

Fall 2020 – Mon/ Wed: 12:00pm – 1:50pm**Section:** 20379**Location:** Online via Zoom**Instructor: Lauren A. Sowa****Office:** Online via Zoom**Office Hours:** Mondays 1:50-2:50 or by appointment**Contact Info:** lsowa@usc.edu**I. Course Description**

In this course you will learn the skills, theories, and additional tools necessary to become a successful public speaker. Since public speaking is first and foremost a skill, this course emphasizes practice-based activities that will help you refine your oral communication abilities. Theories from the fields of communication, business, psychology, and acting will be incorporated into these activities to give you a foundational knowledge of the historical and contemporary worlds of public speaking. 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.

Above all else, this course is about confidence and how to either obtain or manufacture the appearance of natural confidence when speaking publicly.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

Although this course's primary purpose is help you develop, analyze, create and apply public speaking skills and techniques, it is crucial that you grapple with what being an effective oral communicator means for your larger identity. The way you communicate ultimately impacts your presence and/ or personal brand. Thus, throughout the semester, you will be challenged to address questions such as: How can I use new and emerging technologies to help convey my messages? What types of different environments will I be required to speak in? How does the way I speak shape listeners' perspectives of me? Am I more comfortable speaking to certain types of audiences? How do I want to be perceived by my peers, professors, and the public at large?

III. Course Notes

For some people, public speaking is an enjoyable experience. For others, it causes fear and anxiety. A goal for our class is for everyone to feel confident that their peers will treat them with respect both during class discussions and when they present speeches.

I will communicate with you all via e-mail through blackboard. Course readings will be either available online or through Blackboard.

This is a participation heavy class. Because physicality is an important aspect of public speaking, there will be some slight movement in this course (even on Zoom). Please let me know if you have any limitations with standing or movement and we will find an alternative that works best for you.

I strive to ensure that my grading processes are objective and clear. You will never receive a grade that does not have sufficient justification. Moreover, I am always available to discuss assignments and grades in depth. However, I ask that you take the time to fully understand why you received the grade you did and think critically about how you would improve upon the assignment. Any discussions about grades on one assignment must occur before the next assignment is due.

IV. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Text:

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

Stand up, Speak out : The Practice and Ethics of Public Speaking by Leslie Harris
(https://dc.uwm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=comm_facbooks)

All other readings will be available under “Content” on **Blackboard**.

This course is what I consider ‘live’ – it changes based on the background, goals, and progress of each student. Thus, it is imperative that you check Blackboard regularly for any changes to the syllabus. Most importantly, if there are new readings or requirements for a certain week, I will email you as well as post them to Blackboard by Friday at 5pm the week before.

V. Description and Assessment of Assignments & Assignment Submission Policy

Note: the week before each speech, we will briefly discuss in-class the topic for each of your speeches.

Speech 1 - Introduction Speech: (presented live on Zoom) This is a two-minute speech about yourself to help us get to know each other. You can be as simple or creative as you want! Low stakes so we can all get our feet wet.

TED Talk Analysis Paper: As part of our discussion of informative speeches, you will provide a 3-4 page critique of and reflection on a TED Talk of your choice (selection is available at <https://www.ted.com/talks>). Please submit on Blackboard.

Speech 2 - Informative Speech: (Presented live on Zoom) This speech should be 6-7 minutes and inform your audience 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 hone your research skills and provide credible evidence for your claims. Along with your in-class presentation, you will need to submit on Blackboard your speech outline and references.

Speech 3 - Persuasive Speech/ The Pitch: (Recorded on phone or laptop and uploaded to Google Drive) This speech should be 6-7 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. Use this speech as an opportunity to present on something about which you are passionate and could utilize in your real life. This speech requires external research, and you must provide three to four sources during your presentation. Along with your recorded presentation, you must submit on Blackboard your speech outline and references.

Persuasive Speech Peer Critique Paper: This paper provides you an opportunity to respond as an audience member and in return receive a constructive critique from a peer. This 2-page reflection should address the public speaking skills we are learning in the course and discuss whether or not, or to what degree you were persuaded by your peer's speech/ critique.

Speech 4 - Sensory Aid Speech: (Presented live on Zoom with screen share) This speech should be 6-7 minutes and incorporate visual, audio, or other non-verbal tools that bolster or enhance your claims. 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 your speech outline and references.

Online Interview: (individually on Zoom) This assignment will simulate a "real-world" job interview, which are increasingly taking place online rather than in-person. You will be "applying" to a job within your area of interest and answer questions based on your skills and resume.

