IBH 2C3S
Communication and Storytelling
Fall 2026 Course Outline

DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Aidan Moir
Instructor
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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11am-1pm
Office Location: Togo Salmon Hall, 306

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	Yes	Global view:	Yes
A2L:	Yes	Ethics:	Yes	Numeracy:	No	Written skills:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	Yes	Oral skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	Yes	Guest speaker(s):	No

COURSE INFORMATION

Lectures: Mondays, 8:30-10:20am/Wednesdays, 8:30-9:20am (3hrs per week)
Course Delivery Mode: In-person
Course Description: This course offers an introduction to contemporary interpersonal communication theories and research. Topics include: small group communication, persuasive communication, argumentation strategies, conflict resolution and storytelling.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- Mosaic
- Avenue to Learn
- Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations
- McMaster University Library

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to complete the following key tasks:

1. Define key communication theories and methodologies as they pertain to storytelling
2. Illustrate how storytelling, communication, and interpersonal communication is shaped by culture, power, and identity
3. Identify the role of relationality, humour, politeness, and social norms in communication and storytelling
4. Explain how communication and storytelling practices alter based upon the mode of delivery
5. Compare and contrast the differences between oral, print, and visual communication
6. Deconstruct communication and storytelling texts by applying methods including conversation analysis and discourse analysis
7. Interpret how genre and audience are key factors that inform how texts are constructed
8. Develop oral communication and leadership skills through presentations and small and large group discussions. Leadership skills will be fostered through group management and class discussions
9. Strengthen written communication and reflective skills through that apply course concepts and theories to practice

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND TEXT

All required course materials are accessible via Avenue. There is no required textbook that you need to purchase. There are no costs for you associated with the course materials.

CLASS FORMAT

There is an in-person 3-hour course. Mondays will consist of an interactive lecture where we will will we introduce core theories and concepts. Our lectures will also involve group discussions and brainstorming. We may also use some interactive online polling platforms like Menti or Top Hat. On Wednesdays, we will apply theories and concepts to practice by engaging in different activities, which will involve small groupwork, small and large group activities and discussions, mini-presentations, and written work.

Lectures and readings are designed to complement one another. Lectures will address the larger context to the concepts and issues raised by the required material. Many of our readings will serve as case studies. Lectures will not simply repeat what is covered by the readings.

Our classes together are always my favourite parts of the week. I want everyone to feel welcomed and respected in our classroom, so we can have a fun and engaging learning environment.

I will always come prepared and ready to teach. I expect you to do the same – come prepared and on-time having completed the weekly reading material, participate in our lectures, activities, and discussions, and, most importantly, be respectful of one another.

Interaction is a core part of the course – I LOVE discussions and brainstorming activities. But these are also designed to further develop our oral communication skills, which is a major objective of the course!

Please be respectful of everyone's contributions during activities and discussions. Offensive or disrespectful comments or actions, whether racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, will not be tolerated.

COURSE EVALUATION

Assignment	Worth	Due Date
What's Your Story 1-Minute Video Pitch: This assignment requires you to pitch yourself in a 1-minute video recording.	5%	Sept. 18
Group Storytelling In-Class Presentations: In groups of 4, students will deliver a 10-minute in-class presentation applying the theoretical foundations of storytelling and communication. Each group member will also submit a written self-evaluation.	20%	Presented in class week of Oct. 26/28
Recorded Individual Presentation & Self-Reflection: This is a 10–12-minute video recording of an individual presentation analyzing storytelling tactics pertaining to a given topic/example. A 500-word reflective statement on presentation style will accompany the recorded representation.	15%	Dec. 4*
In-Class Written Reflections: These are critical reflection on course material and themes that will be written in-class on provided booklets. Each reflection will be worth 5%. Since there are three In-Class	10% (2 x 5%)	Completed in-class: • Oct. 7 • Nov. 4 • Dec. 9

