

COMM 204: Public Speaking

4 units

Spring 2019: Section 20375

Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-4:50 pm

Location: ANN 405

Instructor: Professor Christiana Robbins

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-3:00 pm

Office: TBA

Contact Info: clrobbin@usc.edu

Course Description: Principles and practices of effective oral communication; analysis of the speaking-listening process; selection and organization of speech materials; use of new presentation technologies.

COMM 322: Public Speaking improves students' ability to effectively communicate with others by enabling students to speak confidently to a variety of audiences. This course introduces students to many categories of public address and develops foundational principles such as: the rational development of logical arguments; the proper use of evidence to support claims; the awareness of and accounting for audience; and the careful use of a variety of methods when persuading others.

The course also works to tackle barriers to high quality public speaking by providing students with a variety of speech tools: it enables students become more comfortable speaking in front of others, in part by managing the anxiety that often accompanies public speaking; it helps students self-assess and improve their speech content and delivery; it prevents missteps by teaching students the proper speech format for a range of scenarios; and it shows students how to improvise under pressure in order to quickly produce a coherent impromptu speech.

Learning Objectives:

- Use critical thinking to identify and assess a speech act's underlying logic.
- Honestly and accurately critique your own speech.
- Identify the ways that fear impacts speech quality; utilize tools to manage or remove that fear.
- Improve the overall quality of a presentation through incorporation of various types of media.
- Write speeches that are tailored to a variety of audience types, including a global audience.
- Learn the differences between speeches designed to celebrate, to educate, and to persuade.
- Articulate your thoughts eloquently and accurately to an audience through speech.

Class Readings:

The Public Speaking Project (n.d.) *Public Speaking: The Virtual Text*. Retrieved from <http://publicspeakingproject.org/psvirtualtext.html>

Miscellaneous readings provided under the “content” folder in Blackboard.

Class Assignments:

A thorough description of each speech, including an overview of specific rules and requirements, will be provided prior to the due date.

1. Introduction speech: Brief speech about your interests and personal background; it functions as a tool that increases your familiarity with the public speaking experience and to help others in the class get to know you; it should be approximately 90 seconds.
2. Audience-tailored speech: In-class group activity that develops a speech taking into account the wants and needs of a unique audience; each group will be assigned a different audience type; it should be approximately four minutes.
3. Visual-narrative speech: Speech that uses a visual aid to tell a story; it should be approximately six minutes.
4. Impromptu speech: In-class activity where students are assigned various topics and then given a limited amount of time to prepare a coherent speech; it should be approximately two minutes.
5. Teaching speech: Speech that teaches the audience about something or how to do something; the grade for this speech is based in part on how much the audience has learned by the end of a speech; it should be approximately five minutes.
6. Persuasive speech: Speech that uses a wide variety of techniques that the course has taught to attempt to persuade the audience of a particular belief or value; it should be approximately eight minutes.
7. Special occasion speech: Also known as an epideictic speech, this speech is tailored to the event and emphasizes values shared by the audience; student will write a wedding toast, an award-acceptance speech, or a (highly abbreviated) graduation commencement address; it should be approximately three minutes.
8. Reflection paper: Three- to four-page paper (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point font, Times New Roman) that analyzes your own speech delivery style, including body language, eye contact, and paralinguistic cues.
9. In-class activities and take-home assignments: Shorter assignments designed to help students better comprehend the material; in-class activities are due at the end of class on the day they are assigned; these activities and assignments will be graded more leniently.

Assignment Submission Policy:

- A. All speeches must be given on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, and barring a legitimate written excuse for unexpected absences,

late speeches will lose 20% of their grade with each day that passes. If a student is unable to deliver his or her speech in class on the date specified, the instructor decides whether the speech can be made up at a later date. If the instructor deems that there is no time in the schedule to add the speech, or if any other circumstance makes rescheduling impossible, the speech is considered unsubmitted by the student and does not receive any points. **WHETHER THE STUDENT HAS AN EXCUSED OR UNEXCUSED ABSENCE, IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR IN ORDER TO SCHEDULE A MAKE-UP SPEECH.** If a student has an excused absence, he or she has one week to contact the instructor and reschedule the speech. If the student does not contact the instructor within one week of absence, the student gets no credit for the speech and fails the assignment.

B. Speeches are delivered in class, but take-home assignments and the reflection paper are submitted on Blackboard. Sometimes the student may be required to submit on Blackboard and bring a hardcopy to class. If for some reason Blackboard is malfunctioning and you cannot submit, you should email me the assignment (clrobbin@usc.edu) or share the assignment with me on Google drive (share with email: clouiserobbins@gmail.com). Blackboard's failures are not an excuse for non-submission.

Breakdown of Grade:

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Introductory speech	50	5
Audience-tailored speech	100	10
Visual-narrative speech	150	15
Impromptu speech	100	10
Teaching speech	150	15
Persuasive speech	200	20
Special-occasion speech	100	10
Reflection paper	50	5
In-class activities & take-home assignments	100	10
TOTAL	1000	100%

Course Grading Policy:

You will receive details about each assignment separately.

In order to pass this class you will need to complete ALL of the speeches. Failure to complete one or more of the speeches will result in an F in the class. If, for some reason, you are unable to complete a speech on the date it is due and also unable to make up the speech at a later date, through no fault of your own and with a legitimate excuse provided that the professor has

declared valid, the points for that speech assignment will be removed from the total number of points available for the course, and will thus have no impact on your course grade, positive or negative. If a small number (exact amount determined at the discretion of the instructor) of in-class or take-home assignments are not completed, you can pass the class, but not completing ANY of the in-class or take-home assignments will result in failure of the course.

