

COMM 204: Public Speaking
Units: 4
Fall 2015—Tuesday/Thursday—12:30-1:50 pm
ANN 406

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Office: USC Joint Educational Project (“JEP House”), 801 W. 34th Street

Office Hours: Thursdays, 10 am-12 pm, and by appointment

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Course Description

In this course, participants will both study the principles and cultivate the practices of effective communication, verbal and non-verbal, for formal contexts. We will focus on learning how to prepare, present, and attend to presentations for such formal contexts as academic conferences, business pitches, wedding receptions, and graduation ceremonies. Ultimately, the course should prove to be illuminating, practical, useful, and FUN.

Learning Objectives

This course aims to enhance participants’ communicative competence by offering opportunities to practice speaking confidently and articulately, regardless of the topic, in front of and with people.

To achieve that objective, participants will develop/hone skills in:

- Learning through play, especially improvisational theater games
- Beating down stage fright and communication apprehension
- Listening actively and respectfully
- Using audience analysis to shape messages’ foci and structure
- Decoding and managing non-verbal communication (e.g., body language, facial expressions)
- Identifying the characteristics of both good speeches and effective speakers
- Organizing ideas logically and transitioning between them smoothly
- Storytelling – composition (e.g., beginning, middle, end), mechanics (e.g., pacing, volume), and give-and-take (e.g., revising according to listeners’ signals)
- Speaking off-of-the-top-of your head (impromptu) and with keyword notes (extemporaneous)
- Creating and using a variety of sensory aids (e.g., props, multimedia)
- Speaking effectively to inform, persuade, and pay tribute
- Honoring ethical best practices



Course Notes

1. Grading

a. This course is graded Numeric and/or In Progress.

b. Here is the grading scale:

A	92.5-100	B+	86.5-89.4	C+	76.5-79.4	D+	66.5-69.4
A-	89.5-92.4	B	82.5-86.4	C	72.5-76.4	D	62.5-66.4
		B-	79.5-82.4	C-	69.5-72.4	D-	59.5-62.4
						F	59.4 or below

c. Here is what A/B/C/D/F-quality speeches look like:

A An outstanding speech. Clear goal that is well adapted to the needs and interests of the audience. Excellent content, well-organized, excellent wording and delivery, and/or superior accomplishment on the criteria established for that speech. Speech reflects academic research and extensive preparation. Speech is presented within the assigned time limitations. Speaker is appropriately dressed and appears credible.

B A speech approaching the qualities of an "A" speech. A good to very good speech, but not achieving a standard of excellence in any or enough areas to merit an "A". A good job of meeting most or all established criteria for that speech. Speech may lack preview statement or may have a weak introduction or conclusion. Speaker may have relied too much on notecards.

C A satisfactory speech. Reasonably clear goal, adequate support, apparent organization, but may not be entirely clear to the entire audience; some problems in wording or delivery or both; and/or some deficiencies in meeting the major criteria established for that speech. Speeches that do not include oral citations from academic sources cannot receive a grade higher than a "C".

D An unclear goal and serious deficiencies in some and perhaps all areas of content, organization, wording and delivery; and/or serious deficiencies in meeting major criteria established for that speech.

F An unacceptable speech that reveals a lack of preparation and/or poor delivery. Failure to meet major criteria established for that speech. For example, being significantly shorter/longer than the time limit or otherwise not conforming to assignment guidelines.

d. **Feedback is extremely important for learning and growth.** During each speech, I type my own feedback into a Google spreadsheet. After each speech, I transcribe peers' valuable words into the spreadsheet as well. Because students' speeches were presented publicly and every person's learning journey can inform our own, feedback is available for all to read and reflect upon. I also annotate written work quite extensively because your ideas are worth considering, and because your writing technique should be as excellent as possible by the time you graduate. Please invest in your own learning by reflecting on this rich feedback.



e. I also offer the opportunity to RE-DO

Despite the smashing success we both anticipate vis-à-vis your speeches and essays, occasionally you may feel that you didn't convey your written thoughts as articulately or deliver your speech as smoothly as you would have hoped. It happens. Learning is "messy."