Written Reflections scheduled during the semester, the lowest grade will be dropped.		Lowest grade will be dropped
Class Attendance & Participation: This mark comprises attendance and participation during Monday lectures. Each student is granted two attendance passes, where two absences are excluded from participation grade to give some flexibility in case of emergencies.	10%	Ongoing throughout the semester
Wednesday Workshop Activities: These are activities where lecture content will be applied in practice. Workshop activities will vary between individual and small group written and oral storytelling exercises. Workshop activities will be completed on select Wednesdays and will be submitted at the end of class.	10% (5 Wednesday Workshop Activities x 2% each)	Completed in class: • Sept. 23 • Sept. 30 • Oct. 21 • Nov. 11 • Nov. 16 • Nov. 25 • Dec. 2 Lowest two grades will be dropped
Final Exam: The Final Exam will be cumulative and will comprise a combination of short answer questions and written storytelling prompts.	25%	TBD scheduled during exam period (Dec. 11-23)
Supercharge!: This is a boost that will be automatically applied to the assignment (excluding What's Your Story Video Pitch and Group Storytelling In-Class Presentations) that is your highest grade in the course, so it will count more towards your final grade!!	5%	

Further details, rubrics, and instructions regarding the assignments will be posted on Avenue.

*For the Recorded Individual Presentation & Self-Reflection, you are entitled to a 3-day grace period to submit your assignment. You may submit your assignment within three days of the Dec. 4 due date, no notice or permission required. The grace period will end on Dec. 7.

If you submit on the due date of Dec. 4, you will receive a 3% bonus (ex. If you receive 80% on your assignment and submit on time for the bonus, your grade will increase to 83%). After the grace period ends, the late policy will come into effect.

To receive the bonus, your Recorded Individual Presentation & Self-Reflection must be submitted on or before 11:59pm Dec. 4. Any submissions recorded as 12:00am or slightly after on Dec. 5 will not

receive the bonus. Incomplete submissions will also not be considered for the bonus. It is your responsibility to ensure your assignment is submitted ahead of the deadline (and consider upload times for video content!).

For students with approved SAS extensions, the extension date will be considered their assignment deadline, and submissions received by that date will remain eligible for the bonus mark.

Given the diversity of accommodation needs/individualized nature of the experience of disability, I recognize that not every barrier will be addressed by the course design. Please reach out to me via email, or if you are registered with SAS, your program coordinator to discuss alternatives if the above do not fully meet your learning needs.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Most assignments will be completed in class with some built in flexibility in case of emergencies.

I fully understand the many roles, responsibilities, and challenges students experience throughout the semester. For this reason, I provide a grace period of 3 days for the Recorded Individual Presentation & Self-Reflection.

However, sometimes things happen or come up despite our best efforts. If you need an extension on the Recorded Individual Presentation & Self-Reflection, please reach out before the end of the assignment's grace period. I am more than happy to accommodate!

After the grace period ends, the late policy comes into effect. Late assignments submitted after the conclusion of the grace period will receive a deduction of 2% per day.

Avenue submissions will close one week following the assignment due date. Late assignments will not be accepted via email.

We will also be completing small activities during class time throughout the semester. Some class activities will also require submission of worksheets, which must be done at the end of class. In-class Written Reflections and Wednesday Workshop Activities cannot be submitted after class is over. Make sure you hand in In-Class Written Reflections, Wednesday Workshop Activities, and any other in-class activities that require submissions before you leave the classroom.

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

I do my absolute best to respond to emails within 24 hours, Mondays-late afternoon Friday. Emails sent Friday evening-Sunday may be answered on Mondays. If you don't receive a reply during this timeframe, please re-send your email – I promise I won't get annoyed!!

Please do not send emails through the message function on Avenue. These messages do not go into my email inbox, and I am very likely not to see them.

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student.

All students must receive feedback regarding their progress prior to the final date by which a student may cancel the course without failure by default.

- *For Level 1 and Level 2 courses, this feedback must equal a minimum of 20% of the final grade.*
- *For Level 3 courses and above, this feedback must equal a minimum of 10% of the final grade.*

Instructors may solicit feedback via an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

Students who have concerns about the course content, evaluation methods, or delivery should first reach out to the course instructor. If your concern remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, you may then reach out to the relevant Area Chair for further consideration.

