**SPCH 1321: Business and Professional Communication (Spring 2019)**

**Instructor Course Requirements**

**Instructor:** Christina (Tina) Ross  
**Office:** WSTU 2809B  
**Office Phone:** 817-515-7227  
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**E-mail:** christina.ross@my.tccd.edu

**Office Hours:**  
- Mondays 12:30-2pm in WFAB 2615 (World Language Lab)  
- Wednesdays 11:30am-2:00pm  
- T/TH 10:30am-1:30pm

**Textbook:**  
You do not need to purchase a textbook for this class. Readings will be provided through open access materials/open educational resources. The primary resource/book for the class is:  

If you would like to learn more about this subject, a recommended textbook is:  

**Additional Course Materials You Will Need:**  
- Standard 2-pocket folder. You will turn in your major assignments (interview & speeches) and corresponding materials (outlines, evaluations, etc.) in this folder. It ensures all materials are kept together and both you and I are organized.  
- Reliable internet access to take online quizzes, access readings, and check Blackboard. You may use your own computer, your smartphone, or the computers on campus.

**Course Description:**  
Study and application of communication within the business and professional context. Special emphasis will be given to communication competencies in presentations, dyads, teams, and technologically mediated formats. This is a communication course, not merely a “speech” course. It is also not a “business” course. The focus is on helping you improve your communication skills in the workplace environment, and also helping you improve your communication skills to get a desired employment position.

**Course Objectives:**  
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate communication competence and critical thinking through an understanding of the foundational communication models by  
   a. recognizing communication as a transactional process involving effective and ethical behaviors in business and professional settings;  
   b. explaining the importance of effective communication in business and professional settings;  
   c. identifying the appropriate channel of communication for a message;

2. Demonstrate essential public speaking skills in professional presentations by  
   a. demonstrating ability to manage communication anxiety;  
   b. demonstrating key factors in audience analysis;  
   c. selecting appropriate topics;  
   d. utilizing various technologies as they relate to competent communication;  
   e. planning effective introductions, conclusions and transitions;  
   f. constructing a well-organized outline;  
   g. using appropriate visuals effectively, including the use of presentation software;  
   h. displaying effective delivery techniques;  
   i. demonstrating ethical public speaking behavior;  
   j. presenting at least one original informative speech and at least one original persuasive speech.

3. Demonstrate essential empirical and quantitative skills by  
   a. evaluating and analyzing appropriate supporting materials from written and electronic sources;  
   b. evaluating sources to verify credibility;  
   c. analyzing statistical data for appropriate inclusion and usage in business presentations.

4. Demonstrate written and oral competency as it relates to employment (including job searches, interviews, interpersonal interaction, conflict management, leadership and performance appraisals) by  
   a. selecting characteristics of effective resumes and cover letters;  
   b. identifying the responsibilities of the interviewer and interviewee;
c. demonstrating effective interview skills;
d. identifying the elements of listening in business and professional settings.

5. Apply essential dyadic and team processes as they relate to the workplace by
   a. describing characteristics of an effective small group;
   b. explaining the role of leadership in successful groups;
   c. identifying various communication behaviors for resolving group conflict;
   d. using basic problem solving procedures;
   e. demonstrating effective teamwork skills by considering various points of view and participating in a small project with a shared purpose.

6. Demonstrate effective cross-cultural communication and social responsibility by
   a. identifying and analyzing the factors involved in how perspectives differ among people from varying cultural groups;
   b. analyzing the complex nature of organizations and organizational culture;
   c. identifying examples of how nonverbal communication differs among cultures locally and globally;
   d. understanding the value of global citizenship in the 21st century.

7. Demonstrate personal responsibility by
   a. understanding the importance and consequences of both verbal and nonverbal communication in personal and business contexts;
   b. recognizing the importance of listening in interactions and the role it plays in ethical decision making in both personal and business interactions;
   c. analyzing and discussing ethical business situations to determine alternative options and consequences.