Speech 5 - Special Occasion Speech: (Presented live on Zoom) This is a 3-4 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! Be creative!

Written Reflections: After each speech, you will write a 2-page (double-spaced), reflection paper about your performance, which will be a part of your grade for each speech. Here you should reflect on your strengths and opportunities for improvement. Be sure to incorporate concepts learned in class from the readings, lectures, and discussions. These are to be turned in on Blackboard within 4 days of giving your speech. So if you present on Monday, it is due on Friday and if you present on Wednesday, it is due on Sunday.

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. Consider how the readings have informed your work, thinking, and development. Discuss 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 4 pages (double-spaced) before references.

VI. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Intro Speech	30	3%
Ted Talk Analysis Paper	10	7%
Informative Speech	30	15%
Persuasive Speech	30	15%
Persuasive Speech Peer Critique Paper	10	6%
Sensory Aid Speech	30	15%
Online Interview	30	15%
Special Occasion Speech	30	5%
Final Reflection Paper	10	7%
Participation (in-class coaching, 1-on-1 meeting, participation and involvement during class discussions and activities)	20	12%
TOTAL	230	100%

Assignment Rubrics

The following criteria will be used for grading your participation, speeches and written assignments:

Participation will be graded on your attentiveness and engagement during class discussions and activities. Your participation grade will also include attendance, the in-class coaching,

and our 1- on-1 meeting.

Papers will be graded on the quality of content, thought, and writing style. (Always proofread please!)

Speeches will be graded based on 3 main components: delivery, content, and written reflection. Each speech's rubric will vary slightly based on the assignment, but here is a generic example of the components that will be evaluated.

Delivery	Performance, vocal inflection, speech patterns, physicality, confidence	10 points
Content	Following the assignment, research, sentence structure, examples, creativity	10 points
Written Reflection	Writing style and grammar, insightfulness, depth of understanding	10 points

b. Grading Scale

94 to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 93%: 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

c. Grading Standards

Grades will be assigned based on the quality of work. In general, an A reflects excellent work, a B reflects good work, a C reflects satisfactory work, a D reflects below expected standards, and an F reflects a failure of the assignment. This means that the student submits the bare minimum of what is expected, the grade will be reflected as such. To receive a B or A on an assignment, the student is expected to demonstrate thoughtful, well-developed, and polished work.

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.

B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

d. Grading Timeline

Grading Timeframe and Missing or Inaccurate Score Inquiries/Disputes

For effective learning, students should receive timely feedback on assignments and exams. Therefore, every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within two weeks. Scores for all assignments and exams are regularly updated on Blackboard. You are responsible for notifying the Instructor **within one (1) week** of a score posting if you think a score is missing or inaccurate. Moreover, you only have this period of time to contest a score on an assignment/exam. If you fail to inquire/notify us of any discrepancy, missing score, or contest a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no further changes will be made.

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, events, and/or guest speaker availability, where relevant. Students should consult the Registration Calendar for dates regarding add/drop deadlines, fees, grading options, etc.

WEEK 1 – Introduction to the Course

“Let’s start at the very beginning, a very good place to start” – The Sound of Music

Mon., 8/17 Welcomes and course overview

Wed., 8/19 **Reading:** *Ch 1 p. 5-16: Public Speaking Today (SUSO)
 *Ch 4: Listening Effectively (PSVT)

WEEK 2 - Thinking Before Speaking

“May the Force be with you” – Star Wars

Mon., 8/24 **Reading:** * Ch 1: Introduction to Public Speaking (PSVT)
 * *The Creative Habit: Learn it and Use it For Life* – Twyla Tharp
Due: Intro Speeches

Wed., 8/26 **Reading:** * *The Inner Game of Tennis* – W. Timothy Gallwey
 * Ch 11: Speaking with Confidence (PSVT)
 *Ch 1: Public Speaking Today (SUSO) p.16-40

WEEK 3 – The Mechanics of the Speech

"You taking to me?" – Taxi Driver

- Mon., 8/31 **Reading:** * Ch 7: Supporting your Ideas (PSVT)
 * Ch 8: Organizing and Outlining (PSVT)
 * Ch 15: Informative Speaking (PSVT)
 * Ch 4: Informative Speaking (SUSO) p. 98-103, 117-122

- Wed., 9/2 **Reading:** * Ch 10: Using Language Well (PSVT)
 * *Speak with Distinction* - Edith Skinner
 * Ch 5: Topic, Purpose, and Thesis (SUSO) p. 169-177
Due: Info Speech Topics

