

COMM 204 Public Speaking
Fall 2017 Syllabus
MW 2-3:20 pm, ANN305

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Office Hours: Mon. 3:30-4:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help you become a better public speaker. You will learn proven strategies for effective public speaking and will apply those strategies to class presentations. During the semester, we will discuss the following: Concepts and models of communication, approaches for tailoring speeches to your audience, techniques for incorporating evidence and media that enhance your claims, and more. We'll practice presentational speaking for different contexts, including academia, business, and social settings. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with strategies for delivering compelling speeches and should feel more confident in your speaking abilities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand communication strategies for effective presentational speaking
- Apply this knowledge by delivering speeches in class
- Learn critical listening skills for evaluating presentations made by others
- Develop verbal, nonverbal, and research skills for public speaking
- Learn how to provide meaningful answers to questions
- Gain confidence in speaking in a variety of contexts

COURSE TEXT

- The Public Speaking Project (n.d.). Public Speaking: The Virtual Text (PSVT). Retrieved from <http://publicspeakingproject.org/psvirtualtext.html>
- Other readings may be assigned during the semester and posted on Blackboard

GRADING

Percentages are calculated by taking the total points earned in the course and dividing by the total possible points (1000).

A: 92.6 – 100	B-: 79.6 – 82.5	D+: 67.6 – 69.5
A-: 89.6 – 92.5	C+: 77.6 – 79.5	D: 62.6 – 67.5
B+: 87.6 – 89.5	C: 72.6 – 77.5	D-: 59.6 – 62.5
B: 82.6 – 87.5	C-: 69.6 – 72.5	F: Under 59.5

COURSE POLICIES

- **Respect:** For some people, public speaking is an enjoyable experience. For others, it causes fear and anxiety. A goal for our classroom is for everyone to feel confident that they will be treated with respect by their peers both during class discussion and when they present.

- **Academic Integrity:** Your work in this class must be your own. Any attempt to represent others' work as yours will receive a zero on the assignment in question and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. To learn more about academic integrity and what constitutes academic dishonesty, please see these links:
 - <https://libraries.usc.edu/research/reference-tutorials>
 - <http://annenberg.usc.edu/CurrentStudents/GStudentsvc/PhD/~//media/Academic%20Integrity%20Overview.ashx>
 - <http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus>

We will uphold the standards outlined by the Student Conduct code in SCampus (see third above). Please talk with me if you are confused or unsure if something would be considered cheating or plagiarism.

- **Assignment Submission:** All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>) via Turnitin. If you are unable to submit your assignment on time to Blackboard for a technical reason, email me (tgillig@usc.edu) your assignment before the deadline.
- **Deadlines:** Late assignments will receive a deduction of 10 points if submitted within 24 hours of the deadline, 20 points if submitted within 48 hours of the deadline, and so on (10 points lost per 24-hour period). If you have an emergency, please email me before the deadline and provide documentation of the emergency at that time or as soon as documentation is available.
- **Email:** I will make every effort to respond to your emails within 24 hours of them reaching my inbox. If 24 hours has passed and I haven't responded, please feel free to follow up to ensure I received your message.
- **Technology:** You may use computers and other devices in class. It is your responsibility to ensure you are engaged in classroom discussion. Participation is part of your grade, and excessive use of technology not related to class activities will affect your grade. No technology should be used during speeches and guest lectures.
- **Special Accommodations:** If you need academic accommodation based on a disability, you are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please bring your letter to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is in 3601 Watt Way in Grace Ford Salvatori Hall, Rm. 120 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

- **Speech 1, Introduction Speech:** This is a two-minute speech about yourself to help us get to know each other.
- **Speech 2, Informative Speech:** This speech should take five to seven minutes and inform your classmates about a topic of your choice. This speech requires external research. Please provide *three to four sources* during your presentation. We will model our speeches after TED Talks. The speech should help you hone your research skills and provide credible evidence for your claims. Along with your in-class presentation, you will need to submit on Blackboard your speech outline and references.
- **Speech 3, Persuasive Speech:** This speech should take five to seven minutes and requires you to craft your own arguments and refute potential counterarguments in order to persuade your audience. This may involve asking them to consider new perspectives, take a certain action, or change their behavior. This speech requires external research, and you must provide *three to four sources* during your presentation.

Along with your in-class presentation, you must submit on Blackboard your speech outline and references.

- **Speech 4, Sensory Aid Speech:** This speech should take five to seven minutes and incorporate visual, audio, or other non-verbal tools that bolster or enhance your claims. You may revisit a topic or idea from your informative or persuasive speech. This speech requires external research, and you must provide *three to four sources* during your presentation. Along with your in-class presentation, turn in on Blackboard your speech outline and references.
- **Speech 5, Special Occasion Speech:** This is a two-minute speech modeled after a speech you may be asked to give in real life. This could be a toast (e.g., wedding, bachelor or bachelorette party), an introduction of an individual, giving someone an award, accepting an award, etc. You choose!
- **Speech Reflections:** After each of the first four speeches, you will write a one-page (double-spaced) reflection paper about your performance. This will result in a total of four reflections. You should reflect on your strengths and opportunities for improvement next time. Work to incorporate concepts learned in class.
- **Impromptu Speeches:** We'll be doing impromptu speeches throughout the course of the semester, when time permits. Speakers can volunteer (or will be selected at random). Topics will be selected at random. Speeches should be one minute long after one minute of prep.
- **TED Talk Analysis:** As part of our discussion of informative speeches, you will provide a two-page summary, critique of, and reflection on a TED Talk of your choice (selection is available at <https://www.ted.com/talks>).
- **Speech Performance Critique:** There are many opportunities on campus and online to watch debates on topics you find interesting and important. The options include critiquing the persuasive public speaking skills of politicians (e.g., election debates), students running for an elected position, media figures, and other public figures. This summary, critique, and reflection (three to four pages, double-spaced, before references) will give you the opportunity to watch a debate (or two opposing speeches) and compare the styles and performances.
- **Shark Tank Exercise:** This is an in-class activity designed to put persuasive speaking skills into practice. Students will team up and present an idea or innovation to a panel of "sharks" to persuade the sharks to fund their project. The winning team will receive five extra credit points.
- **Final Reflection Paper:** This paper discusses concepts learned, progress made, and areas for continued improvement. Expand on what you've written in previous reflections. Evaluate your performance throughout the course. Think about future occasions where you may be asked to speak and how you can incorporate skills you've learned here. This is in place of a final exam. The paper should be two to three pages (double-spaced, before references).
- **Participation and Attendance:** Your attendance is important to your success in this class. Emergencies accompanied by documentation will be considered excused absences. Any more than *four unexcused* absences will result in a one-third deduction to your final grade (e.g., A to an A-, A- to a B+, B+ to a B, etc.).

