Communication Department

COM 1000-13: Principles of Human Communication

3 Units

Fall 2026

Meeting days/times: Tuesdays 4:00 – 6:40pm

Meeting location: Liberty Station 204-A

Final Exam: Thursday, December 17th, 2026

Instructor title and name:	Professor Hifner
Email:	phifner@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	Mondays 3:00-4:00 pm or on zoom by appointment

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

General Education Mission & Learning Objectives

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips

students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Description

A survey of the human communication process. Emphasis is placed on intrapersonal, interpersonal, and public communication. Particular attention is paid to the preparation and presentation of speeches.

Program and Course Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will:
1. Be able to describe and discuss the process of human communication.
2. Be able to identify and explain the basic components of an effective speech.
3. Be challenged to interact competently in dyadic, and small group experiences.
4. Be able to construct and deliver informational and persuasive speeches.
5. Develop the theoretical, practical, and spiritual foundations for effective communication.

General Education Learning Outcomes

FELO 1b. Oral: Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through oral communication.
Signature assignments include an informative speech, a group speech, an interview, and a persuasive speech.These assignments will allow students to evaluate and improve their oral communication skills throughout the course.

The remaining GE course learning outcomes and their corresponding GELO's can be found using the link below:

https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/tug-catalog/general-education/

Required Text

Edwards, A., Edwards, C., Wahl, S. T., & Myers, S. A. (2024). *The communication age: Connecting and engaging*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Your textbook will be accessed online through a link in Canvas Module, "Course Introduction."

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 16 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

Assessment and Grading

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns regarding grading. I want each of your grades to represent the effort you put in and the growth you see in yourselves throughout the semester. **If you are concerned with a grade or believe I have made a mistake grading, I encourage you to reach out as soon as possible to address it.**

Grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F <60
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Course Requirements	**Points Possible**
Participation/Attendance (x15)	75
Speech Outlines (x2)	100
Informative Speech	100
Persuasive Speech	100
Partner Mock-Interviews	50
Micro-Teach Theory Lesson	50
Assignments	195
Reading Quizzes (x13)	130
Final Exam	200
Total	**1000**

Late Policy

All assignments should be completed on time and turned in through the appropriate channels. **Work that is turned in after the provided deadline is no longer eligible for full credit unless previously arranged.** Scores for late assignments decrease by 10% each day following the due date. In-class assignments and activities cannot be turned in late or made up in the case of an absence. Exams and speeches excluding the final exam can be rescheduled ahead of time on a case-by-case basis. **Failure to present on your assigned day will result in a failing grade for that presentation.**

I understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise, and I will treat each situation with grace and empathy. In the event of an emergency, I would be happy to grant students an extension on a case-by-case basis at my discretion. This is not an excusal of work nor will late work be accepted without advanced notice. Students may email me prior to the due date to request an extension. If one is not granted, the student must complete the assignment on time or accept the point deduction.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the Class Schedules site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Communication Expectations

As part of this course, students will be expected to improve their overall communication skills and confidence in various settings. I expect each student to make an effort to participate in class when appropriate and communicate with me effectively. **If you are struggling, need to share information with me, or will be absent for a class session, you are expected to email me as soon as possible.** It is difficult to strengthen a muscle you do not use, so please take advantage of this course and the opportunities provided throughout our time in class to strengthen your communication muscles! I will do all that I can to provide a safe, comfortable environment that allows students to share without fear of judgement or criticism. I expect every student to aid in cultivating that environment, as well.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In COM 1000, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been

intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include political and health related issues. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of communication, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

In COM 1000, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include politics or health related issues. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of communication, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

General Course Concerns

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the Office of Spiritual Life and Formation.

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a

student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Behavior Policy

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student

behavior that is disruptive or threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the Academic Behavior Policy in the University Catalog.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g, ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) is not permitted, and use of these tools will be treated as breaches of academic integrity. Considering this course was created, in part, to help you formulate ideas into words, the use of AI is unnecessary as well as counteractive to the purpose of this course.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center, by email or phone at 619-849-2533. Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines approved accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC eligibility process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of

language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced a bias incident regarding language, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services or consult the list of campus pastors.

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

You will receive 5 points per class session for attendance and in-class participation. Lack of participation and/or attendance will result in those points being lost for the week. Our class has limited time to meet, so attendance and engagement are vital!

Technology Policy

The use of technology such as iPads or laptops during lectures for note taking purposes is allowed, but not encouraged. It can be difficult to avoid distractions while these devices are in use, so I recommend taking physical notes if you are able. The use of technology during discussions or activities is strictly prohibited as it inhibits learning. Exceptions will be made for students who have accommodations or who ask me ahead of time.

Loma Writing Center

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more.

Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend making an appointment in advance.For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see Loma Writing Center webpage or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- Appointment Calendar: https://plnu.mywconline.com/
- Website: https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

Important Due Dates:

Informative Speeches-10/20/26
Mock Interview Projects-11/16/26
Persuasive Speeches-12/1/26
Final Exam-12/17/26