

# COMM 204 Public Speaking

## Fall 2018 Syllabus

### MW 10 – 11:50 am, ANN 209

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Office Hours: 1 – 2 pm Mon.

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#### 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.

#### 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

#### 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

#### POLICIES

- **Respect:** While some people enjoy speaking in front of a group, many feel anxiety about it. Some nervousness before speaking is typical, but everyone in our class should feel confident that they will be treated with respect when they present. This starts with being respectful of your classmates during class discussions and other interactions.
- **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://annenbergl.usc.edu/CurrentStudents/GStudentsvcs/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 written assignments will be submitted through Blackboard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>) via Turnitin. If you experience technical issues trying to upload through Turnitin, email your assignment to [tgillig@usc.edu](mailto:tgillig@usc.edu) before the deadline to avoid losing points for late submission.
- **Assignment Deadlines:** Late assignments will receive a deduction of 5 points if submitted within 24 hours of the deadline, a deduction of 10 points if submitted within 48 hours of the deadline, and so on (i.e., 5 points deducted per 24-hour period). If you have an emergency, please email me before the deadline and provide relevant documentation.
- **Assigned Speaking Days:** Not speaking on your assigned day without documented evidence of an emergency (i.e., an excused absence like a hospitalization) will result in a deduction of one full letter grade (i.e., -10%) from your final grade on the speech. For example, a speech earning a 90% will be assigned a final score of 80%.
- **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 any 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.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- **Speech 1, Introduction Speech:** This brief speech about yourself (2-3 minutes) will 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 3-4 sources in your outline and state/reference these sources during your presentation. This speech will help you hone your research skills and provide credible evidence for your claims. Along with your in-class presentation, you will need to submit through Turnitin your speech outline and reference page.
- **Speech 3, Persuasive Speech:** This speech should take five to seven minutes and requires you to craft your own arguments and refute potential counterarguments to persuade your audience. This may involve asking audience members to consider new perspectives, take a certain action, or change a behavior. This speech requires external research, and you must state/reference 3-4 sources during your presentation. Along with your in-class presentation, you must submit through Turnitin your speech outline and reference page.
- **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 state/reference 3-4 sources during your presentation. Submit your speech outline and reference page through Turnitin.

- **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 discussed in class and in the readings.
- **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 last 1-2 minutes. You'll be given 1-2 minutes to prep after selecting your topic.
- **TED Talk Critique:** As part of our discussion of informative speeches, you will provide a two-page paper about a TED Talk of your choice (selection is available at <https://www.ted.com/talks>). This paper should provide a summary, critique of, and reflection on the talk you watched.
- **Debate Critique:** There are opportunities on campus and online to watch debates on topics you find interesting and important. You may decide to critique a political debate (e.g., Presidential election footage or students running for an elected position), a debate occurring on a talk show or in the news (e.g., sportscasters arguing about a game or team), or any other situation where two individuals are arguing in favor of different stances and are able to directly address each other's comments. This summary, critique, and reflection (three to four pages, double-spaced, before references) will give you the opportunity to watch a debate and compare 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 for 5-7 minutes to a panel of "shark" investors 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.).
- **Extra Credit:** Opportunities may be available during the semester for you to participate in research studies for extra credit. When these become available, I will share the information over email or in class. To earn five extra credit points, you can participate in a study and send me a half-page written reflection about your experience. You can participate in up to two studies for a maximum of 10 extra points total.