8. Demonstrate computer literacy by
   a. using the internet to develop speech research and submit assignments;
   b. using electronic programs to develop business presentations;
   c. using electronic programs, including Blackboard and/or Google, to work on team projects;
   d. participating in optional library classroom opportunities designed for effective speech research and source documentation.

Evaluation Methods: Grading: 90-100% A; 80-89% B; 70-79% C; 60-69% D; below 60% F.
Grades are typically rounded up if you have .5 or higher. For example, if you have an 89.5% at the end of the semester, that will be rounded up to an A. Anything less than an 89.5% will typically not be rounded up.

Speeches are evaluated according to three basic criteria: delivery, structure/organization, and content (including visual aids). All three are elements of effective presentations. It is expected that you will be an active participant in all group activities. Part of your grade will be based on classmates’ evaluations of you. You must complete the interview, informative speech, AND the group presentation in order to pass this course.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

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<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Organizational Culture Profile</td>
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<td>Informative Speech + Outline</td>
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<td>Group Problem-Solving Proposal + Outline</td>
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<td>In-Class Activities, Assignments &amp; Homework</td>
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<td>Lesson Guides: 14 @ 5 points each</td>
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<td>Office Party + Elevator Speech</td>
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<td>NACE Survey Skills Analysis</td>
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<td>Self-Assessments: 2 @ 10 points. each</td>
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<td>Mock Interview (including resume &amp; cover letter)</td>
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<td>Outline Rough Drafts: 2 @ 10 points each</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Peer Evaluations: 2 @ 10 points each</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>In-Class Participation, Activities &amp; Assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Quizzes: 5 @ 20 pts. each (6 total; lowest score is dropped)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam + LinkedIn Profile</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exit Interview</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>800</strong></td>
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**Grading Legend:**

716-800 points = A  
636-715 points = B  
556-635 points = C  
476-555 points = D  
0-475 points = F

**Grading Breakdown:**

Presentations (including outlines, PSA, etc.) = 35%  
In-Class Activities, Assignments & Homework = 35%  
Quizzes + Exams = 30%
**Brief Descriptions of Assignments:**

**Organizational Culture Profile:** For this assignment, you’ll select an organization in your pathway for which you do NOT currently work and research what it’s like to work there. Then you’ll prepare a 1-3-minute informal presentation and “executive summary” of the company describing the organizational culture along with one PowerPoint slide.

**Informative Speech:** This is a 3-5-minute presentation designed to enlighten or educate the audience with new information about *either* culture or careers. Your topic must relate to one of these two areas, so you can either inform us about culture & business or about a specific career. One of your information sources for this speech must be an interview. Presentation software will be used for this speech, and an extemporaneous delivery style is expected. You will also turn in a typed outline of your speech.

**Group Problem-Solving Proposal:** Working with a group of 3-4 students, you’ll propose a solution to a common problem among TCC students. Your instructor will notify you of the general topic for this presentation later in the semester. Your group will create a 1-minute video PSA promoting awareness of this problem and/or your solution(s). Both the PSA and your group presentation should follow the motivated sequence, and a typed outline with PowerPoint should accompany your presentation. You and your group members will take turns leading a meeting, and when it is your turn to lead the meeting, you’ll prepare an agenda. Each presentation will be followed by a short question-and-answer session, and when the other groups are presenting, you will ask questions and complete an evaluation form. The group presentation must include some form of interactive presentation software (such as Poll Everywhere or Mentimeter). For this project you will earn both an individual grade and a group grade.

**Lesson Guides:** Before starting our lessons on each day’s topic(s), you’ll complete a worksheet that gives an overview of the topic and the important points related to the topic. These worksheets should help you retain the information better, follow the lesson more closely, and improve your grades on the online quizzes. The worksheets are considered homework and must be completed before class. At the beginning of each class, I will check to see if you have completed these worksheets. If you are late to class you do not receive credit for completing it. You will earn 5 points simply by completing them. Only 14 scores will be counted, so you are allowed to miss one without it impacting your grade. However, if you complete all of the lesson guides, one will count as extra credit.

