COMM 204 Public Speaking
Spring 2018 Syllabus
TTh 9:30-10:50 am, ANN408

Instructor: Lik Sam Chan (Sam)      Office: ASCJ G6 (PhD Office)
Email: liksamch@usc.edu      Office Hours: Tue: 3:30-4:30 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This workshop 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 by speaking every week. 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 will practice presentational speaking for different contexts, including academia, business, social, and mediated 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
• Other readings will 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. We are learning to be both an excellent speaker and an excellent listener.
• **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 (liksamch@usc.edu) your assignment **before** the deadline.
• **Written Assignment Deadlines (Self-Performance Critique):** Late assignments will receive a deduction of 25% of the points if submitted within 24 hours of the deadline, a deduction of 50% if submitted within 48 hours of the deadline, and so on (25% deducted per 24-hour period). For example, a self-performance critique earning 4 points will be assigned a final score of 3 points if submitted within 24 hours of the deadline. 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.

• **Written Assignment Deadlines (Midterm and Final Exams):** No make-up exams will be given unless the student submits a petition request form with supporting documents for an alternate date, stating the unavoidable circumstances leading to an expected absence from the exam in question, and secures approval from me for the make-up exams.

• **Assigned Speaking Days:** Not speaking on your assigned day without documented evidence of an emergency (i.e., an excused absence like illness or hospitalization) will result in a deduction of 10% from the grade on the relevant speech. For example, a speech earning 15 points will be assigned a final score of 13.5 points (i.e. 15 – 1.5 = 13.5).

• **In-Class Activities:** We put theory into practice through the in-class activities. I cannot re-create the class experiences for those who missed them. Therefore, I expect everyone to participate in the activities. For rare occasions such as illness or hospitalization, you can obtain the missed points by doing extra impromptu speeches (each speech worth two points).

• **Email:** I will make every effort to respond to your emails within 24 hours of them reaching my inbox, but I usually don’t answer email on weekends. If 24 hours has passed and I haven’t responded, please feel free to follow up to ensure I received your message. Please mark the subject line of your email “[COMM 204]” so that I can notice your emails from hundreds of work-related emails I receive every day. When writing your email, please be formal. Begin your emails with “Hi/ Dear Sam/Mr. Chan/Dr. Chan/Professor Chan” and end them with your name. If you have a longer question that would be best addressed in a conversation, please make an appointment with me.

• **Technology:** You may use computers and other devices during lectures (Tuesdays). But scientific study has shown that “using laptops in class harms academic performance” (read https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/using-laptops-in-class-harms-academic-performance-study-warns). It is your responsibility to ensure you are engaged in classroom discussion. Participation is part of your grade, and use of technology not related to class activities will affect your grade. No computers allowed/needed on activity days (Thursdays).

• **Video Recording:** As part of the written assignments, you will analyze your own speech performance. Therefore, prepare a video recording device on the speaking days.

**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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. 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.

• **Support Systems:**
  - **Student Counseling Services (SCS)** – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
    Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.
    engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
  - **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** – 1 (800) 273-8255
    Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Speech Assignments

- **Speech 1, Introduction Speech:** This is a three-minute speech about yourself to help us get to know each other.

- **Speech 2, Informative Speech:** This speech should take three to five 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 refine your research skills and provide credible evidence for your claims. Along with your in-class presentation, you will need to submit on Blackboard ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)) your speech outline/script and references.

- **Speech 3, Persuasive Speech:** This speech should take three to five 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 ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)) your speech outline/script and references.

- **Speech 4, Special Occasion Speech:** This is a three-minute speech modeled after a speech you may be asked to give in real life. This can 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! Along with your in-class presentation, turn in on Blackboard ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)) your speech outline/script and references.
• **Speech 5, Sensory Aid Speech:** This speech should take three to five 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 ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)) your speech outline/script and references.

**Written Assignments**

• **Self-Performance Critique:** After each of the Speech 2, 3, and 5, you will write a two-page (double-spaced) reflection paper about your own performance. This will result in a total of three reflections. You should reflect on your strengths and opportunities for improvement next time. Work to incorporate concepts learned in class. Turn in on Blackboard ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)). Further details will be provided.

• **Midterm Exam:** This in-class exam will consist of multiple choices and essays that measure your understanding of course materials up to the first half of the semester. Turn in on Blackboard ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)) in-class. Further details will be provided.

• **Final Exam:** This take-home final exam will consist of essays and video-taped performances that measure your understanding of course materials covered in the entire semester. The take-home exam is due during the final exam week set by the university. Turn in on Blackboard ([http://blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)). Further details will be provided.

**Class Activities**

• **Weekly Lecture Participation:** Your participation in the weekly lecture is important to your success in this class. Emergencies accompanied by documentation will be considered excused absences.

• **Impromptu Speech Exercises:** Two times during the semester we will be doing impromptu speeches. Topics will be selected at random. Speeches should be one minute long after one minute of preparation.

• **Campus Tour:** You and your team will lead a 15 to 20 minutes campus tour for your classmates.

• **Persuasive Speeches Preparation:** You will give your persuasive speech twice! The first time will be a trial and the second time will be graded.

• **Argument Crafting Workshop:** You will workshop with your team members on your persuasive speech. Bring in hard-copies of your speech script to your team members.

• **Troupes and Schemes:** You will give a one-minute presentation on a troupe/scheme to the class.

• **Body Language Training:** You will have a chance to direct your team members’ body languages (based on either your informative speech or persuasive speech).

