

CAS Affiliate Faculty Handbook

(updated 8/14/2019)

Department of Communication Studies
Metropolitan State University of Denver

This document is intended to be a reference for affiliate faculty teaching Communication Studies courses in the Department of Communication Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. This document is meant to guide affiliate instruction and is open to changes, revisions, and updates. Should anything from be altered, affiliate faculty will be made aware immediately via the appropriate communication channel(s).

1. Your Value to the Department of Communication Studies

The value affiliate faculty members add to our department is immense and the amount of gratitude you deserve as invaluable members of this department is immeasurable. As people and as professionals, you mean so much to CAS and to the students we serve.

Thank you for your service and commitment.

We value academic freedom and trust your expertise in the subject matter we cover. While this document lays out several guidelines, procedures, and standards, these items are intended to support you as an affiliate and provide a basic foundation upon which you can leverage your knowledge and skills, showcasing them rather than muting them.

With this said, you are trusted to make pedagogical decisions that will further the CAS mission of “providing educational opportunities centered on communication for a diverse urban population by offering a full range of introductory, advanced, and collaborative teacher/learner centered curricula.”

2. Affiliate Communication

MSU Denver email will be our official channel of communication. You will be expected to have your email set up and accessible by the first day of classes (not only your class(es), but first day of ALL classes). When anyone from the CAS Department tries to reach you, we will be using MSU Denver email to do so.

- a. Within your classes, you are encouraged to use MSU Denver as your official channel of communication. However, we understand there are other channels available for communicating with students and students communicating with you. No matter what means you take, clearly state the official channel for class communication in your syllabus making sure students know how to reach you and how you will reach them.
- b. When it comes to timelines for communication, be clear with your students and follow whatever policies you establish. For example, if you tell your students you respond to emails within 24 hours, respond to emails within 24 hours.
- c. Those of you teaching online courses, establish your policy immediately, ensure students understand your timeline, and follow it. Also, make sure they know how to reach. If it is internally through Blackboard, through email, or through another channel, ensure students know this. As per our Instructional Design team here at MSU Denver, for online instructors it is suggested that you respond to communication from students within 24 hours.

If you need to contact the CAS Department for any reason, please start by contacting Dr. Samuel Jay (email: sjay@msudenver.edu / cell: 319-325-1246), the CAS Affiliate Coordinator. Should other stakeholders need to be included, Dr. Jay will triage and/or coordinate. This includes Dr. Dan Lair (CAS Department Chair), Dr. Brenden Kendall, (CAS Department Associate Chair), Jacque Kirby (Program Assistant), and Shannon Harris (Administrative Assistant).

- a. This process is inclusive of most everything, including needing to cancel class, questions about rooming, issues with Blackboard, equipment issues, etc. Establishing a policy for communication will help you better get the support/assistance you need.
- b. This is not intended to enable absolute control over communication, but rather to lessen the unnecessary workload for Drs. Lair and Kendall, Ms. Kirby, and Ms. Harris. As Affiliate Coordinator, it is Dr. Jay's responsibility to support and assist affiliate faculty; thus, starting with him is the most efficient way for making that possible.

3. Process for Handling Student Complaints

Should you have a student complaint that you are unable to resolve on your own, request that the student contact Dr. Jay via email. Please do not share his cell phone number. Dr. Jay will communicate with the student and work to resolve any issues that exist, including, if necessary, sending issues or conflicts up the chain of command to Drs. Lair and/or Kendall.

4. Syllabus Information

As mentioned, we value academic freedom, and this includes your syllabus. However, there are items you do need to include in your syllabus. Much of this content is now available at tinyurl.com/AffiliateMaterials. Dr. Jay will continue to update the materials on this site, but if you need addition information not found there, email Dr. Samuel Jay and he will share.

The information you need to include in your syllabus:

- a. Course Catalogue Description: This is the information found in the MSU Denver course catalogue.
 - i. If you would like to supplement this description with your own description (ex. "Professor Johnson's Course Description") that is fine, but be sure to include the official description as well.
- b. Required Readings: Include book information here. If you want to integrate additional readings, that is fine, but include here something like "Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard").
 - i. Public Speaking textbook: *The Speaker's Primer* (2nd Ed) by Valenzano III, et al. along with *2019 CAS 1010 Workbook*
 - ii. Interpersonal Communication textbook: *Reflect & Relate* (5th Ed) by McCornack and Morrison
 - iii. For information about textbooks for other courses, please contact Dr. Jay or Ms. Kirby.
- c. Student Learning Outcomes: These are the things students should be able to do once the course has been completed.