## 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

## POINTS AND DUE DATES

Assignment	Total Points	Due Dates
<b>Speeches</b>		
Introduction Speech	40	Mon., 8/27
Informative Speech	140	Wed. 9/12 – Wed. 9/19
Persuasive Speech	140	Wed. 10/10 – Wed. 10/17
Sensory Aid Speech	180	Wed. 11/6 – Wed. 11/13
Special Occasion Speech	100	Mon., 11/26
<b>Written Assignments</b>		
Speech Reflection Papers (4 total)	100	Wed., 8/29; Mon. 9/24; Mon., 10/22; Wed., 11/14
TED Talk Critique	30	Wed., 9/5
Debate Critique	60	Mon., 11/5
Final Reflection Paper	100	Wed., 12/5
<b>In-Class Activities</b>		
Goals Exercise (In-Class)	10	Mon., 8/20
Shark Tank	40	Mon., 10/8
Participation and Attendance	60	Ongoing
<b>Total Points: 1000</b>		

## SCHEDULE

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

### Week 1: Course Introduction and Speech Competencies

Mon., 8/20	Course Overview <u>Assign:</u> Introduction Speech
Wed., 8/22	Public Speaking Competencies <u>Reading:</u> Ch. 1 and 4 PSVT

### Week 2: Research Portfolios and Audience Analysis

Mon., 8/27	Introduction Speeches, Developing a Research Portfolio for Speeches <u>Reading:</u> Ch. 5 PSVT <u>Assign:</u> TED Talk Critique
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Wed., 8/29 Audience Analysis  
Assign: Informative Speech for 9/13-9/20  
Due: Introduction Speech Reflection

### **Week 3: Informative Speaking**

Mon., 9/3 NO CLASS (Labor Day)  
Due: Informative Speech Topic

Wed., 9/5 Introduction to Informative Speaking  
Reading: Ch. 8 and 15 PSVT  
Due: TED Talk Critique

### **Week 4: Informative Speaking Continued**

Mon., 9/10 Informative Speaking

Wed., 9/12 Informative Speeches Group 1

### **Week 5: Informative Speaking Continued**

Mon., 9/17 Informative Speeches Group 2

Wed., 9/19 Informative Speeches Group 3

### **Week 6: Persuasive Speaking**

Mon., 9/24 Guest Lecture  
Reading: Ch. 16, 18 PSVT  
Due: Informative Speech Reflection Paper

Wed., 9/26 Introduction to Persuasive Speaking  
Assign: Persuasive Speech

### **Week 7: Persuasive Speaking Continued**

Mon., 10/1 Introduction to Group Speaking, Meet with Groups for Shark Tank  
Assign: Shark Tank  
Due: Persuasive Speech Topic

Wed., 10/3 Group Work for Shark Tank

### **Week 8: Persuasive Speaking Continued**

Mon., 10/8 Shark Tank

Wed., 10/10 Persuasive Speech Group 1

### **Week 9: Persuasive Speaking Continued**

Mon., 10/15 Persuasive Speech Group 2

Wed., 10/17 Persuasive Speech Group 3

### **Week 10: Sensory Aids**

Mon., 10/22 Introduction to Sensory Aids in Public Speaking

Reading: Ch. 13 PSVT

Assign: Sensory Aid Speech

Due: Persuasive Speech Reflection Paper

Wed., 10/24 Visual Arguments, Visualizing Data

Due: Sensory Aid Speech Topic

### **Week 11: Sensory Aids Continued**

Mon., 10/29 Principles of Debate

Assign: Debate Critique

Wed., 10/31 Improv Workshop

### **Week 12: Sensory Aids Continued**

Mon., 11/5 Sensory Aid Speeches Group 1

Due: Debate Critique

Wed., 11/7 Sensory Aid Speeches Group 2

### **Week 13: Sensory Aids and Special Occasion Speaking**

Mon., 11/12 Sensory Aid Speeches Group 3

Wed., 11/14 Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches

Reading: Ch. 17 PSVT

Due: Sensory Aid Speech Reflection Paper

Assign: Special Occasion Speech and Final Reflection Paper

### **Week 14: Special Occasion Speaking Continued**

Mon., 11/19 Humor in Speeches

Wed., 11/21 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

### **Week 15: Special Occasion Speaking Continued**

Mon., 11/26 Special Occasion Speeches

Wed., 11/28 In-Class Activities