• **Speaking to the Camera:** Very often we speak to the public through media. It is not unusual to feel uncomfortable to speak in front of a camera. You will be interviewed by your team members, in front of their camera.

• **Business Party Exercise:** In this caffeinated session, you will engage in a speed-dating style business conversation with class members. Topics will be decided by the class as a whole.
## GRADING BREAKDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speeches (48%)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction Speech</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thu., 1/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative Speech</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Thu., 2/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Materials to Blackboard, 12 noon)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuasive Speech</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Thu., 3/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Materials to Blackboard, 12 noon)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Occasion Speech</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Thu., 3/29</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Materials to Blackboard, 12 noon)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory Aid Speech</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Thu., 4/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Materials to Blackboard, 12 noon)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Written Assignments (25%)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Performance Critique</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tue., 2/6; Tue., 3/20; Tue., 4/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>(12 noon)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm In-Class Exam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tue., 2/27, in-class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Take-Home Exam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tue., 5/8, 8-10am</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>In-Class Activities (27%)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Lecture Participation</td>
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<td>Ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impromptu Speech Exercises (2 total)</td>
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<td>Thu., 1/18; Tue., 4/24</td>
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<td>Campus Tour</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thu., 2/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuasive Speeches Preparation</td>
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<td>Thu., 2/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argument Crafting Workshop</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thu., 2/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Troupes and Schemes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thu., 3/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body Language Training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thu., 3/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking to the Camera</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thu., 4/5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Party Exercise</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thu., 4/26</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points: 100</strong></td>
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## COURSE SCHEDULE

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

**Week 1: Introduction to the Course**

- **Tue., 1/9**  
  Course Overview  
  Assignment: Introduction Speeches

- **Thu., 1/11**  
  **Introduction Speeches**  
  Reading: Ch. 1 PSVT

**Week 2: Research Portfolios and Audience Analysis**

- **Tue., 1/16**  
  Speaking Competences and Audience Analysis  
  Reading: Ch. 5 PSVT

- **Thu., 1/18**  
  Organizing and Outlining Speeches  
  Impromptu Speech Exercise I  
  Reading: Ch. 8 PSVT
**Week 3: Informative Speaking**

Tue., 1/23  Introduction to Informative Speeches  
*Reading: Ch. 15 PSVT*  
*Assignment: Informative Speeches*

Thu., 1/25  No Class  
*Reading: Ch. 7 PSVT*

**Week 4: Informative Speeches**

Tue., 1/30  No Class  
*Reading: Ch. 9 PSVT*

Thu., 2/1  **Informative Speeches**  
*Assignment: Campus Tour Plan*

**Week 5: Informative Speeches**

Tue., 2/6  Voice Control  
*Reading: Ch. 12 (up to 12-7) PSVT*  
*Deadline: Self-Performance Critique (Informative Speeches)*

Thu., 2/8  Campus Tour

**Week 6: Persuasive Speaking**

Tue., 2/13  Introduction to Persuasive Speeches  
*Reading: Ch. 16 PSVT*  
*Assignment: Persuasive Speech Preparation*

Thu., 2/15  Persuasive Speech Preparation

**Week 7: Persuasive Speaking**

Tue., 2/20  Logics and Reasoning  
*Reading: Ch. 6 PSVT*  
*Assignment: Persuasive Speaking Script (1 to 2 pages)*

Thu., 2/22  Argument Crafting Workshop

**Week 8: Persuasive Speeches**

Tue., 2/17  Midterm Exam (in-class)  
*Assignment: Troupes and Schemes*

Thu., 3/1  **Troupes and Schemes**  
*Reading: On Blackboard*  
*Assignment: Persuasive Speeches*

**Week 9: Persuasive Speeches**

Tue., 3/6  Ethics and Use of Language  
*Reading: Ch. 3 PSVT*

Thu., 3/8  **Persuasive Speeches**

**Spring Break 3/11 - 3/18**
Week 10: Special Occasion Speeches

Tue., 3/20 Using Body Languages
Reading: Ch. 12 (from 12-8) PSVT
Deadline: Self-Performance Critique (Persuasive Speeches)
Assignment: Speech Script with Body Language Direction

Thu., 3/22 Body Language Training

Week 11: Special Occasion Speeches

Tue., 3/27 Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches
Reading: Ch. 17 PSVT
Assignment: Special Occasion Speeches

Thu., 3/29 Special Occasion Speeches

Week 12: Sensory Aid Speeches

Tue., 4/3 Speaking with Confidence
Reading: Ch. 11 PSVT
Assignment: Speaking to the Camera

Thu., 4/5 Speaking to the Camera
Reading: On Blackboard
Assignment: Sensory Aid Speeches

Week 13: Sensory Aid Speeches

Tue., 4/10 No Class
Reading: Ch. 10 PSVT

Thu., 4/12 No Class
Reading: Ch. 14 PSVT

Week 14: Sensory Aid Speeches

Tue., 4/17 Introduction to Sensory Aid Speeches
Reading: On Blackboard

Thu., 4/19 Sensory Aid Speeches

Week 15: From Speaking to Listening

Tue., 4/24 Effective Listening
Impromptu Speech Exercise II
Deadline: Self-Performance Critique (Sensory Aid Speeches)
Reading: Ch. 4 PSVT
Assignment: Business Party Exercise

Thu., 4/26 Business Party Exercise

Final Exam due: 8-10 am, 5/8

* Your taking this course will be regarded as confirmation that you have studied and understood this syllabus, as well as agree to all requirements stated.