



COMM 204: Public Speaking

4.0 Units Spring 2020

Mondays/ Wednesdays 3:30 pm- 4:50 pm

Section: 20375

Location: ANN 211 (The new Annenberg building)

Instructor: Aveva Yusi Xu

Office: ASC G6 (Ph.D. Suite)

Office Hours: Mondays/ Wednesdays 2:00- 3:00 pm, & by appointment

Contact Info: yusixu@usc.edu

I. Course Description

Welcome to Comm 204 Public Speaking! The course is designed for students who would not only perceive public speaking as an approach to deliver a message, but also intend to make a long-lasting impact and leave a powerful impression with speeches. In this course, we will explore a core set of theories, skills and practices essential to speak effectively in various contexts. This course balances theory and practice: on the theory part, we will examine the dialectical relationship between speakers and listeners, study the speech communication process and how to best utilize theories to assist verbal and non-verbal communication; on the application side, we will learn how to gather, select and organize materials, and supplement speeches with multimedia tools. Our goal of this course is to equip you with confidence and skills to give clear and compelling speeches in personal, public and professional settings.

Our learning objectives include:

- Understand the benefits and principles of strong public speaking;
- Apply relevant knowledge in speech research, preparation and delivery process;
- Cultivate critical thinking skills and become an active and respectful listener;
- Demonstrate capability in analytical reasoning, verbal, non-verbal and research skills;
- Become a confident, effective and ethical speaker in various contexts;
- Develop competence in speaking and listening in a cross-cultural setting.

Prerequisite: None.

Recommended Preparation: This course aims to create a safe and respectful space for us to hone our public speaking skills, thus it involves a lot of practice, participation and interaction.

Please be prepared to speak, as well as actively listen and provide feedback for your peers in class!

Required Text

Public Speaking: The Virtual Text (n.d.), available in PDF form and online at <http://publicspeakingproject.org/psvirtualtext.html>.

Other readings or recordings may be assigned during the semester and will be made available via Blackboard.

Course Policies

Attendance and participation

Due to the unique interactive nature of the course, active participation and regular attendance is expected. Productive and constructive participation will enhance the interaction and your learning experience, so please be prepared to engage and contribute. Furthermore, being a respectful and attentive listener benefits you as well as your fellow classmates. A major part of what you will learn in this class is how to be an engaged audience member – how to listen to and understand the language strategies involved in good public speaking. As an attentive audience, you are showing rapport to your peers, while fostering critical thinking abilities. Participation points will be awarded or deducted at my discretion toward the end of the semester.

A significant amount of class materials will be outside of the textbook, therefore missing class will impact not only your attendance score, but how well you will do in exams. You are allowed **two unexcused absences** without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence would be penalized with the reduction of one third of a letter grade (e.g. B+ to B, etc.). Absences due to sickness, religious observance, personal emergencies or university-sanctioned activities may be excused, and it would be the students' responsibilities to provide written evidence with verifiable source 48 hours in advance.

Punctuality

Though I completely understand occasional personal priorities shift, please try not to disturb your peers and the class. Please be considerate and try to avoid repeatedly arriving late or leaving early. If you have to miss more than 15 minutes of the class, especially on a speech day, consider asking for an excused leave in advance.

In-class activities and impromptu speaking

There will be a number of in-class activities (e.g. in-class debate, video analysis, etc.) and opportunities to speak in circumstances when you are less prepared. In-class activities are usually based in small groups (3-4 people), and everyone is expected to contribute. Impromptu speaking is prompted for an individual to speak for 2-3 minutes on a controversial topic. While prepared

speeches are graded based on content and delivery, impromptu speaking in front of the class are voluntary and will be awarded with 2 extra participation points each time.

Contact the professor

Email: Email is the preferable way to contact with me outside of the classroom. Please use the course code [COMM 204] in your subject line when drafting an email to me. In principle, I aim to respond to emails within 48 hours on weekdays. If I haven't got back to you within that time frame, please feel free to send me a reminder.

Office Hour: Please email me at least **24 hours** before to reserve a 15-minute office hour slot to confirm the availability. If I cannot physically be there in person during office hours, I will make every effort to be available through virtual meetings.

