COMM 204 Public Speaking  
Summer 2017 Syllabus  
MWF 12:00-2:50pm  
ANN 305

Instructor: Courtney Cox  
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Office Hours: W 9-11am  
Location: ANN Patio

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course aims to assist students with their public speaking proficiency through both a theory and practice-based curriculum. Throughout COMM 204, students will learn concepts and models of communication which will assist in their preparation of speeches for various occasions and audiences. Through learning how to effectively support ideas, select and organize materials, and utilize visual tools, students will develop tools relevant in academic, business, and social settings. By the end of this course, students will become better listeners as well as poised speakers in any setting.

REQUIRED TEXTS
2. *The Well-Spoken Thesaurus: The Most Powerful Ways to Say Everyday Words and Phrases* by Tom Heehler

*All other required viewing or reading assignments will be posted to Blackboard

COURSE POLICIES
1. **Classroom conduct** – Glossophobia, the fear of public speaking, is one of the most common phobias in the world. A mutual respect for one another is crucial in cultivating a skillset which is nerve-wracking for a good chunk of the population. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. My hope is that this course will serve as a sharpening tool for not only speaking skills, but listening as well.

2. **Academic Integrity** – This course assesses each individual’s effort and work. Like all classes at USC, this work must be yours. Any attempt to use others’ work as your own is subject to a failing grade and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. You can find more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty here: https://libraries.usc.edu/research/referencetutorials and here: http://annenberg.usc.edu/CurrentStudents/GStudentsvcs/PhD/~/media/Academic%20Integrity%20Overview.ashx. This course will uphold the standards outlined by the Student Conduct code in SCampus (http://webapp.usc.edu/scampus). If you have any questions throughout this class regarding academic integrity, please let me know.

3. **Special Accommodations** - Academic accommodations are made when students register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved
accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please deliver this documentation to me within the first week of the semester, or as soon as possible. DSP (https://dsp.usc.edu/) can be reached at ability@usc.edu and (213) 740-0776. Please let me know if you are concerned about accommodations for any other reason.

4. **Technology** - Please silence all phones before class and keep them stored during our time together. While computers are allowed for class-related exercises and notetaking, they must be put away during speeches and guest lectures.

5. **Assignment Submission** – All assignments should be printed, stapled, and clearly labeled with your name and date. Given the short nature of this class, due dates are strict and all assignments must be turned in at the beginning of the class they are due. If an emergency arises, please let me know as soon as possible and provide documentation in a timely manner.

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**STUDENT RESOURCES**

**Sexual Assault Policy and Resources** - The University of Southern California is committed to fostering a safe campus environment for all members of the university community, free from sexual coercion, violence, and sexual intimidation. The university’s sexual misconduct and sexual assault policies have been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated (https://policy.usc.edu/student-misconduct/). To learn more about your reporting options and your rights, or to speak with a counselor confidentially, contact the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center/Center for Women and Men at 213-740-4900, or contact Student Counseling Services at 213-740-7711. For more information and resources, including off-campus resources like the Rape Treatment Center, visit the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center website at https://sarc.usc.edu/resources/. Finally, remember that you can contact a campus cruiser at 213-740-4911 for a safety escort.

**Stress Management** - Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge. Moreover, they offer drop-in workshops throughout the semester on managing stress and maintaining mindfulness.

**Additional Academic Support** - A number of campus resources exist to support you academically. Contact the Center for Academic Support (http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/) at 213-740-0776 or study@usc.edu.

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**ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW**

**Introduction Speech (5%)** – This is your “elevator” speech, a one-minute introductory presentation which allows us to get to know one another. This is a concise, casual introduction to ease into the course and allow you to practice the type of speech you may need to give at a conference, networking event, and yes, even an elevator.

**Informative Speech (10%)** – This is a 5-7 minute speech providing information on a topic of your choice. You will need to provide AT LEAST three sources to support your evidence presented over the course of
your speech. You will submit a speech outline along with your source material before giving your speech.

**Persuasive Speech (10%)** – This is a 5-7 minute speech designed to persuade your audience to a particular opinion or action. You will need both evidence and counterevidence to convince your crowd. You will submit a speech outline along with your source material (with AT LEAST three sources) before giving your speech.

**Sensory Aid Speech (10%)** – This is a 5-7 minute speech which utilizes a non-verbal tool (PowerPoint, handout, song, video clip, etc.) to get your point across. For this speech, you may revisit a previous topic from your informative or persuasive speech. You will submit a speech outline along with your source material (with AT LEAST three sources) before giving your speech.

**Special Occasion Speech (10%)** – This is a 2 minute speech which reflects one of a variety of real-life situations requiring a short-but-sweet presentation. This includes a graduation speech, keynote address, award acceptance speech, wedding toast, an introduction, etc.