REGRADING POLICY

Maybe you feel differently about your assignment grades. If that is the case, these are the steps to follow if you would like the assignment regraded:

- Review the feedback received; think about how it applies to your assignment
- Wait 24 hours. If you still feel that your assignment deserves a regrade, email with a regrade request.
- Any regrade requests must be made within 1 week of the release of the assignment grades
- In your email, justify why your assignment deserves a regrade, referring to specific examples from your assignment and the instructions/rubric. Any requests that fail to provide these details will not be considered.
- A request does not automatically lead to a higher grade. Your grade could decrease or stay the same.

Assignment revision and resubmission after grades have been released is not permitted.

REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work" and the link below*;

http://ug.degroote.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/missed-course-work-policy/

COURSE MODIFICATION

I do my best to maintain our weekly schedule. However, sometimes we may need to spend more time on a particular topic, or we may need to adjust the schedule during the semester (ex. Class cancellations due to weather, sickness, etc.) If any changes occur, you will be notified on Avenue.

GENERATIVE AI

USE PROHIBITED

Students are not permitted to use generative AI in this course. In alignment with McMaster academic integrity policy, it "shall be an offence knowingly to … submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source". This includes work created by generative AI tools. Also state in the policy is the following, "Contract Cheating is the act of "outsourcing of student work to third parties" (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639) with or without payment." Using Generative AI tools is a form of contract cheating. Charges of academic dishonesty will be brought forward to the Office of Academic Integrity.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. email, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for

delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

Academic Accommodation For Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students enrolled in IBH 2CS3 are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through

regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your enrolment in IBH 2CS3 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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Date	**Topic**	**Readings & Reminders**
Sept. 9	Welcome & Course Overview	No required readings or activities.
Module 1	**Theoretical Foundations of Storytelling & Communication:** This section of the course will introduce the core theoretical foundations and concepts to understand the practice of storytelling and the relationship between storytelling and communication. We will explore medium theory and how technology alters storytelling and communication; how communication is shaped by cultural practices and identity dynamics; how meaning is constructed through stories; the role of relationality and politeness within interpersonal communication; and the genre conventions that shape how stories are told (and designed) to relate to specific audiences.	
Sept. 14/16	Why Does Storytelling Matter for Communication?	<u>Weekly Readings:</u> Parul Sehgal, “The Tyranny of the Tale.” *The New Yorker*, July 3, 2023. Julian Brave Noisecat, “How Media Can Help Bring Indigenous Traditions Back to Life.” *The Walrus*, September 29, 2025. <u>Weekly Reminders:</u> Wednesday Workshop Activity

		What's Your Story 1-Minute Pitch Video Due Sept. 18 (5%)
Sept. 21/23	Technology & Storytelling: Oral, Print, and Visual Communication	Weekly Readings: Carr, Nicholas. "The Tyranny of Now." *The New Atlantis* 79 (2025): 94-103. Couldry, Nick. "Mediatization or Mediation? Alternative Understandings of the Emergent Space of Digital Storytelling. *New Media & Society* 10, no. 3 (2008): 373-391. Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity
Sept. 28/30	Identity, Culture, Narrative	Weekly Readings: Croteau, David and William Hoynes. "Active Audiences and the Construction of Meaning." *Media & Society*. London: Sage, 2014, p. 260-293. Holt, Douglas. "Jack Daniel's America: Iconic Brands as Ideological Parasites and Proselytizers." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 6, no. 3 (2006): 355-377. *An oldie but a goodie, one of my favourites! Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity
Oct. 5/7	Genre, Audiences, & Persuasion	Weekly Readings: Lane, Anne. "Towards a Theory of Organizational Storytelling for Public Relations: An Engagement Perspective." *Public Relations Review* 49, no. 1 (2023): 1-10. Yoon, Hyunsun and Jongsoo Lee. "Genre in Transnational Television: A Case of Netflix Originals Korean Dramas." *Television & New Media* 26, no. 2 (2024): 243-258.

