

# Attorney Communication & Persuasion



**2026**

# Attorney Communication & Persuasion

## Course Information and Syllabus

### Summer Mini 2026: 6200-17094

Instructors: Cawlyn Robinson: [robinsoncawlyn@gmail.com](mailto:robinsoncawlyn@gmail.com)  
Jim Lawrence: [jelawrence@uh.edu](mailto:jelawrence@uh.edu)

Location: Room: 211 Time: 5:30pm-8:30pm

Office Hours: Since this course is being offered in the evening, there won't be set office hours. However, we are available to meet with students when requested.

Textbook: None. Reading materials for the class will be posted on the course website. Reading materials not posted to the link can be accessed through Lexis or Westlaw.

This course is designed to help you understand the dynamics of communication and persuasion – both the psychological dynamic and the presentation dynamic. Each class meeting will address one or two specific communication and persuasion techniques and you will perform exercises designed to increase your individual skill development for each technique. There will be predetermined techniques (see the syllabus), we may insert additional techniques as necessary. Professors Jones and Lawrence each bring years of advocacy experience AND years of professional theatre training to their approach to the class.

This course is applicable to ALL law students. It is not focused on litigation advocacy.

### Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Through this course, and by the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Learn the basic tools necessary for attorneys to become better communicators.
- Gain insights into the psychology of communication.
- Gain insights into the psychology of persuasion.
- Successfully demonstrate basic mastery of each of the predetermined techniques.
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively in a group setting through a group presentation.

### Grading

There will be 4 data points in the grading rubric, and they are:

- 1) **Professionalism and Participation (25% of total grade)**
- 2) **Skill Assessment: Storytelling (20% of total grade)**
- 3) **Skill Assessment: Group Presentation (25% of total grade)**
- 4) **Final Presentation (30% of total grade)**

## **Class Attendance Policy**

Please inform the professors of this class via email if you intend to miss a class. Students are expected to complete all graded assignments even if they miss a class or take the class S/U.

## **Honor Code**

The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

## **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

CAPS can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS ([www.uh.edu/caps](http://www.uh.edu/caps)) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the "Let's Talk" program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. [www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets\\_talk.html](http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html).

## **Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy**

UHLC and the University of Houston are committed to maintaining and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment in which students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from discrimination and sexual misconduct. If you have experienced an incident of discrimination or sexual misconduct, a confidential reporting process is available to you. For more information, please refer to the University system's Anti-Discrimination Policy webpage, Anti-Discrimination Policy, Sexual Misconduct Policy webpage, and Sexual Misconduct Policy. Under the University Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a "responsible employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

## **Names and Pronouns**

Chosen names and preferred pronouns (including non-binary ones such as they/them/their) must be respected in this classroom. Please feel free to reach out to us at any time if you want to make us aware of your chosen name or preferred pronoun, or if you have concerns about how we or your classmates address you.

## **Accessibility and Accommodations**

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400 or emailing [jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU](mailto:jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU).

If you require any support services, you may contact Ms. Samantha Ary, Academic Records Coordinator. Ms. Ary is located in the Office of Student Services suite, and she can be reached at [sary@central.uh.edu](mailto:sary@central.uh.edu) or (713) 743-7466. Requests for accommodation that involve graded assignments must be directed to Ms. Ary and should be made as soon as possible to allow adequate time to document and to process the request. If you observe religious or cultural holidays that will coincide with synchronous class sessions or conferences, please let either instructor know as soon as possible, so that we may make arrangements.

## **Recording of Class**

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center. If you have an accommodation to record class related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

## **AI Policy**

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text (AI Generated Text). Examples of the technology include what are known as "generative" large language models (LLMs), and specific implementations that are well known in the general public as ChatGPT or the like. These systems can generate text in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output – the AI Generated Text – appears to have human-mimicking "intelligence" and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for written work product a student might generate themselves. AI Generated Text can include computer code or programs as well as human language content. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to not prompt, generate, obtain, read, or use any AI Generated Text in relation to any activity or assessment in this course except as expressly allowed by the professors. This applies to AI Generated Text from yourself or others. This pledge includes

that your assessment work product in the course is without any contribution from AI Generated Text unless expressly authorized by the professors. This specifically extends to the plagiarism policy and unauthorized aid/materials parts of the Honor Code: AI Generated Text will be treated as from another/other in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any work product generated for this course that is submitted to the instructors or presented in a class session, regardless of whether it is graded content or not. Nor may AI Generated Text be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non-proctored environment, such as “take-home” assignments, without prior express permission from the professors. Instances when you are allowed or not allowed to incorporate AI Generated Text in your assignment(s) will be expressly stated by your professors. If listed in the syllabus, these designations are listed as “AI use NOT ALLOWED” or as “AI use ALLOWED, but you must indicate on the submitted assignment if you used AI and also turn in your prompts.” For any assignment in which you use AI Generated Text, you must turn in the prompts you used to generate the material, in addition to turning in the final product. Note that for any assignment where AI use is allowed, you are not required to use AI if you choose not to.

Electronic caselaw research aids, such as Westlaw or LexisNexis, and online or hardcopy form books, such as those promulgated by O’Connor’s, are not considered large language models (LLMs) or AI Generated Text. You may use these types of aids freely throughout the semester. If you are unsure whether a research aid, website, or other resource falls under the “AI Generated Text” restriction, please ask.

A note from the University of Houston:

*Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS ([www.uh.edu/caps](http://www.uh.edu/caps)) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. [http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets\\_talk.html](http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html)*

## **Course Schedule**

- May 18** Course Introduction  
Technique: Using Your Voice (inflection, tone, etc.)
- May 19** Technique: Using Your Body (gestures, body language, movement, etc.)
- May 20** Technique: Being in the Moment (Improvisation, etc.)
- May 21** Technique: Using “Story” as a Persuasive Tool
- May 26** Skill Assessment: Storytelling
- May 27** Technique: How to Ask Good Questions  
Group Presentation Workshop
- May 28** Skill Assessment: Group Presentation  
Final Presentation Workshop
- May 29** Skill Assessment: Final Presentation