throughout the semester. The contents of this syllabus are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.*

# COURSE CALENDAR

**Tuesday, September 5—Course Introduction**

**\*\*Thursday, September 7—Public Discourse Night—6:30 p.m. in Heritage Room, Student Center**  
Be prepared to ask questions about the civic engagement project

**Thursday, September 7—Rhetoric and Civic Life & Deliberative Rhetoric**

Read Introduction and Chapter One Rhetoric and Civic Life  
Read Isocrates, *Hymn to Logos*  
Read Chapter Two Deliberative Rhetoric

**Tuesday, September 12— Evidence and Research**

Read Chapter Three Argument and Evidence  
Read Chapter Four Research  
*Project Proposal Due*

**Thursday, September 14—Research Day**

Research/evidence exercise completed in class

**Tuesday, September 19— Project Proposal Speeches & Reasoning**

Read Chapter Seven Reasoning

**Thursday, September 21— Rhetorical Situation and Audience Analysis**

Read Chapter Five Audience and Rhetorical Situation  
*Draft Problem Analysis*

**Tuesday, September 26—Delivery and Language**

Read Chapter 12 Delivery

**Thursday, September 28—Problem Analysis Presentation Preparation**

*Problem Analysis Due*

**Tuesday, October 3—Nobel Conference**

**Thursday, October 5—Structure**

Read Chapter Six Structure  
Review Chapter Two (Plan)

**Tuesday, October 10— Problem Analysis Presentation**

**Thursday, October 12-- Problem Analysis Presentation**

**Tuesday, October 17— Plan Workshop and Research**

Bring draft of Plan

**Thursday, October 19— Refutation and Evaluation**

Read Chapter Eight Refutation

**Tuesday, October 24—Fall Break**

**Thursday, October 26—Public Advocacy Presentation Preparation**

*Plan Due*

**Tuesday, October 31 Policy Cases**

Read Chapter Nine Policy Cases

**Thursday, November 2—Persuasion—Credibility**

Read Chapter Ten Credibility

**Tuesday, November 7— Public Advocacy Small Group Presentations**

*Action Proposal Due*

**Thursday, November 9— Pathos and Language**

Read Chapter Eleven Pathos

Read Chapter Thirteen Language

**Tuesday, November 14— Public Advocacy Presentations**

**Thursday, November 16—Public Advocacy Presentations**

**Tuesday, November 21—Public Advocacy Presentations/Workday**

**Thursday, November 23—Thanksgiving**

**Tuesday, November 28—Website Workday**

**Thursday, November 30—Ethics**

Read Chapter Fourteen Ethics

**Tuesday, December 5— Civic Engagement in Context**

Review Chapter One Rhetoric in Civic Life

**Thursday, December 7— Website Review**

**Tuesday, December 12— Project Reflections**

*Final Reflection Due*

*Action Assessment Due*

**Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup> 3:30 p.m.—Website Due**