I care about your learning and personal growth, and I want to support your practice and mastery. I also believe that your grades should reflect your perseverance and capacity over time, not how you happened to do some random Tuesday.

So! You may re-write any/all essays and re-deliver any/all speeches as many times as you'd like until you're satisfied with the quality of your performance. The final grade you receive for any assignment will be the average of all of your attempts.

HOW: To re-do a speech, just email me by 3 pm the day before you wish to deliver that speech in class so that I can rejigger my teaching plan. A speech re-do is just that – a second attempt to deliver the same/similar material. You do not have to start over from scratch.

To re-do an essay, just email it to me. Because I provide extensive written feedback, re-doing an essay means creating a new essay from scratch.

Accompanying either form of "re-do," I require a note or oral statement that identifies what you revised and why.

Whether you exercise this option is up to you. You have the power to get as good at public speaking as you possibly can, and to earn as high of a grade as your performance merits. I'm excited to see what you do with this power.

2. Blackboard

- a. The instructor will post readings to Blackboard, post Announcements to Blackboard, and send those Announcements as emails via Blackboard.
- b. Students will submit assignments to Blackboard via Turnitin.
- c. *Should you experience difficulties with Blackboard or any other technological aspects of the course, you may consult with the following resources:*
Annenberg Virtual Commons: <http://vc.uscannenberg.org/annenberg-it>
Annenberg IT Help Desk: ASC 234 | ascotech@usc.edu | (213) 740-3901
USC Information & Technology Services (<http://itservices.usc.edu/>)
USC Libraries (<http://www.usc.edu/libraries/>)
Lynda.com

3. Google Drive

- a. A spreadsheet on Google Drive -- <http://tinyurl.com/1230pmspeeches> -- allows students to sign up for speech days and speaker order + provides students with the aforementioned written feedback on speech content and delivery.

4. USC Dornsife Joint Educational Project

a. What is JEP?

JEP is an acronym for [Joint Educational Project](#), and this on-campus organization's mandate is to facilitate service-learning opportunities for USC students. Service-learning is an educational approach that pairs theoretical classroom work with applied community-based work in order to improve intellectual understandings and support local priorities.

b. What will you do with JEP?

You will collaborate with peers in groups of 3-5, called "mini-teams." Each mini-team will work together for two hours per week over eight weeks. During one of these hours, mini-team members will travel to and from a local K-12 classroom and teach a 50-minute lesson on public speaking. During the other hour, mini-team members will meet face-to-face to plan their weekly lesson.

Before each site visit, a mini-team representative will bring their team's lesson plan to JEP for their Program Assistant (PA) to approve.

Rather than write a weekly reflective essay of 1-3 pages that helps you to put your coursework and service in conversation, we will discuss your JEP experiences in class during COMM 204.

c. WHY AM I MAKING YOU DO THIS???

1. To give you an opportunity to practice public speaking in a real-world setting
2. To help you better learn public speaking principles by teaching them to others

d. What else will you get out of doing JEP?

- A line-item for your resume that you might frame as "leadership" or "community outreach"
- A sense of pride and satisfaction from doing good work that matters
- A richer understanding of the University Park neighborhood
- A tighter connection with your COMM 204 peers

e. How does this JEP requirement respect your time and efforts?

1. Your participation in JEP is worth 20% of your semester grade.
2. I have dedicated three class sessions towards supporting your JEP work.
3. I will observe your work on-site and provide you with sensitive feedback.

f. What have COMM 204 students said about their JEP experiences?

I think our JEP group worked really well together and the students got a lot out of our time there.

I just wanted to say that I really enjoyed this experience. It was so rewarding when a student told us yesterday that our lesson plans have really helped her. She told us that her history teacher noticed her improved public speaking skills. :)

My teammates and I really enjoyed JEP. Although we had a few complications at the first site; i.e. parking, behavior, etc., we learned a great amount from both the students and the experience.