If you are unable to deliver a speech or turn in an assignment due to illness or a personal emergency, you must provide written documentation that will allow you to be excused, or discuss your situation with the professor in a timely manner. Do not wait until the end of the semester to sort things out.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A/A- outstanding, thoughtful and enthusiastic work
B+/B above average work, demonstrating good insight into assignment
B-/C+ needs improvement on ideas, argument and follow through
C and below fulfilling the bare minimum and showing little understanding of the material

A	= 100-94	C	= 76-74
A-	= 94-90	C-	= 73-70
B+	= 89-87	D+	= 69-67
B	= 86-84	D	= 66-64
B-	= 83-80	D-	= 63-60
C+	= 79-77	F	= 59-0

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must appeal it **in writing**, stating the specific reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate, within two weeks of receiving the graded assignment. No late appeals will be accepted for review.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/7/19 – 4/26/19)

Friday, January 25: Last day to register and add classes for Session 00S1

Friday, January 25: Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Tuesday, January 29: last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, February 22: Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the week three equivalent for short sessions) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, April 5: Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change based on the progress of the class and current events.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Complete all assigned readings before class time. The initials, PSP, indicate that the assigned reading is from the course textbook, *The Public Speaking Project*. Any time you see a

title in quotations, there is a corresponding article available on Blackboard in the folder, “Content” and within the subfolder with the specific week number. “Activity” previews what we will be doing in class that day; in-class assignments will be graded. The word “assignment” indicates that the item listed is due at the beginning of class on that date.

Week 1: Introductions

—Syllabus review, course introduction, & overview of public speaking—

M 1/7 *Activity:* Student surveys; Meet-and-greet activity

W 1/9 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 1: Introduction to Public Speaking
Activity: “Speeches warm-up” worksheet

Week 2: Ethics in Public Speaking

—A speaker’s ethical concerns and considerations—

M 1/14 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 3: Ethics in Public Speaking
Activity: Overview of introductory speech; Speech prep

W 1/16 *Activity:* Introductory speech

Week 3: The History of Public Speaking

—What public speaking of the past has to tell us about the present—

M 1/21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day: NO CLASS

W 1/23 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 2: Origins of Public Speaking
Activity: “Philosophers in debate” worksheet

Week 4: Thinking Things Through

—Critical thinking 101 & how to identify bad arguments—

M 1/28 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 6: Critical Thinking & Reasoning from page 6 - 1 to 6 - 9;
“Deductive and Inductive Arguments” (on Blackboard)
Activity: “(Critical) thinking about critical thinking” worksheet

W 1/30 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 6: Critical Thinking & Reasoning, page 6 - 10 to 6 - 17;
Review of the site, www.yourlogicalfallacyis.com
Activity: Identifying logical fallacies in online arguments

Week 5: Articulating What You Know

—Evidence justifies audience belief in the things you think of as self-evident—

M 2/4 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 7: Supporting Your Ideas

W 2/6 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 5: Audience analysis

Activity: “Matching evidence to audience” worksheet

Week 6: Analyzing Your Audience

—Audience awareness communicates respect—

M 2/11 *Reading:* Skim PSP Chapter 14: Speaking to a Global Audience
Activity: “Audience analysis” worksheet

W 2/13 *Activity:* Audience-tailored speech

Week 7: Organizing What You Know

—Making your speech make more sense: When to say what you say—

M 2/18 President’s Day: No class

W 2/20 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 8: Organizing & Outlining
Activity: Outlining visual-narrative speech

Week 8: Beginnings & Endings

—How to be memorable in the right ways—

M 2/25 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 9: Introductions & Conclusions
Activity: “In the beginning...” worksheet
Assignment: Submit outline for visual-narrative speech

W 2/27 *Activity:* Draft visual-narrative speech intro & conclusion

Week 9: Incorporating Visual Tools

—The visual is impactful—

M 3/4 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 13: Visual Aids
Assignment: Submit visual-narrative speech introduction & conclusion

W 3/6 *Activity:* Visual-narrative speech

Week 10: Spring Break

NO CLASS

Week 11: Presenting Your Best Self, pt. 1

—You’re terrified, but it doesn’t have to show—

M 3/18 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 11: Speaking with Confidence
Activity: Mapping insecurities
Assignment: Prior speech video recording

W 3/20 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 12: Delivering your Speech

Week 12: Presenting Your Best Self, pt. 2

—A speech is worthless when poor delivery obscures high-quality content—

M 3/25 *Activity:* Improving body language, eye contact, vocal pitch and intonation
Assignment: Reflection paper

W 3/27 *Activity:* Impromptu speech

Week 13: Educating Others

—Tools to help you help others understand—

M 4/1 *Activity:* “Informative speech outline” worksheet
Reading: PSP Chapter 15: Informative Speaking

W 4/3 *Activity:* Teaching speech

Week 14: Persuading Others, pt. 1

—How to change audience beliefs—

M 4/8 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 10: Using Language Well
Activity: Crafting the speech outline

W 4/10 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 16: Persuasive Speaking
Activity: Critique of argument logic

Week 15: Persuading Others, pt. 2

—How to change audience beliefs—

M 4/15 *Activity:* Persuasive speeches

W 4/17 *Activity:* Persuasive speeches

Week 16: Speaking at Special Events

—Recognizing and adapting to the unique characteristics of epideictic speech—

M 4/22 *Reading:* PSP Chapter 17: Special Occasion Speaking
Activity: Student evaluations

W 4/24 *Activity:* Special event speech prep

Week 17: Dead Week

NO CLASS

Week 18: Final Exam

F 5/3 *Final exam:* Takes place on Friday, May 3, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm in our regular classroom. For the final exam, each student will present their special occasion speech to the class.

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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.