WEEK 4 - Techniques for Public Speaking

“Nobody puts Baby in a corner” – Dirty Dancing

- Mon., 9/7 NO CLASS: LABOR DAY

- Wed., 9/9** **Reading:** * Ch. 9: Introductions and Conclusions (PSVT)
 * Ch. 8: Effective Introductions and Powerful Conclusions (SUSO)
 * Ch 12: Delivering Your Speech (PSVT)
 * *Freeing the Natural Voice* – Kristin Linklater
Due: Ted Talk Analysis Paper
Activity: In-class Coaching Day 1

WEEK 5 – Informative Speech Week

“That’s what I do. I drink and I know things” – Game of Thrones

- Mon., 9/14 **Speech:** Informative

- Wed., 9/16 **Speech:** Informative

WEEK 6 – One on One Meetings

“All it takes is faith and trust” – Peter Pan

- Mon., 9/21 1-on-1 feedback

- Wed., 9/23 1-on-1 feedback

WEEK 7 – Persuasive Speech Prep

"I'll have what she's having" – When Harry Met Sally

- Wed., 9/30 Reading: * Ch 10: Developing Strong Arguments (SUSO)**
Activity: In-class Coaching Day 2

WEEK 8 – Persuasive Speech Week

"I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse" – The Godfather

- Mon., 10/5 **Speech:** Persuasive

- Wed., 10/7 TBD

WEEK 9 – Sensory Aid Prep

“Who tells your story?” – Hamilton

- Mon., 10/12 **Reading:** * Ch 13: Presentation Aids (SUSO)
 * Ch 13: Visual Aids (PSVT)

WEEK 10 - Sensory Aid Speech Week

"If you don't like what's being said, change the conversation" – Mad Men

- Mon., 10/19 **Speech:** Sensory Aid

- Wed., 10/21 **Speech:** Sensory Aid

WEEK 11 – Public Speaking and Getting Hired

“Make it work” – Project Runway

- Mon., 10/26 **Reading:**
[https://www.eztalks.com/online-...](https://www.eztalks.com/online-interview/7-common-online-)

[interview-questions-and-suggested-answers.html](#)

<https://theundercoverrecruiter.com/how-to-do-well-in-a-video-interview/>

<https://www.livecareer.com/interview/questions>

Wed., 10/28 **Activity:** Guest Speaker: Ricardo Horna
(Master Comm MGMT, Google & Youtube recruiter)

WEEK 12 – Online Interview Week

“What? Like it’s hard?” – Legally Blonde

Mon., 11/2 **Interview:** Online

Wed., 11/4 **Interview:** Online

WEEK 13 – Special Occasion Speech Week

“This is your final rose tonight. When you’re ready” – The Bachelor

Mon., 11/9 **Reading:** * Ch 5: Audience Analysis PSVT
* Ch 17: Special Occasion Speaking PSVT

Due: SOS topics

Wed., 11/11 **Speech:** Special Occasion

VII. Policies and Procedures

Synchronous session recording notice

Live class sessions will be recorded and made available to students through Blackboard (including transcriptions). Please remember that USC policy prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. As a student, you are responsible for the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-c/>). These rules will be strictly enforced, and violations will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction.

Going back to Campus

Although we are starting the semester with online instruction only, conditions may improve. In such case, courses listed as hybrid will give opportunity to students to attend class in person. This will happen only by following the strictest health guidelines and safety protocols. These are listed in the [Trojans Return](#) page. Please take the time to read this ahead so that you are prepared in case it is possible to return to in-person instruction.

Participation

This class demands participation from all of us. Participation is part of your grade. The current modality of teaching includes synchronous and asynchronous lessons, assignments, exercises, and evaluation processes, and each affords different types of participation. In a synchronous zoom environment, when proper, participation is synchronous. This may include talking, when appropriate, during a zoom meeting, or using the chat function to generate or participate in discussions. If you are unable to attend a zoom session synchronously, a make-up assignment will allow you to still engage in classroom content and count toward your participation.

The distant nature of these learning environments may prompt us to forget that we are a community and that each of us and our ideas deserve respect. For this reason, it is imperative that you remember to **respect the opinion of others**, regardless of how much you disagree.

Your presence and respect for your classmates (especially when it is their turn to give a speech) is imperative. Therefore, cellphones must be put away during speeches to help us create an attentive and positive environment for one another.

Communication

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.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity Policy:

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

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.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course, without approval of the instructor.

[Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis](#)

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on **Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness**.

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 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.

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 Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.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.