**Speech Reflections (10%)** – After each of these speeches, you will write a one-page, double-spaced reflection about your presentation, noting what you felt you accomplished successfully and where you believe you can improve.

In addition, you will also critique one classmate’s speech for each category, answering the following: 1) What did they do especially well? 2) How could they improve their speech? 3) What aspects of their speech style would you like to adapt to your own? This critique should also be one-page, double-spaced.

**TED Talk Analysis (10%)** – You will analyze a TED Talk (at least ten minutes long) of your choice and write a two-page summary/critique of the speech (TED Talks available at https://www.ted.com/talks).

**Final Self-Reflection (15%)** – This 3-5 page (double-spaced, excluding references) paper combines knowledge gained from course readings, lectures, and the experience of presenting several speeches. What did you find most useful from this course? How can you imagine using some of these skills in future environments? Use specific examples in your assessment.

**Shark Tank Exercise (10%)** – Like the popular TV show, you’ll have 10 minutes to persuade a group of investors to buy into your company. The “sharks” will only select one product to support, so your ability to utilize persuasive speaking skills, visual aids, and market research will be vital to your success. The winning product will receive extra credit.

**Participation and Attendance (10%)** – This course is designed with several interactive factors built into each class to enhance your confidence and ability to speak publicly. Given that there are a limited number of class sessions as a summer course, your attendance is important not only for the materials presented, but the participatory nature of a speech course. Students are expected to attend each class, other than pre-excused absences or emergencies. These excused absences require accompanying documentation. More than two unexcused absences will result in a deduction from your final grade. Additionally, students are expected to be on time; repeated tardiness will also reflect poorly on a student’s final grade.
GRADING BREAKDOWN

A: 92.5 – 100  B+: 87.5 – 89.4  C+: 77.5 – 79.4  D+: 67.5 – 69.4
A-: 89.5 – 92.4  B: 82.5 – 87.4  C: 72.5 – 77.4  D: 62.5 – 67.4  F: < 59.5
B-: 79.5 – 82.4  C-: 69.5 – 72.4  D-: 59.5 – 62.4

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to Public Speaking

W 6/28  Introduction and Course Overview
Reading: PSVT Ch. 1: Introduction to Public Speaking
Due: Intro Survey

F 6/30  Speaking with Confidence and Purpose
Reading: TWST: The Well-Spoken Vocabulary; PSVT Ch. 11: Speaking with Confidence
Due: Introduction Speech

Week 2: The Informative Speech

M 7/3  Crafting an Informative Speech
Reading: PSVT Ch. 7: Supporting Your Ideas; PSVT Ch. 15: Informative Speaking
Due: Speech Reflections

W 7/5  Organizing your Speech
Reading: PSVT Ch. 8: Organizing and Outlining

F 7/7  Speech Day!
Due: Informative Speech

Week 3: Persuasive Speaking

M 7/10  Persuading Your Audience
Reading: PSVT Ch. 16: Persuasive Speaking
Due: Speech Reflections

W 7/12  GUEST LECTURE: TJ Finley (Attorney)
Reading: PSVT Ch. 6: Critical Thinking and Reasoning; PSVT Ch. 3 Ethics in Public Speaking

F 7/14  Speech Day!
Due: Persuasive Speech

Week 4: Pitch(ing) Perfect
Crafting the Perfect Pitch
Reading: TWST: The Seven Rhetorical Sins; “13 Tips on How to Deliver a Pitch Investors Simply Can’t Turn Down” (BB); “8 Mistakes Entrepreneurs Make When Pitching to Investors” (BB)
Due: Speech Reflections

SHARK TANK EXERCISE

Crafting the Perfect Pitch Pt. II
Reading: PSVT Ch. 9: Introductions and Conclusions

Week 5: Using Sensory Aids

Making Visual Aids Work for You
Reading: PSVT Ch. 13: Visual Aids
Due: TED Talk Analysis

Making Visual Aids Work for You Pt. II
Reading: “10 TED Talks That Used Visual Graphics to Win the Audience” (BB); Watch: “How to Make a Splash in Social Media” (BB)

Speech Day!
Due: Sensory Aid Speech

Week 6: Speeches for Special Occasions

Toasts, Acceptance Speeches, and Intros
Reading: PSVT Ch. 17: Special Occasion Speaking
Due: Speech Reflections

Preparing a Special Occasion Speech
Reading: PSVT Ch. 5: Audience Analysis

Speech Day!
Due: Special Occasion Speech

Week 7: Final Reflections

Final Thoughts
Due: Speech Reflections
Due: Final Self-Reflection