I don't really know what else to add except for commentary on how much I enjoyed working with the kids and with my group members this semester. This was such a valuable experience for me, and I'm glad I got hands on experience and got to do some volunteer work during my last semester of college. Thanks for giving me this opportunity!

Our team worked pretty excellently together and as a good unit. I would say that we should all get full credit for our JEP work as we attended site as required and taught our kids a pretty resourceful lesson about public speaking

My team worked pretty well together and covered for each other if we were late! I enjoyed working with this team. We learned a lot from the students and the students learned from us!! We saw a lot of progress.

This was a really great experience. I think the three of us made a pretty good team.

Overall, it was an absolute pleasure working with [my teammates]. They were both great at communicating and being present on site amidst juggling other priorities... everyone contributed in their own unique way and made a difference in teaching the kids through out the experience. I truly had a fabulous time connecting with students -- they were fun, intelligent, and inspiring!

We had a great semester at Foshay! In fact, Ms. Huang said that we were the best JEP group she's ever had! The students were also phenomenal, and the last session was incredibly heartwarming as each of them explained the impact we had on their public speaking skills and approach to life/going to college in general. Great experience. :)

I think that since I initially really resented the idea of participating in JEP, I have come to my own and wholeheartedly put effort into the JEP experience, including the classroom environment, the lesson plans, and most importantly the kids. I have respected them and the classroom each time I was there, and had given them my undivided attention while on site. Our team worked together great, we let each other take the reigns at certain times when need be which was very respectable. Our team was a dream team!

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Requirements

This class requires a moderate level of technological proficiency. The instructor believes in all students' capacity to learn and grow, and values the resources that USC provides so that students may enrich their technological proficiency.

In terms of hardware/software, none is required. Students may choose to create slide presentations via proprietary software such as Microsoft Powerpoint or iWork Keynote, free shareware such as Prezi.com or Google Slides, or an analog paper flip chart (provided by USC Annenberg).

Required Readings

- *Public Speaking: The Virtual Text.* www.publicspeakingproject.org
- Weekly Readings & Videos on Blackboard

Assignment Submission Policy

- 1. Written work (e.g., essays, outlines, bibliographies, slide presentations, etc)**
 - a. In general, I never collect paper from you. Save the paper and ink, y'all.
 - b. Post to Blackboard via Turnitin by 12:29 pm on the due date
 - c. If the file is too large for Turnitin (as is sometimes the case with image-heavy or video-embedded Powerpoints), then email it to me. If the file is too large for email, please upload the file to Google Drive and share it with laurelfelt@gmail.com
 - d. *If you experience difficulties with Blackboard, then email the assignment to the instructor by 12:29 pm on the due date – NOTE: 12:29 pm is right before class.*
- 2. Analog materials (e.g., note cards) and spoken work (e.g., assigned speeches)**
 - a. Share in class on the date that you chose via in class and online sign-ups

Additional Policies

- 1. Late and unfinished assignments**
 - a. Make-up work will be allowed without penalty for excused absences only, and are due by the next class session at 12:29 pm.
 - b. For unexcused absences, there will be a full letter grade loss on the evaluation of that assignment for each day that it is late.
 - c. Students must complete all assignments in order to receive credit in the course.
- 2. Late arrival to and early departure from class**
 - a. Class meetings are precious! Don't miss class. DON'T.MISS.CLASS.
 - b. Due to extenuating circumstances, for a period of up to but not exceeding 15 minutes, you may ONCE arrive late and ONCE depart early from class without penalty. Things come up sometimes. I get it.
 - c. If you arrive late more than once, depart early more than once, or the amount of time by which you are late or leave early exceeds 15 minutes, then I will confer a participation penalty.

3. Absent from class

- a. Class meetings are precious! Don't miss class. DON'T.MISS.CLASS.
- b. Without a doctor's note, you may miss class twice without penalty. Three unexcused absences confers a participation penalty. Missing 4+ classes is very problematic and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.
- c. On "speech days," it is essential that we show up for our colleagues. By "showing up," I mean attending physically and tuning in mentally by listening, analyzing, and providing feedback. I care about my students and profoundly believe in their right to be heard and supported by the entire group. Do not skip out on your peers; if you need a mental health day, I would prefer that you bypass one of my teaching sessions instead and get the notes from a partner. Your peers matter.