**NACE Survey Skills Analysis:** After reviewing recent findings by the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE), you’ll prepare a typed reflection and analysis paper of your job skills, strengths, and opportunities.

**Office Party and Elevator Speech:** For this assignment, we will hold an in-class “office party,” where you’ll mingle with guests and deliver a short “elevator speech” to one of our presenters. Guest speakers will give a short panel presentation on employment application & interviewing, then you will have time to mingle with them and the rest of your classmates. During the office party, you will be required to give a short “elevator speech,” which is a 30-second self introduction and summary of your qualifications. The speech will be given interpersonally to one of our invited guests, and is worth 5 points of your total office party grade. You must prepare a business card for this interaction.

**Self-Assessments:** For the interview and informative speech you’ll complete a self-assessment analyzing your strengths and areas to improve. Both of these assessments will be completed online.

**Mock Interview:** In order to prepare you for an actual future interview experience, we will simulate one in class. First, you will research and “apply” for a job of interest to you by preparing a resume and cover letter. Then, during a predetermined time, you will come to a designated location on campus and representatives from Career Services and I will conduct a mini-interview with you. You will receive a list of sample, possible questions ahead of time, and will be graded on your verbal and nonverbal communication and preparation for the interview. After the interview you will send a thank-you note, which is included in the overall interview grade.

**Quizzes:** There are six total quizzes in this course, all taken online through Blackboard. I drop your lowest score so only the top five quiz scores will count toward your final grade. Consult the schedule for exact due dates. The quizzes cover assigned readings and class discussion, and consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Your lesson guides serve as study guides for these quizzes.

**Final Exam:** The final exam consists of three parts: one essay question worth 10 points, 50 multiple choice and true/false questions, and a LinkedIn profile or portfolio.

**Exit Interview:** The exit interview will consist of a written survey and an oral Q & A. Many organizations conduct exit interviews with their departing employees in an attempt to understand their reasons for leaving and how the organization can improve in the future. With that in mind, I will meet with all students and ask you to consider what you have learned and what suggestions you have for future students. This interview will be conducted as a group.
What Do You Need to Do to Be Successful in This Class?
The 8 principles for success in this speech class are:
1. LISTEN by taking notes, asking questions, and following directions
2. Keep up; pay attention to the schedule
3. Have a positive attitude; realize you can learn something every day
4. Attend class
5. Practice your communication skills
6. Be organized
7. Respect your teacher and your peers
8. Have fun!

Course Expectations:
1. Academic Integrity:
   Any student found cheating on an exam, or any student found guilty of intentional plagiarism of any kind will receive a ZERO on that assignment, No Exceptions. The student will also be referred directly to the campus CARE team. Any student found plagiarizing a speech will NOT be allowed to present the speech, resulting in an F for the class.

2. Attendance:
   TCC’s official Mandatory Attendance Policy can be found online through this link:
   Essentially the policy reads:
   • A student in an on-campus course missing a cumulative of 15% of the class meetings and not keeping up with the course assignments may be dropped at the discretion of the instructor.

To clarify, my policy on attendance is as follows:
• Upon the second absence you will be notified via e-mail of their attendance record and the possibility of being dropped from the course upon their next absence. It is recommended that you respond to your instructor and inform her why you are having difficulty attending class.
• After the 4th absence you will be sent an e-mail requesting a meeting with the instructor to discuss course attendance. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate and schedule a meeting with the instructor. During the meeting, the student and instructor will create a plan of action document which details requirements for the student to remain in the course. If the student does not schedule a meeting and misses an additional class period the instructor may drop the student from the course.
• I will discuss attendance issues with affected students before making a final decision to drop you from the course. If you have not attended any of the first 5 classes and if we have not worked out an acceptable solution, you will be dropped from the course. I will always try contacting you first through email regarding any attendance issues, and it is your responsibility to check your email.