II. Overview of Assignments and Exams

Speeches

The course consists of one informal introductory speech and four formal speeches: an informative speech, a pre-assigned persuasive speech, a sensory aid speech, and a ceremonial speech.

Introduction speech---- 60-90 seconds.

As an informal speech, you are asked to pair up and introduce your class partner to the class. This serves two purposes: a. ice-breaking- to know your classmates better and to foster a comfortable and relaxed environment for further public speaking exercises; and b. incorporating basic strategies for public speaking, e.g. audience adaptation, embrace nervousness.

Informative speech---- 5-7 minutes.

Modelling TED talks, you will be giving a speech informing us about a topic of your choice. You are also welcomed to choose a topic from a crowd sourced topic pool, which will be made available later in the semester. The purpose of this speech is to sharpen research skills and provide credible evidence for your claims.

Persuasive speech---- 5-7 minutes.

This speech invites and persuades your audiences to perform an action or to shift potential thoughts and feelings. It requires a thoughtful argument with well-grounded research evidence, and refutes potential counterarguments. You will be able to show your understanding of basic persuasion techniques and further demonstrate your research capabilities.

Sensory aid speech---- 5-7 minutes.

You will demonstrate originality, creativity, and mastery incorporation of class concepts in this speech, aided with multimedia tools. You are encouraged to select an academic topic relevant to your current courses or your personal research interests. The key of this training is to use sensory aid tools to supplement your speech in a non-disruptive and beneficial way.

Special occasion speech---- 3 minutes.

This speech prepares you for a ceremonial occasion where you may be asked to give a speech in real life. This can be celebrative occasions such as a wedding, a graduation commencement, an anniversary, a dinner party, and etc. This practice facilitates

* **Note:** The speeches with asterisk should be research-based, and you will be required to conduct individual research or scientific material gathering/ selection in preparation. At least three external resources (i.e. journal articles, journalistic sources, etc.) are expected for each speech. **An outline with research portfolio** is asked to be uploaded on Blackboard for each speech by a specific deadline.

Exams

Midterm

The midterm will be 40 multiple-choice questions covering concepts and empirical cases from the lectures and student speeches.

Take home final---- *Course reflection and essay questions*

In lieu to the final exam, you will be asked to submit a 2-page final reflection on the challenges and your progress throughout the semester.

Assignments

In-class debate & peer evaluation on speech videos are pre-assigned exercises respectively aiming to further develop students' persuasion skills and critical thinking abilities. Instructions for each assignment will be specified separately.

III. Grading

Breakdown of Grade

Category	Points	% of Grade
Participation & Attendance	30	10.00%
Speeches		
Introductory speech	10	3.33%

Informative speech	50	16.67%
- Preparation: Research portfolio + outline	10	
- Content + Delivery	40	
Persuasive speech	50	16.67%
- Preparation: Research portfolio + outline	10	
- Content + Delivery	40	
Sensory aid speech	60	20.00%
- Preparation: Research portfolio + outline	10	
- Content + Delivery	40	
- Sensory aid	10	
Special Occasion speech	30	10.00%
- Audience analysis + structure outline	10	
- Content + Delivery	20	
Exams		
Midterm	20	6.67%
Take-home Course Reflection + Essay	20	6.67%
Assignments		
In-class Debate	15	5.00%
Peer Video Analysis	15	5.00%
TOTAL	300	100%

Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

Grading Standards

Detailed instructions will be provided for each assignment separately. Please note that this class maintain a high academic standard, such that careful preparation and dedication on your part will be necessary to earn even a C grade. The expectations for each letter grade are:

A/A-	Outstanding, thoughtful and enthusiastic work
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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

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments need to be submitted on time to avoid grade reduction. Unexcused late submissions are subjected to one third of a letter grade (e.g. B+ to B, etc.) reduction for each day after the assignment is due. Special considerations or extensions are permitted given that a student provides written evidence of the absolute need to request such considerations. Students must present the documents to me at least 24 hours before an assignment is due.

Grade reconsideration

Concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment must be presented in writing. Requests for grade reconsideration must make a positive argument based on the facts of the assignment and feedback. Appeals should be made after 24-hour cooling off period and within one week of receiving the graded assignment. No late appeals will be accepted for review.

IV. Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the **Annenberg Digital Lounge** for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's **Information Technology Services** website.

However, given the nature of the course and its focus on audience participation, **laptops are not needed and not to be used in the class**, especially in the student speech sessions. You are responsible to bring you own notepad and pens to take notes.

V. Additional info: Add/Drop Dates (15 weeks: 1/13/20 – 5/1/20)

- **Friday, January 31:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001
- **Friday, January 31:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001
- **Tuesday, February 4:** Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

- **Friday, February 28:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]
- **Friday, February 28:** Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]
- **Friday, April 3:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

VI. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

	Topics	Agenda	Readings
<i>Week 1</i>	Introduction 1/13 Welcome & Course Overview 1/17 Introduction to Public Speaking and related communication process	Introduction speech partner assigned	Chapter 1
<i>Week 2</i>	Ethics 1/20 MLK Day- no class 1/24 Ethical speech	Introduction Speech Delivery	Chapter 3
<i>Week 3</i>	Listening & Getting started 1/27 Focusing on the listener 1/31 Topic selection, material gathering	Impromptu activity 1	Chapter 4, Chapter 5 Chapter 7
<i>Week 4</i>	Be Analytical and credible 2/3 Speak to inform 2/7 Workshop: Research for your topic	informative speech assigned informative speech outline due on Friday 2/9	Chapter 15 & TED videos
<i>Week 5</i>	Informative Speech week 2/10 Informative speech delivery group 1 2/14 Informative speech delivery group 2		
<i>Week 6</i>	Developing your speech 2/17 Organization and outline 2/21 Speak to persuade	Impromptu activity 2 persuasive speech assigned	Chapter 8 & Chapter 9 Chapter 16

<i>Week 7</i>	Persuasion		
2/24	Persuasion science Part 1		Links on BB
2/28	Pending: Guest lecture on debate, argument and counter argument by Gary Ho, J.D.		
<i>Week 8</i>	Midterm week		
3/2	Persuasion science Part 2 <i>Midterm Review</i>	Persuasive speech outline and research portfolio due	Links on BB
3/6	<i>Midterm Exam</i>		
<i>Week 9</i>	Persuasive speech delivery week		
3/9	persuasive speech group 1	Peer videos made during class	
3/13	persuasive speech group 2	Sensory aid speech assigned	
Spring Break	<i>Have a great break!!</i>		
3/16			
3/20			
<i>Week 10</i>	Going global		
3/23	Confidence building	Impromptu activity 3	Chapter 11
3/27	Speaking with cultural sensitivity		Chapter 14
<i>Week 11</i>	Visual aids		
3/30	<i>In-class activity</i> : peer video analysis	In-class debate topic assigned	
4/3	Visual Aid Dos & Don'ts	Sensory aid speech outline and research portfolio due	Chapter 13
<i>Week 12</i>	Sensory aid speech delivery week		
4/6	Sensory aid speech group 1		
4/10	Sensory aid speech group 2		
<i>Week 13</i>	Bonus fun!		
4/13	In-class debate and analysis		Links on BB
4/17	<i>Guest lecture</i> on professional development by Nazli Senyuva, Ph.D.		
<i>Week 14</i>	Honing your skills		
4/13	Language use	special occasion speech assigned	Chapter 10
4/17	Special occasion speaking		Chapter 17
<i>Week 15</i>	Ceremonial speech week		
4/27	Emotional appeal in Public Speaking		Links on BB
5/1	Special occasion speech delivery & Wrapping up		

STUDY DAYS			
FINAL EXAM PERIOD		Take-home Course Reflection + Essay due on 5/6	

VII. Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

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.

b. Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.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 and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL),
 press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

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

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | *Title IX* – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by 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. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, 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

uscsa.usc.edu

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.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]

<https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/>

The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally “breaking bread” over a meal together and USC will pick up the tab! Your meal event can take place anywhere outside of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.