4. Use of technology in the classroom

- a. In general, cell phone use is prohibited. There are a few exceptions, such as: using your timer/alarm for specific activities; photographing the white board; videotaping speeches; etc. The instructor will state aloud when cell phones are allowed. Otherwise, stash them. Turn them on silent and forget about them. Adios. Verboten.
- b. When the instructor is spouting pearls of wisdom aloud and/or scribbling gems on the white board, you may take notes via paper or electronic device. Document that genius if you feel so moved.
- c. When your peers are speaking, your laptop and/or tablet should be closed. The instructor vehemently expects students to practice respectful, active listening. Why? Because doing so helps speakers to feel safe, and safety is non-negotiable. The instructor will not tolerate anyone hurting anyone. This also helps everyone to **develop the capacity to focus, engage, connect, and collaborate**. Such skills are imperative for 21st century workplaces. If your peers' ideas demand documentation, then you may take notes via paper and/or follow up later and ask them to repeat.

5. Grading questions

- a. After receiving a grade, students must wait for 24 hours before addressing the instructor. Please use this time to think through the strength of your case.
- b. If you have determined that your grade merits further review, then submit your complaint/rationale in writing within the next week (7 days). Again, complaints or requests for reconsideration of a grade will not be considered unless they are submitted in written form and delivered after 1 day but before 8 days have elapsed.
- c. A complaint constitutes an argument, and will be evaluated by the standards of acceptable argumentation as presented in class readings and lectures.

Grading Breakdown, Description and Assessment of Assignments

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	% of GRADE	CRITERIA
Speeches: 1. Special Occasion Speech 2. ISA 3. Two Cents Talk 4. Persuasive 5. Interview 6. Elevator	500 1. 100 2. 125 3. 50 4. 100 5. 75 6. 50	50%	(see relevant guidelines for each speech)
JEP: 1. Lesson planning 2. Teaching	200	20%	1. Respect (e.g., contributing your best work to your mini-team, arriving at site punctually, communicating with your peers, students, and host teacher appropriately, etc) 2. Content (e.g., thoughtful lesson plans, insightful feedback, calling on students by name, etc) 3. Delivery (e.g., modeling speech best practices, cultivating a safe and caring classroom, etc) 4. Logistics (e.g., attending site, submitting lesson plans, participating in reflection exercises, etc)
Essays: 1. Personal goals 2. Analysis of live speech 3. Self-observation 4. JEP reflection	200 1. 50 2. 50 3. 50 4. 50	20%	(see relevant guidelines for each essay)
Participation	100	10%	1. Respectful, active listening (e.g., making eye contact, leaning forward, nodding, etc) 2. Proper use of technology (e.g., stowing cell phone, writing/typing solely to note-take) 3. Sensitive, generous sharing (e.g., offering feedback to peers, asking & answering questions, giving 100% to in-class activities, working productively with peers, etc) 4. Logistical requirements ATTENDANCE: (see policies)
<i>Extra credit</i>	<i>Up to 50</i>	<i>Up to 5%</i>	<i>TBD</i>
TOTAL	1000	100%	