If you must miss class for any reason, you are responsible for determining what you missed in class for that day by
   1. FIRST, reading the corresponding material(s),
   2. SECOND, by talking to another student (the instructor is not responsible for inaccurate information from other students), and/or
   3. LASTLY, contacting the instructor during office hours.
   Do NOT send your instructor an email asking what was missed without first looking over the schedule (this will tell you the day’s topic) and the readings, and second, getting notes from another student.

3. Late Work:
   This is NOT a self-paced course. Late work will not be accepted for ANY reason. All assignments are to be completed by the due dates and times listed on the course calendar. If you know you will be unable to attend class, please turn in any assignments prior to the class period. All assignments, with the exception of in-class activities, are due at the BEGINNING of class. Anything turned in after the assignment has been collected will be considered late and will receive zero points.

   Tardiness: On-time arrival to class is expected, with the understanding that sometimes unexpected events happen. Make every effort to get to class early or on time. Assignments will be checked at the beginning of class, and if you are late to class, you will not receive credit for completing the assignment. IMPORTANT: If you are late to class on the day of your mock interview, informative or group presentation and do not have appropriate
documentation explaining your tardiness, you will automatically receive a 20-point grade deduction. If you know you are going to be late, call a class member, the instructor, or the communication department administrative assistant and explain your situation. It is the instructor’s discretion to accept or reject your explanation, but acceptance is more likely if you show you have made an effort to notify someone of your tardiness or absence.

4. Communication Plan

Contacting the Instructor
If you have any questions about course material or assignments, please don’t hesitate to contact me. I am here to help! My contact information can be found on the first page of this syllabus. If you contact me via phone or email, please allow 24 hours for a response during weekdays, longer on the weekends. If an immediate response is needed, I recommend you call my office or stop by during my office hours.

When e-mailing your instructor, please remember to be respectful and professional. Please re-read any emails you send before you send them to make sure they are relating what you intend to say clearly and thoughtfully. I will treat you with respect and as an adult; I expect the same in return. If you send rude or belligerent emails, I will respond by asking you to rephrase your issue. I am very happy to help you but you must understand your responsibilities as a student. If you continue to send angry, rude emails, your emails will be referred to the campus CARE team.

MyTCC is the official email for the college. All official communication from TCC and your instructor will be delivered to your my.tccd.edu email address. If you send an email from a non-TCC email address, I may not receive it. If I do receive an email from a non-TCC email address, I will send a reply to your MyTCC email. It is your responsibility to check this email or have your messages forwarded to another email account.

Communicating with Other Students
This course requires students to interact with one another through online communication, group activities, and e-mail, as that will help improve your communication skills and further your understanding of the material. A partial focus of this class is group work. You must become an active participant in all group assignments. If you do not participate and contribute to the success of the group you may receive a zero for your project grade. All group assignments must be completed as a group. No exceptions will be made for students to complete this assignment individually.

In Case of Campus Closing
In the unlikely event that campus is closed and the class cannot meet as scheduled, the instructor will post updated instructions on Blackboard. The student is responsible for checking Blackboard and following the instructions as given. The campus is considered open and students are expected to come to class until an official announcement from TCC is given. Please allow some time for the instructor to coordinate a workable solution when TCC announces it is closed.

5. Group Work:
A major focus of this class is group work. You must become an active participant in your group project. If you do not participate and contribute to the success of the group you may be fired from the group and receive a zero for your project grade. All group assignments must be completed as a group. No exceptions will be made for students to complete assignments individually.

6. Speech Presentations
You must give your speech presentation on your assigned day, or you are responsible for finding a classmate to trade presentation days with you. Students who do not give the informative or the persuasive speech on their assigned day will be graded as follows:

Excused absence: Zero point deduction. 
Excused absences include: a college sanctioned event where prior notice has been provided, illness verified in writing by a doctor, or an emergency with documentation provided through the appropriate authority. In the case of an excused absence, the student will make up the presentation with no point deduction during the next class period, or on a scheduled make-up day.

