

## Common First Week Assignment

Review the syllabus for the class and review “Critical Concept Three: Communication Is Multimodal” in WOVENText Chapter 2 (pp. 37-42). Create a video (60-90 seconds) in which you articulate a challenge relating to one of the modes—written, oral, visual, electronic, or nonverbal communication—that you’ll be engaging with in class projects this semester. What challenges do you expect to face in relation to this particular mode (use specific examples from your past experience)? How might you overcome these challenges (again using examples from your past experience)?

**Technology:** To record your video, use an easily accessible technology: your (or your friend’s or classmate’s) smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer with webcam and mic. You can also use resources available to you on campus:

1. The Presentation Rehearsal Studios in the Clough Undergraduate Learning Center (CULC), in which you can work with a presentation coach and also record yourself and then send a link to the video to yourself (or anybody else): <http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu/rehearsal-rooms-0>
2. The Library’s gadget-lending service, which allows you to check out a range of equipment, including laptops, tablets, and cameras: <http://libguides.gatech.edu/gadgets>

**Audience:** Imagine your audience to be other first-year students at Georgia Tech and other faculty members. They’re interested in your supported opinions, not your ability to summarize materials with which they are familiar.

**Planning:** In planning this video, you need to create a script (or at least elaborated talking points). Consider that for most people speaking at a normal conversational rate, a half-page paragraph (in 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, with 1” margins) is equivalent to about one-minute of talk, so your 90-120 second video will have a script that’s three-quarters of a page to one double-spaced page long.

**Design:** An important aspect of any video is its design. Think about how you will not only deliver your argument to your audience but also present it in an engaging manner that uses the affordances of the video genre. If you speak directly to the camera, consider the angle and placement of the visuals, the setting in which you’re speaking, your appearance, your body language, and your eye contact. Or, consider if a slideshow, stop-motion, time-lapse, or other kind of creative style might be better suited to representing your argument. For any video, ensure that your voice is clearly audible and easy to follow.

**Rehearsal:** Do NOT just wing it. Do not have the first recording be the final take. Rehearse. A LOT. Maybe five or six or even ten times. In your video, you want to appear and sound relaxed, poised, and confident.

**Submission:** Submit your video by uploading it to T-Square or, if the video is too large to upload, by uploading it to a service such as YouTube or Vimeo (as indicated by your instructor) and submitting the link to T-Square.

**Reflection:** During the class period after you submit your assignment, your instructor will ask you to reflect on the project. “Reflecting” in this case means that you’ll respond in writing to a set of prompts or questions that ask you to consider how and why you made the choices you made in completing the diagnostic assignment. You’ll then save that reflection and return to it later in the semester as you prepare your final portfolio.

Why is reflection important? Because when you take a step back to critically review the ways you approached a problem and implemented a solution, you learn how to generalize that process—that is, you learn how to apply those critical thinking, communication, and project management skills to other subjects and areas of your life.

**Grading:** This diagnostic assignment is worth 5% of the total grade, and will be assessed using the Writing and Communication Program’s programmatic rubric.