	Topic	Assignments Due	Deliverable Due
Week 1 8/25	Team-building & Intro to COMM 204		
8/27	Listening	Chapter 4: <i>Listening Effectively</i> Bb: Week 1	
Week 2 9/1	Connecting with & Serving an Audience <i>GUEST: Dr. Chaz Austin</i>	Chapter 1: <i>Introduction to Public Speaking</i> Chapter 5: <i>Audience Analysis</i>	Essay #1: Personal Goals
9/3	Posture, Gestures, Facial Expressions, Pitch, Tone, Rate, Volume	Chapter 11: <i>Speaking with Confidence</i> Chapter 12: <i>Delivering Your Speech</i> Bb: Week 2	JEP: Sign up
Week 3 9/8	Organizing and Outlining	Chapter 8: <i>Organizing and Outlining</i> Bb: Week 3A	Brown: basic outline JEP: Take TB test
9/10	Introductions, Conclusions, Transitions, and Three-Point Walking	Chapter 9: <i>Introductions and Conclusions</i> Bb: Week 3B	JEP: Read TB test
Week 4 9/15	Thoughtful Word Choice & Special Occasion Speaking <i>GUEST: Anna Christopher</i>	Chapter 10: <i>Using Language Well</i> Chapter 17: <i>Special Occasion Speaking</i> Bb: Week 4A	
9/17	On-site Safety & Feedback <i>GUEST: Jaime Carias</i>	Chapter 3: <i>Ethics in Public Speaking</i> Bb: Week 4B	First draft SOS speaking (basic) outline
Week 5 9/22	NO CLASS: Attend a live speech & observe your JEP classroom	Bb: Week 5A	SOS preparation (full sentence) outline Attend a live speech JEP: Site observations
9/24	JEP Lesson Planning <i>GUEST: Uma Murphy (JEP Program Assistant)</i>	Bb: Week 5B	JEP: Spider map JEP: 8-week plan
Week 6 9/29	SPEECH: SOS		SOS notecards JEP: Plan 1 st week
10/1	SPEECH: SOS		JEP: Plan 1 st week
Week 7 10/6	Visual Aids <i>GUEST: Chimene Tucker</i>	Chapter 13: <i>Visual Aids</i> Chapter 15: <i>Informative Speaking</i>	Bring an old Powerpoint Essay #2: Analysis of live speech JEP: 1 st teaching session
10/8	Informative Speaking	Chapter 6: <i>Critical Thinking...</i> Chapter 7: <i>Supporting Your Ideas</i> Bb: Week 7	Bring first draft ISA outline, thesis JEP: 1 st teaching session
Week 8 10/13	SPEECH: ISA		JEP: 2 nd teaching session
10/15	SPEECH: ISA		JEP: 2 nd teaching session
Week 9 10/20	SPEECH: ISA		JEP: 3 rd teaching session
10/22	SPEECH: ISA		Final ISA outline to Bb JEP: 3 rd teaching session
Week 10 10/27	SPEECH: 2 € Talks	Bb: Week 10	JEP: 4 th teaching session
10/29	JEP Reflection, Skill Drills		JEP: 4 th teaching session

Week 11 11/3	Persuasive Speaking	Chapter 16: <i>Persuasive Speaking</i> Bb: Week 11	JEP: 5 th teaching session
11/5	SPEECH: Persuasive Meet in ASC G34		Persuasive speech outline JEP: 5 th teaching session
Week 12 11/10	SPEECH: Persuasive Meet in ASC G34		JEP: 6 th teaching session
11/12	Demo @ Studio A <i>Sign-up on GoogleSheet for Session I (12:30-1:10) or Session II (1:10-1:50 pm)</i>		JEP: 6 th teaching session
Week 13 11/17	Best Practices for Interviewers and Interviewees	Bb: Week 13	Interview concept First draft of Q's and A's JEP: 7 th teaching session
11/19	Record @ Studio A <i>Sign up on GoogleSheet for 10-minute timeslot with your partner</i> SPEECH: Interview		JEP: 7 th teaching session
Week 14 11/24	Elevator Speeches & Networking Convos	Bb: Week 14	
11/26	NO CLASS: Thanksgiving		
Week 15 12/1	SPEECH: Elevator		
12/3	Reflections on COMM 204, feedback, farewell		Essay #3: Self-observation
FINAL Tuesday, 12/15, 11am-1pm	OPTIONAL: Final re-do session		Essay #4: JEP reflection

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to adjust this schedule throughout the semester.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. NOTE: USC Dornsife Writing Center, <http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>, Taper Hall of the Humanities Room 216, is an excellent resource.

Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. NOTE: Please inform the instructor as soon as possible if English is not your primary language and you believe you may require special accommodations.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. NOTE: Any student requesting academic accommodation based on a disability is required to register with The Office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your instructor (or TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.