		Weekly Reminders: In-Class Written Reflection #1 (5%)
Oct. 12/14	Reading Week! No class! Enjoy the break ☺	
Oct. 19/21	Relationality, Humour, and Conflict in Interpersonal Communication	Weekly Readings: Critchley, Simon. "Theorizing Humour, Organization and Work." In Humour, Work and Organization, edited by Robert Westwood and Carl Rhodes, 77-91. London: Routledge, 2007. Henricks Stotts, Megan. "Conversational Maxims as Social Norms." Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy 67, no. 9 (2024): 3087-3109. Power, Katherine. "Please Excuse Me, Is there a Place for Politeness in Australian Politics." The Conversation, February 20, 2022. Schachter, Harvey. "What We've Been Told About the Non-Verbal Communications Ratio is Wrong." The Globe & Mail, October 23, 2025. Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity
Oct. 26/28	Group Storytelling In-Class Presentations	
Nov. 2/4	Midterm Review & Check-In	Weekly Reading: There are no required readings this week. As a reminder, there is no mid-term exam. This is just a chance to review what we have covered so far before we move into the second half of the course material Weekly Reminders: In-Class Written Reflection #2 (5%)
Module 2	**How Do We Analyze the Stories We Tell?**: This section of the course introduces different critical questions, approaches, methods for analyzing stories as a form of communication. We will begin this section by understanding how we can judge the truth and ethics of stories (whether shared by colleagues or by businesses) as communication. We will then cover	

	different methods including conversation analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, textual analysis, and interviewing. During our Wednesday Workshop Activities, we will practice analyzing communication and storytelling practices through these approaches.	
Nov. 9/11	Determining Truth and the Ethics of Communication	Weekly Readings: Hannan, Jason. "Trolling Ourselves to Death? Social Media and Post-Truth Politics." *European Journal of Communication* 33, no. 2 (2018): 214-226. Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity
Nov. 16/18	Approaches to Analyzing Speech & Text	Weekly Readings: Abell, Jackie and Elizabeth H. Stokoe. "'I Take Full Responsibility, I Take Some Responsibility, I'll Take Half of it But No More Than That': Princess Diana and the Negotiation of Blame in the 'Panorama' Interview." *Discourse Studies* 1, no. 3 (1999): 297-319. *Another oldie, but a goodie! Dangoisse, Pascale and Gabriela Perdomo. "Gender Equality through a Neoliberal Lens: A Discourse Analysis of Justin Trudeau's Official Speeches." *Women's Studies in Communication* 44, no. 3 (2021): 419-447. Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity
Module 3	**Communication & Storytelling in Practice: Current Issues and Debates**: This module builds upon the theoretical and methodological foundations we have explored in the course on storytelling, communication, conflict, relationality. We will apply these foundations to think through the impact of social media and generative artificial intelligence on storytelling and (interpersonal) communication, and the role communication contributes for advocacy and social awareness.	
Nov. 23/25	Social Media Storytelling & the Gen AI Dilemma	Weekly Readings: Bishop, Sophie. "Influencer Creep." *Real Life Magazine*, June 9, 2022. https://reallifemag.com/influencer-creep/

		Jezer-Morton, Kathryn. “What Twenty Years of Social Media Has Done to Our Memories.” *The Walrus*, August 29, 2026. Weiner, Anna. “Can A.I. Writing Be More Than a Gimmick?” *The New Yorker*, April 9, 2025. https://www.newyorker.com/books/under-review/can-ai-writing-be-more-than-a-gimmick Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity
Nov. 30/Dec. 2	Storytelling as Advocacy and Public Communication	Weekly Readings: Chaplain, Jessica. “Indigenous Climate Advocacy and Transnational Solidarity in UN Climate Conferences.” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 110, no. 3 (2024): 370-395. Polletta, Francesca. “Personal Storytelling in Social Movements.” In *The Routledge Companion to Narrative Theory*, edited by Paul Dawson and Maria Mäkelä, 104-116. New York: Routledge, 2023. Weekly Reminders: Wednesday Workshop Activity Recorded Individual Presentation Due Dec. 4
Dec. 7/9	Course Conclusion & Exam Review	Weekly Readings: No required reading. Weekly Reminders: In-Class Written Reflection #3 (5%)
TBD	Final Exam to be scheduled during examination period (Dec. 11-23)	