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Assignment	Total Points	Deadline
Speeches		
Introduction Speech	40	Mon., 8/28
Informative Speech	140	Wed. 9/13 – Wed. 9/20
Persuasive Speech	140	Wed. 10/11 – Wed. 10/18
Sensory Aid Speech	180	Wed. 11/1
Special Occasion Speech	100	Mon., 11/20
Written Assignments		
Goals Exercise (Class 1)	10	Mon., 8/21
Speech Reflections (4 total)	100	Mon., 9/4; Mon. 9/25; Mon., 10/8; Mon., 11/13
TED Talk Critique	30	Mon., 9/11
Speech Critique	60	Mon., 11/6
Final Reflection	100	Wed., 11/29
In-Class Activities		
Shark Tank Exercise	40	Wed., 10/4
Participation and Attendance	60	Ongoing
Total Points: 1000		

COURSE SCHEDULE

The assigned readings should be read before the class under which they are listed.

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Mon., 8/21 Course Overview
Assignments: Introduction Speech for 8/28

Wed., 8/23 Public Speaking Competencies
Reading: Ch. 1 and 4 PSVT

Week 2: Research Portfolios and Audience Analysis

Mon., 8/28 Introduction Speeches, Developing a Research Portfolio for Speeches
Reading: Ch. 5 PSVT
Assignments: Informative Speech for 9/18

Wed., 8/30 Audience Analysis
Assignments: Informative Speech for 9/13-9/20, TED Talk Analysis for 9/11

Week 3: Informative Speaking

Mon., 9/4 NO CLASS (Labor Day)
Deadline: Introduction Speech Reflection due on Blackboard; Informative Speech Topic Approval (Email)

Wed., 9/6 Introduction to Informative Speaking
Reading: Ch. 8 and 15 PSVT

Week 4: Informative Speeches

Mon., 9/11 Peer Review of Informative Speeches
Deadline: TED Talk Critique due on Blackboard

Wed., 9/13 Informative Speeches Group 1

Week 5: Informative Speeches

Mon., 9/18 Informative Speeches Group 2

Wed., 9/20 Informative Speeches Group 3

Week 6: Introduction to Persuasive Speaking

Mon., 9/25 Introduction to Persuasive Speaking
Reading: Ch. 16, 18 PSVT
Assignment: Persuasive Speech for 10/9
Deadline: Informative Speech Reflection Paper (Blackboard)

Wed., 9/27 In-Class Activities, Group Work for Shark Tank Speeches
Assignment: Shark Tank for 10/4

Week 7: Persuasive Speaking

Mon., 10/2 In-Class Activities, Peer Review for Persuasive Speeches
Assignment: Speech Critique for 11/6
Deadline: Persuasive Speech Topic Approval (Email)

Wed., 10/4 Shark Tank Speeches

Week 8: Persuasive Speeches

Mon., 10/9 Persuasive Speech Group 1

Wed., 10/11 Persuasive Speech Group 2

Week 9: Persuasive Speeches and Crisis Communication

Mon., 10/16 Persuasive Speech Group 3

Wed., 10/18 Crisis Communication
Assignment: Sensory Aid Speech for 11/13
Deadline: Persuasive Speech Reflection Paper (Blackboard)

Week 10: Introduction to Sensory Aids

Mon., 10/23 Introduction to Sensory Aids in Public Speaking
Reading: Ch. 13 PSVT
Deadline: Sensory Aid Speech Topic Approval (Email)

Wed., 10/25 Reviewing Visual Arguments

Week 11: Sensory Aids Continued and Sensory Aid Speeches

Mon., 10/30 Visualizing Data, Peer Review Day for Sensory Aid Speeches

Wed., 11/1 Sensory Aid Speeches Group 1
Assignment: Final Reflection Paper for 11/29

Week 12: Sensory Aid Speeches

Mon., 11/6 Sensory Aid Speeches Group 2
Deadline: Speech Critique

Wed., 11/8 Sensory Aid Speeches Group 3

Week 13: Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches

Mon., 11/13 Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches
Reading: Ch. 17 PSVT
Assignment: Special Occasion Speech for 11/20
Deadline: Sensory Aid Speech Reflection Paper (Blackboard)

Wed., 11/15 Humor in Speeches

Week 14: Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches

Mon., 11/20 Special Occasion Speeches

Wed., 11/22 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Week 15: Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches

Mon., 11/27 In-Class Activities

Wed., 11/29 NO CLASS
Deadline: Final Reflection Paper due on Blackboard