

Chesapeake Project Course Revision Plans

COMM 107, Oral Communication: Principles and Practices

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The communication department's introductory oral communication course, because of its broad focus on communication in its many forms (e.g., interpersonal, small group, public speaking), offers an excellent opportunity to explore sustainability and environmentalism as concepts and practices shaped by social and communicative interaction. My overall goal regarding the three sustainability learning objectives I am introducing into COMM 107 is to work with my students toward a sense of the opportunities and responsibilities individuals and communities have for building a sustainable, equitable future from the local to the global level.

I have designed the following three learning outcomes to take advantage of existing units and learning outcomes. This approach will allow us to treat sustainability, not as an extraneous topic, but as an integrated topic that treats sustainability as an organic outgrowth of a course in a department dedicated to the study of communication, and its effects, in the public sphere.

Sustainability learning outcomes

- Apply interviewing skills and concepts by preparing, conducting, and evaluating an interview with an individual responsible for pursuing, developing, and/or implementing sustainability programs at the community, organizational or governmental level.
- Apply negotiation and conflict management skills and concepts by playing the web-based simulation *Fishbanks* and facing the challenges of attempting to maximize net worth in a competitive environment while sustainably managing common-pool resources.
- Demonstrate understanding of the concept of meaning and the dynamism of language by summarizing and explaining four contingent, changing, and contested meanings of environment developed in the United States in the 19th and 20th century.

Assessment will be done both formally and informally, as appropriate. For example, students will be asked to produce a written reflection on their interview of an individual involved with sustainability efforts. Students' experiences, challenges, and evolving understanding of sustainability through the negotiation and conflict management activity will be assessed more informally, through (a) periodic check-ins during the multi-day *Fishbanks* simulation and (b) through a teacher led debrief at the end. Finally, formal assessment in the form of exam questions regarding sustainability, environmentalism, and communication will be used on the final exam as a final gauge of student growth regarding sustainability.