Unexcused absence: Zero points
Students who do not provide an acceptable reason for not giving their presentation will make up the presentation at the instructor’s discretion for zero points. Unexcused absences include, among others: missing class to study for a test, oversleeping, not being prepared, or having to work. **You cannot take the final exam or pass this class without giving both an informative speech and a persuasive speech (even if you will be receiving zero points for the presentation).**
7. **Online Assignments:**
   You will be expected to access Blackboard frequently to complete the readings and course assignments. If you do not have internet/computer/printer access at home, you may wish to use the computers on campus. On the Northwest campus, the TCC library (third floor of WTLO), world language lab (WFAB 2615), and information technology lab (WSTU 2807) are all good places to complete these assignments and view the readings. Your instructor will occasionally send out Announcements with important course information, but it is your responsibility to check these announcements regularly.

8. **Grading**
   Your grades will be posted on Blackboard as soon as possible after the due date. Please allow at least 2-3 days for your instructor to grade all assignments. It will be your responsibility to regularly check your grade to keep up to date on your progress in the class. To configure your grade, divide the smaller number (points earned) by the larger number (points possible). This will give you a percentage, which will help you determine your letter grade. For example, if you have earned 500 points out of a possible 550 total points, your percentage would be .909 \((500 \div 550 = .909)\), or 90.9%, which is an A.

   If you have a concern or question about a grade, I invoke the 24/7 rule: You must wait 24 hours before talking to your instructor about it, but you must discuss any grading issues no later than 7 days after the assignment due date. You are certainly welcome to discuss grades at any time.

9. **Quizzes/Exams:**
   All quizzes are to be taken on Blackboard and are due on Sunday nights by 11:59pm. The quizzes are located in the "Quizzes" section on Blackboard. All quizzes, with the exception of the syllabus quiz, have a 40-minute time limit and must be completed by the due date. Please ensure you have a reliable internet connection and an uninterrupted block of time when you sit down to take these assessments. If you encounter a technical difficulty while taking a quiz, I will reset your quiz one time only during the semester. **You will get only one reset for the entire semester, not one reset per quiz, and no resets will be made for the final exam.** Resets are only given in case of technical difficulty; they are not “re-dos.” I drop the lowest quiz score. No paper quizzes nor any make-up quizzes or exams will be given.

10. **Classroom disruption:**
    From the Student Handbook:
    “The faculty, staff, and administration of Tarrant County College believe that one of the responsibilities of the College is to provide the best possible learning environment for students. The primary learning environment is the classroom...Upon the recommendation of a classroom, laboratory, or clinical instructor, the dean of student development and educational services can administratively withdraw any student from a class because of the student's disruptive, disrespectful, or insubordinate behavior.”
    Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to “Students who create disruption and distractions in classes by inappropriate and untimely laughing and talking, general inattentiveness, tardiness, or use of cellular telephones and beepers in class unless prior approval is received from the instructor.”
    [http://www.tccd.edu/Documents/Student%20Services/Student%20Handboook%202020100106.pdf](http://www.tccd.edu/Documents/Student%20Services/Student%20Handboook%202020100106.pdf)

    I expect you to act in a professional, courteous manner when I am speaking and when your fellow classmates are speaking. On speech days, please DO NOT walk in on another student’s presentation, as this is incredibly distracting and disrespectful. Wait until the end of the presentation, then enter the room. I also expect you to pay attention to your fellow classmates’ speeches and listen supportively. If you disrupt a classmate’s speech or use electronic devices during someone’s speech, I will take points off of your speech grade.