- d. Student Learning Objectives: These are the measurables that should be able to assessed once the course has been completed.
- e. Grading Breakdown: It is recommended that you have a list of assignments and items that will be graded in the course as well as the amount these items are worth. Also, a grading scale is something to consider including as students often wonder what makes for a (+) or a (-) when final grades are submitted.
- f. Schedule of Activities: You need to have some sort of outline or schedule on the syllabus. Be clear with due dates for assignments as well as at least a general idea of what material will be covered and when.
- g. CLAS Syllabus Policies: Each semester, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences creates and circulates a list of policies they want included in the syllabus. Please make sure your students have access to this information.
 - i. Rather than including this information in your syllabus, we ask that you download this document and email it to your class at some point during the first week of class.
- h. Deadline Parts of Term Dates: Each semester, a set of dates for adding, dropping, withdrawing, etc. from the class are established. Make sure this information is available to your students.
 - i. Rather than including this information in your syllabus, we ask that you download this document and email it to your class at some point during the first week of class.
- i. Attendance Policy: We do ask that you include the CAS course attendance policy.
 - i. You are free to drop this into your syllabus and/or download this document and email it to your class at some point during the first week of class.

5. Blackboard Usage

Blackboard is MSU Denver's official online learning platform. Those who teach online will be familiar with the platform and its functions. If you are not teaching online, the amount of Blackboard integration you want is up to you.

- a. With this said, having an online gradebook that allows students to stay up-to-date on their grades is a nice resource. Also, uploading the course syllabus, assignment sheets, and the schedule can be helpful to students.
- b. If you are going to use Blackboard, make that clear to students in your syllabus and during class.

6. Final Grades

Submitting final grades on-time is a must. Each semester, be sure your final grades are entered by the established deadline. If you have problems or questions, contact Dr. Jay.

7. Teaching Assignments

Roughly four weeks into each semester, teaching preferences for the next semester will be requested. Dr. Jay will contact you, asking for information about days and times as well as courses you would like to teach. Those affiliates who have been with the department the

longest are given precedence, but teaching evaluations and observable teaching performance are also considered.

Please understand that we do our best to give affiliates the courses they desire and the number of classes they request, but not all requests can always be met.

8. CAS 1010 (Public Speaking) and CAS 1710 (Interpersonal Communication) Information

The bulk of our lower-division courses, specifically CAS 1010 Public Speaking and CAS 1710 Interpersonal Communication, are taught by affiliate faculty members. To assist you with teaching these courses and to create a functional amount of standardization (i.e. enough of a system that we can assess the overall course -not instructors- to ensure the University is being properly served by these required courses), there are components of both we need you to include in your courses. These items include:

a. For Public Speaking:

i. Students are required to purchase/have access to the textbook and workbook:

1. For CAS 1010 the textbook and workbook are bundled. Students must have both. Know that the workbook is meant to help students gain more perspective and information from their peers regarding speaking strengths and weaknesses. The workbook is intended to be a tool through which students can learn how to appropriately evaluate speeches, evidence, arguments, etc., but also serve as a resource for speakers who will ideally gain insight into areas where they excel and where they can improve thanks to the thoughtful, organized, and evidence-supported feedback of their peers.

ii. Three required speeches: The workbook includes information on speeches required for the course. Each instructor must assign at least three of those speeches.

1. With that said, these are genres or categories of speeches. You have academic freedom with the specifics of the speeches as well as the weight you give them when grading.

iii. Final Exam: We are no longer requiring a Final Exam for CAS 1010.

b. For Interpersonal Communication:

i. Students are required to purchase/have access to the textbook.

ii. At the moment, there are no standardized assignments or Final Exam for CAS 1710.

9. Additional CAS Classes

If you are teaching a CAS course that is not CAS 1010 or CAS 1710, please reach out to Dr. Jay for supporting materials that can help you with the class, should you desire that assistance.