

## **Journalism 150**

### **Stand and Deliver: Presentation Skills**

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Office hours: M 2:15 – 2:45 p.m./W 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Appointments welcome

#### **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. It is also designed to help you meet Kansas University's CORE learning objectives as part of your greater education through time. 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."

### **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 25 points – Evaluation 25 points  
Presentation delivery 75 points
- **Group Presentation**  
Outline 25 points – Evaluation 25 points  
Presentation delivery 75 points
- **Individual presentation II**  
Outline 25 points – Evaluation 25 points  
Presentation delivery 75 points
- **Final individual presentation**  
Edited outline and supporting materials, including a leave-behind document 100 points – Evaluation 25 points  
Presentation delivery 100 points

**Quizzes and exercises:** 100 points cumulatively

**Outside presentation evaluation:** 100 points

**Professionalism profile**, including your class participation and required blog posting and responses: 100 points

### **What materials you will need**

1. Access to the J150 blog, where you will post presentations and evaluations (I will provide instructions for the blog use when you start posting.)
2. Access to at least one presentation software, such as PowerPoint/Keynote/Prezi

## **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. For those of you in my sections, my instructions 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 or whatever. I 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. Make a note.

If you have some sort of catastrophic event that alters the course of your life, I will work with you to figure out how best to deal with J150.

- **Respect your classmates.**

In this class, it is important that you feel comfortable expressing ideas and opinions. I 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.**

**Deadlines are absolute.** I don’t accept late assignments. Catastrophic events are the exception, but anything less than a catastrophe will earn you a zero. Even one zero could seriously affect your grade. Don’t expect to make up exercises, unless you and I have discussed that option in advance.

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

**Disconnect from your phone** when you come to class. No scrolling Instagram or ESPN. Send your texts before class starts, or risk having me send random texts and Snapchats from your phone and alienating all of your contacts. If you and I have to wrestle for your phone, you’ve gone to a dark place.

**KU policy states that no student** may add a journalism class after the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 specified level of attendance, without the student's consent.

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

**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, call (785) 864-SNOW (7669). Clever, isn't it? Or, wait for an e-mail or text message saying such.

- **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. Associate Dean Tom Volek 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 Associate Dean Volek:

**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 j-school provides **computer and broadcast laboratories** for student use. The computer lab in 105 Stauffer-Flint will be open the following hours during the fall semester: Saturday and Sunday—noon to 10 p.m.; Monday through Thursday—5 -10 p.m.

**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. She is available during her posted hours. She is not your personal word coach and won’t do your work for you. (In fact, I’d like to be there if you ask such of her, as I like firecrackers.) She is, however, a knowledgeable and accessible language guru.

**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. (I’ll update you on where to find it.)

**The Weir Production Laboratory** in the Dole Center will be open 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday. Students may sign up for editing time and equipment on a first-come, first-serve basis through the School of Journalism Web site, [www.journalism.ku.edu](http://www.journalism.ku.edu). (Look under the reservations link on the right-hand side of the page.) All times are subject to change.

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

**Inform me** if you have a physical, emotional or personal problem that may interfere with your ability to succeed in J150.

**Disability Resources**, Room 22 in Strong Hall, coordinates accommodations and services for KU courses. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted Disability Resources, please do so as soon as possible.

**Occasionally, grievances arise.** Talk to me 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 me, feel free to make an appointment to see Associate Dean Tom Volek 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. The Office of the Vice Provost insures appropriate, confidential notification and communication among University offices when responding to campus and individual student emergencies. Keeping community safety and security at its core, the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Success is always available to assist students in negotiating the University community. 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](http://www.achievement.ku.edu).

- **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. I 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%

**It's your responsibility to keep track of the grades you earn.** I keep grades for my record of students' progress, which is my responsibility to KU. If you care enough to ask about your grade, care enough to keep track.

- **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 I asked you to address within a given assignment. Manage your time so you can hit all the bases.

2) Complete all the things I ask of you in the class. Yes, the blog is important. Yes, your outside 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) Create your outline first, then add your supporting materials. This helps you create a presentation that is yours, not merely a cut-and-paste hatchet job of other people's work. Outline. First.

4) Remember a presentation is not an essay read aloud. **It's not a speech.** If you read your presentation word-for-word, I will know you haven't prepared or rehearsed. And, I will be more likely to investigate whether part or all of your presentation has been lifted.

5) Type and double-space your class assignments, so I may insert my comments. I accept no single-spaced or handwritten (hello, high school) work. Notice I had to write it twice in one document. Yikes.