**USP 2015 COM COURSE: APPLYING FOR AN EXCEPTION REQUEST**

This document provides information and submission requirements for programs seeking an exception to one or more of the COM Course and Student Policies (listed below). As noted in USP 2015 materials:

*Exceptions to course policies that are consistent with overall course objectives may be made on a case-by-case basis. A request for an exception must be in writing and accompany the USP 2015 Course Approval Form request through the approval process.*

The key to a successful exception request is a program’s ability to **demonstrate how the focuses and key objectives of COM courses can be met in a delivery format other than those established in the COM policies**. For example, the COM course cap of 24 is informed by national best-practices guidelines for communication-intensive courses, partially in recognition of the time-intensive work of providing effective feedback on communication assignments, allowing time for discussion of effective communication approaches, and allowing time for student oral communication activities. However, a co-taught course (as one example) may be able to make a compelling case for exceeding the cap.

**COM Course and Student Policies**

1. Communication courses must be a minimum of 3 credit hours.
2. Communication courses will be limited to 24 students.
3. COM2 courses should be offered at the 1000- or 2000-level.
4. Departments must submit syllabi every three years for all approved Communication courses.
5. Students will be expected to achieve a grade of "C" or better in COM1 and COM2 to receive USP credit for the course.
6. Successful completion of a lower-division communication course (COM1) will be a prerequisite for mid-level communication courses, and successful completion of a mid-level communication course (COM2) will be prerequisite for the advanced course (COM3); prerequisites will be enforced.

**Procedure for Submitting an Exception Request**

The procedure is designed to be efficient and flexible to your program’s context, thus there is no specific format for the request to follow.

1. Write an explanation of ***no more than two pages*** which clearly (1) identifies the course for which you seek an exception, (2) identifies the specific course policy(ies) you seek an exception for, and (3) explains what specific course features justify the exception request.

In other words, this document should explain how the course design and delivery will allow the instructor(s) to provide “repeated instruction, practice, and feedback [to] emphasize and progressively develop transferable skills for students’ academic work and future professions,” across oral, written, and digital formats. The supplementary information on the next page may help you craft a response which directly speaks to specific objectives and outcomes of the COM sequence.

1. Send the document (and supporting materials if relevant) to Jake Hayden, *USP Committee Coordinator, at* [usp@uwyo.edu](mailto:usp@uwyo.edu). If the request occurs during initial course approval or scheduled renewal, the request should accompany documents required for those processes.
2. After the USP Committee has met to discuss your request, you will receive notice that it has been accepted, accepted with revisions, or denied.

**Supplementary information: Quick access to the COM2 and COM3 focuses and outcomes**

**Overview of COM1/COM2/COM3 focuses**

Students will develop skills in written, oral, and digital communication as appropriate to specific disciplines and courses at the introductory, intermediate, and advanced level.  Through repeated instruction, practice, and feedback, the communication sequence will emphasize and progressively develop transferable skills for students’ academic work and future professions. The introductory course (COM1) will emphasize foundational skills for academic writing. Intermediate courses (COM2) will emphasize foundational oral and digital communication skills and continue to build on writing skills. Advanced courses (COM3) will emphasize using the discourse of a discipline or interdisciplinary field to communicate to academic or professional audiences through written, oral, and digital communication.

Written communication is the set of abilities required to compose, critically analyze, and present information through writing. Oral communication is a set of abilities required to compose, critically analyze, present, and deliver information through oral interaction. Digital communication is a set of abilities required to compose, critically analyze, and present information through electronic media.

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| **Outcome**  **and central focus** | **COM2**  (full outcome description) | **COM3**  (full outcome description) |
| **Outcome 1:**  Gaining a **breadth** of communication experience | Develop and communicate written, oral, and digital messages through a variety of assignments that include discipline-based or interdisciplinary purposes, forms, and audiences. | Use the discourse of a discipline or interdisciplinary field to communicate that field’s subject matter to academic or professional audiences through written, oral, and digital communication |
| **Outcome 2:**  Conducting and using **research** effectively | Find, analyze, evaluate, and document information appropriately using a variety of sources. | Find, analyze, evaluate, and document information appropriately as applicable to the discipline, interdisciplinary field, or professional setting, as demonstrated by completing a substantial communication project that requires appropriate research skills |
| **Outcome 3:** Developing appropriate **structures** for specific **audience(s**) and **purpose(s)** | Understand the different purposes of written, oral, and digital messages and employ appropriate organizational strategies, including developing thesis statements and main ideas. | Recognize and evaluate more advanced aspects of communication that respond to the purposes and needs of audiences in a discipline, interdisciplinary field, or professional setting |
| **Outcome 4:**  Making use of effective **processes, technologies, and collaboration** | Make effective use of multiple drafts, revisions, progressive assignments, computer technology, peer and instructor comments, and collaboration in the achievement of a final work of communication. | Make effective use of multiple drafts, revision, computer technology, peer and instructor comments, and collaboration to show understanding of communication standards in a discipline or interdisciplinary field. |
| **Outcome 5:**  Understanding and responding to **conventions** | Observe the accepted conventions including spelling, grammar, organizational structure, punctuation, delivery and documentation in oral, written, and digital messages. | Observe the accepted conventions of spelling, grammar, organizational structure, punctuation, delivery and documentation expected in disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or professional contexts |
| **Outcome 6**:  Delivering effective **oral presentations** | Deliver prepared presentations in a natural, confident, and conversational manner, and display nonverbal communication that is consistent with and supportive of the oral message. | Deliver presentations in a confident and professional manner, consistent with the standards of the discipline or interdisciplinary field |
| **Outcome 7:**  Engaging with **opposing perspectives** | Interact effectively with audience members, engage opposing viewpoints constructively, and demonstrate active listening skills. | Interact effectively with audience members, engage opposing viewpoints constructively, and demonstrate active listening skills |

**See also:** A-Z Directory -> University Studies -> -> COMMUNICATION SEQUENCE

[USP COMMUNICATION SQUENCE](http://www.uwyo.edu/usp/com-sequence/index.html)