11. **Cell Phones**
    This classroom has been designated by your instructor as a “No-Phone Zone.” This means that you are not to use your phone while in this classroom unless asked to do so by your instructor. Out of respect for your classmates and instructor, it is expected that you will not use your phone during lecture, class discussion, or student presentations unless directed to do so. A minimum of 5 points will be deducted from your speech score if you are caught leisurely using your phone during a classmate’s presentation. Also, before class, after class, during group work time, and during individual work time, you will be expected to participate in face-to-face communication with your classmates rather than using your mobile devices to communicate. If you are seen with your phone out while in this classroom, your classmates and instructor will remind you of this policy.

12. **Technical Problems**
    To access Blackboard and view our course page, please visit the MyTCC homepage: [www.my.tccd.edu](http://www.my.tccd.edu). If you need help logging into MyTCC, click on “Need help logging in?” underneath the Login button. You can request
technical support by selecting the myTCC Help tab in the upper right-hand corner of any MyTCC webpage, and submitting a Help Ticket using your WebAdvisor credentials. To reach the Help Line by phone, call 817-515-6411. Tech support will be able to assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

13. **Extra Credit**
   There will be some small extra credit opportunities during the semester. These include but are not limited to:
   - attending and critiquing an outside speaker or TCC performance,
   - visiting or practicing with a tutor or the instructor,
   - participating in our campus speech contest, or
   - regularly attending NW Communicators club meetings.
   You may **not** turn in extra credit in place of a major assignment. **There is a cap of 15 points maximum extra credit in this class.**

14. **Student Resources**
   If you have any disabilities or feel you cannot complete this course through both online and in-class methods, please be sure to document and coordinate accommodations through SAR on campus, located in WCTS 1133A. They can be reached at 817-515-7186 (TTY: 817-515-7009). It is the student’s responsibility to schedule alternative testing accommodations if needed. SAR requires at least 72 hours’ notice to schedule alternative testing.

   **PLEASE NOTE:** Each classroom has a desk specifically reserved for students with disabilities. If a student needs to use the desk and you are seated at it, you will be asked to move to a different seat. Please be respectful and mindful of others’ needs. Do not move the table from its designated location.

   Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Advising and Counseling Center in WCTS 1110A for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that may be beneficial to you.

15. **Campus Carry**
   Effective August 1, 2017, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a **concealed** handgun in buildings on public community college campuses, except in locations the College establishes as prohibited. Prohibited areas include but are not limited to Theater and Performance Halls, Health Services, Testing Services, Counseling Services, Physical Education, Early College High School Programs, Child Care Facilities, and the TCC Police Department. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more specific TCC regulations, [http://www.tccd.edu/services/policedepartment/open-carry/campus-carry-regulations/](http://www.tccd.edu/services/policedepartment/open-carry/campus-carry-regulations/). For emergency information, please go to the following link: [https://www.tccd.edu/about/emergency-information/](https://www.tccd.edu/about/emergency-information/).

16. **Children and Pets**
   Children and pets are not allowed in class, unless you have proper documentation and are authorized to have a service animal. No un-registered guests will be permitted in class during regular class hours.

17. **Printing**
   For this course, you should expect to spend about $2-3 for your printing needs. In order to avoid a $0.40 transaction fee each time you swipe your debit/credit card, it is **strongly recommended** you go to [WEPANow.com](http://www.tccd.edu/services/policedepartment/open-carry/campus-carry-regulations/), choose Tarrant County College from the LogIn option, and frontload your account for your on-campus printing needs. The website will guide you through the frontloading process, with no transaction fee. $5 WEPA cards are also available for cash-purchase, in the library; WEPA cards should be treated like cash. For this course, two-sided copies are acceptable. In order to avoid overspending on print outs for this class, make sure that every draft you print is your best, error-free draft.

   Outlines and papers are due at the **beginning of class** or they will receive a zero. The library also permits you to reserve a group study room, where you can practice your presentations—with PowerPoint—if you like. The information technology lab in WSTU 2807 can also provide assistance with PowerPoint, and the Academic Learning Center (in the library) can assist with papers and outlines. I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities.