

**NOTE: MEDIA CENTER AND OTHER ACTIVITIES DATES MAY CHANGE**

**COMM 204  
PUBLIC SPEAKING  
Spring 2020  
(20383R) Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:50 ANN 309**

**Instructor:** Karen North, PhD  
**Office:** ANN 414B  
**Office Hours:** by appointment  
**Contact Info:** [knorth@usc.edu](mailto:knorth@usc.edu)

**Annenberg IT Help Desk:** ASC 234 | [ascstech@usc.edu](mailto:ascstech@usc.edu) | (213) 740-3901

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This skills-based course is designed to help you become a better public speaker through theory and, most importantly, practice. We will learn concepts and models of communication, how to adapt a speech for different occasions and audiences, how to support your ideas effectively, how to select and organize materials in preparation for a speech, and how to use multimedia tools in presentations, among other skills. This course should be relevant in academic, business, and social settings. You should become a better public speaker and listener, while thinking about and maintaining ethical standards.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Understand communication concepts that serve as a basis for effective speaking, and apply this conceptual knowledge in practice to give effective speeches
- Be a more analytical listener, and develop the ability to analyze and evaluate presentations made by others and to provide constructive feedback (and find areas to praise).
- Develop and demonstrate verbal, nonverbal, and research competencies through researching, preparing, and delivering presentations relevant to your audiences
- Learn how to ask good questions and provide meaningful answers to questions
- Gain confidence to speak publicly in a variety of situations

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Anderson, Chris (2016). TED Talks: The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking. Mariner Books (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt): Boston/New York.

**OPTIONAL TEXT:** The Public Speaking Project (n.d.). Public Speaking: The Virtual Text. Retrieved from <http://publicspeakingproject.org/psvirtualtext.html> (referred to as PSVT for the rest of this syllabus)

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

**GRADING** Percentages will be calculated by taking the total points earned in the course and dividing by total possible points (1000).

- A: 92.6 – 100
- A-: 89.6 – 92.5
- B+: 87.6 – 89.5
- B: 82.6 – 87.5
- B-: 79.6 – 82.5
- C+: 77.6 – 79.5
- C: 72.6 – 77.5
- C-: 69.6 – 72.5\
- D+: 67.6 – 69.5
- D: 62.6 – 67.5
- D-: 59.6 – 62.5
- F: Under 59.5

## COURSE POLICIES

**Respect:** Public speaking creates fear and anxiety for many people, and one of the goals of this course is for everyone to feel more confident when they get up in front of others to speak. To achieve this, we are going to build and maintain a safe space for expression. We will have many class discussions and get to know each other over the course of the semester. We do not want anyone to monopolize conversations or, on the other hand, feel unable to contribute. We will learn from each other if we listen to others and speak up when we want to share or ask questions. Disrespectful comments or behaviors will not be tolerated. Please contact me immediately if you ever feel like the class atmosphere is not respectful toward you or your peers.

**Academic Integrity:** Your work in this class must be your own. Any attempt to represent others' work as your own will receive a failing grade on the assignment in question (at a minimum) 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/current-students/graduate-students/academic-integrity>

**Student Conduct:** We will uphold the standards outlined by the Student Conduct code in SCampus (see <http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus>). Talk with me if you are confused or unsure if something could or would be considered cheating or plagiarism. See last page of syllabus for official statement.

**Assignment Submission:** All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>) via Turnitin. If you are unable for any reason to submit your assignment on time to Blackboard for a technical reason, email me ([knorth@usc.edu](mailto:knorth@usc.edu)) your assignment before the deadline.

**Deadlines:** The due dates for your assignments are strict. Late assignments are not accepted. If you have an emergency, please contact me before the deadline and documentation is required.

**Email:** During normal business hours (M-F, 9am-6pm) I will respond to emails within 24-48 hours (probably sooner). If you email me outside of those times or if I give you some notice about limited email, it may take me longer to respond. On weekends, I may not respond until Monday. If it has been more than 24 hours and you think I may have missed your email, please send another.

**Technology:** Phones must be put away during class. Computers may be used if you like, but only for class-related material and note-taking. I may ask you to close all computers at any time, and if computers become distracting, I may change this policy. Computers must be put away during speeches and guest lectures.

**Special Accommodations:** Academic accommodations are made when students register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please deliver this documentation to me within the first week of the semester, or as soon as possible. DSP (<https://dsp.usc.edu/>) can be reached at [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu) and (213) 740-0776. See last page of syllabus for official statement.

**English as a Second Language or Other Accommodations:** Please let me know if you need special accommodations if English is not your primary language or if you are concerned about accommodations for any other reason.

## STUDENT RESOURCES

Sexual Assault Policy and Resources. The University of Southern California is committed to fostering a safe campus environment for all members of the university community, free from sexual coercion, violence, and sexual intimidation. The university's sexual misconduct and sexual assault policies have been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated (the policy is available in SCampus, Part E: [https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/files/2015/11/SCampus-Final-112015\\_v8.pdf](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/files/2015/11/SCampus-Final-112015_v8.pdf)). To learn more about your reporting options and your rights, or to speak with a counselor confidentially, contact the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center/Center for Women and Men at 213-740-4900, or contact Student Counseling Services at 213-740-

7711. For more information and resources, including off-campus resources like the Rape Treatment Center, visit the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center website at <https://sarc.usc.edu/resources/>.

Finally, remember that you can contact a campus cruiser at 213-740-4911 for a safety escort.

**Stress Management.** Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge. Moreover, they offer drop-in workshops throughout the semester on managing stress and maintaining mindfulness. Additional Academic Support. A number of campus resources exist to support you academically. Contact the Center for Academic Support (<http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/>) at 213-740-0776 or [study@usc.edu](mailto:study@usc.edu).

#### **GRADE BREAKDOWN**

Introduction speeches	100
Personal Passion	100
Business Briefing	100
Narrative	100
Persuasive (or political)	100
Press Conference	100
Reflection Paper	100
Shark Tank Pitch	200
Conference Preso	100
Radio Interview	100 (interviewer/interviewee)
TV Interview	100 (interviewer/interviewee)
Special Occasion Speech or Toast	100
Reflection Paper 2	100
TED Talk	200
Attendance	100
Participation	100

**All Papers and Presentations will be discussed in class. All presentations are to be accompanied by a written copy of your text. Turn in the written version to Blackboard each week.**

**Notes on the REFLECTION PAPER:** Your reflection papers should include concepts learned in class while reflecting on your strengths and places for improvement. This is an analysis and should motivate you to be introspective.

**Participation and Attendance:** One goal of this course is for you to feel more confident speaking up, asking questions, and participating more generally. Even lectures will have discussion components. We will learn more if we engage with each other and contribute to class discussions. Additionally, there will be several sessions where we will be doing impromptu speaking activities. These are very important for you to feel more comfortable speaking in a variety of settings and without formal preparation. Because of this, I expect students to **attend all classes**, other than pre-approved excused absences (illness, religious observance, university-sanctioned activities) or emergencies. An absence will be considered excused if it falls under one of those categories (pre-approved or emergency) and is accompanied by documentation. Any more than two unexcused absences will result in a 1/3 deduction to your final grade (e.g., A to an A-, A- to a B+, B+ to a B, etc...). Also, please be on time. If I notice persistent lateness, particularly if it is disruptive or during speeches, I will deduct points in this category.

**COURSE SCHEDULE** The assigned readings are meant to be read before the class under which they are listed. This syllabus and schedule may change to accommodate unexpected needs of the class as a whole and, thus, the course may change throughout the semester. **NOTE:**

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS WILL BE EVERY THURSDAY. BE PREPARED EACH WEEK.

### **Week 1 January 14-16**

Introduction to Course and Introduction Speeches

Introduction to Public Speaking and Public Speaking Competencies, listening, defining your audience. First Topic: Introduction presentations Listening Effectively, Thinking about your Audience, Thinking about your style.

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 1 (Presentation Literacy) and 3 (Common Traps)

**Assignment Due: Self Introduction Speech  
Other Introduction Speech  
(turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 2 January 21-23**

Informative speaking (**Personal Passion**). Defining your Ideas. Defining your style.

Tues: Developing Outlines for Speeches

Thurs: Personal Passion presentations

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 2 (Idea Building) and 4 (The Throughline)

**Assignment Due: Self Informative Speech: Personal Passion (2 minutes)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 3 January 28-30**

Informative Speaking Business update/briefing. Speaking in meetings. Briefing memos as a tool.

Tues: Briefing Memos. Briefings in business and politics

Thurs: Briefing presentations

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 4 (Idea Building) and 5 (Connection)

**Assignment Due: Informative Speech: Business Briefing/Update (2 minutes)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 4: February 4-6**

Narrative Speaking (story telling)

Tues: Narrative Speaking: How to tell a story

Thurs: Narrative presentations

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 6 (Narrative) and 4 (The Throughline)

**Assignment Due: Narrative speech (tell us a story)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 5: February 11-13**

Persuasive Speaking and Advocating for a cause Political (pair up for rebuttal experience)

Tues: Persuasion and how to influence others, and the use of counterarguments. Political persuasion. Pair up and share ideas to inform your rebutter!!

Thurs Persuasive presentations (Rebuttals are “educated impromptu”)

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 7 (Explanation) and 8 (Persuasion)

**Assignment Due: Persuasive speech (2 minutes)  
Rebuttal (30-60 seconds)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 6: February 18-20**

Persuasive Speaking Press Conferences

Tues: Discussion of Press Conferences

Thurs: Press Conference Simulation

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 9 (Revelation)

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 16 (Set up) and 17 (Voice and Presence)

**Assignment Due: Press Conference Speech  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 7: February 25-27**

Reflection Week

Tues: Discussion of Lessons Learned AND Dealing with Distractions Part 1

Thurs: Distractions and Lessons Learned (Cont) **maybe intro to Shark Tank**

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 18 (Format Innovation) and 21 (Your Turn)

**Assignment Due: Reflection paper  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

### **Week 8: March 3-5**

Entrepreneurship: Persuasive Speaking, Pitching Ideas and Products, & The Shark Tank

Tues: SHARK TANK prep week

Thurs: Shark Tank Pitch prep in class exercises

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 10 (Visuals), 11 (Scripting), 12 (Run Through), 13 (Open and Close)

**NO ASSIGNMENT**

### **Week 9: March 10-12**

Entrepreneurship Pitches Continued

Mon/Tues: Shark Tank Pitches with Q&A

Wed/Thurs: Shark Tank Pitches with Q&A

**Assignment Due: Shark tank Pitches (2-4 minutes)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

**NO SCHOOL MARCH 15-22 ENJOY SPRING BREAK!**

### **Week 10: March 24-26**

Being an Expert: Sensory Aid Speeches and Research Portfolio (Conference speaking)

Tues: Conveying Technical Information and speaking at a professional meeting/conference (and the need for a **slide deck**)

Thurs: Presentations

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 19 (Talk Renaissance)

**Assignment Due: Conference Speech Presentations (2 minutes)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

**Week 11: March 31 – April 2**

Radio and Television Interviews

**Work in Media Center.** Learn introductory media skills (podcasting and Studio A). Conduct “expert interviews” with each other 1. Radio Interview and 2: TV News Interview.

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 14 (Wardrobe) and 15 (Mental Prep)

**Assignment Due: Radio Interview and TV Interview due next week  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

**Week 12: April 7-9**

Radio and Television Interviews

**Work in Media Center.** Learn introductory media skills (podcasting and Studio A). Conduct “expert interviews” with each other 1. Radio Interview and 2: TV News Interviews

**Assignment Due: 1. Radio Interview  
2. TV Interview  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

**Week 13: April 14-16**

TED Talk Prep

Tues: Reflections and review of semester to embrace skills and styles

Thurs: Group work to help each other outline and strategize

**Assignment Due: Reflection Paper**

**Week 14: April 21-23**

Tues: TED Talks

Thurs: TED Talks

**Assignment Due: TED Talk (4-5 minutes)  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

**Week 15: April 28-30**

Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches

Tues: Introduction to Special Occasion Speeches and how to speak at a meaningful event (e.g., a weddings and other toasts, etc.)

Thurs: Humor in Speeches and prep for Thursday

**READINGS:** TED Chapter 20 (Why it Matters) and 4 (The Throughline)

**Assignment Due: Special Occasion Presentations  
(and turn in written version on Blackboard)**

**FINALS WEEK May**

Final Exam Day -- \*\*Final Papers and Final Revisions\*\*

## 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](http://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](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

### Support Systems:

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355– 24/7 on call*

<https://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](http://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) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

<https://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](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://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.

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

[https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/](https://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](http://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 Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*



<https://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](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenbergsuccessfund.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-and-awards>

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.