



COMM 204: Public Speaking
4 Units

Fall 2022 – T/TH – 12:30pm-1:50pm PST

Section: 20375R

Location: ASC 240

Instructor: Professor Kiran Dhillon

Office: Online

Office Hours: W 8:00am-11:00am PST; Also by Appointment

Contact Info: kkdhillon@usc.edu

I. Land Acknowledgement

The University of Southern California's (USC) University Park campus is located on the traditional land of the Tongva People. You can visit <https://mila.ss.ucla.edu/> to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples in Los Angeles and read stories shared by the Tongva community. To learn about the Indigenous land on which your remote learning location resides, you can visit <https://native-land.ca>.

II. Course Description

This course introduces students to a core set of theories and practices related to the art of public speaking. In this class, you will learn what goes into making good decisions about communicating effectively in public situations, how to approach audiences analytically, and how to be a more engaged member of society that values the free exchange of good ideas. The class has two basic components: theory and application. The theory component explores how and why public speaking is a vital part of social life, and the choices that will best prepare you for those moments when you are called upon to speak. The application component provides opportunities to perform public speaking by building your speeches and then delivering them to your audience. Success in this class requires that you give sufficient attention to both components. Those who apply themselves will learn to be more thoughtful speakers, and to speak more thoughtfully. The concepts we learn in this class will apply not only to situations where you get up and speak, but any situation where being an engaged member of a group is important. We cannot promise that you will become a great speaker, but you will receive the benefit of the knowledge and training that will provide you with the opportunity to improve your abilities and understanding.

III. Student Learning Outcomes

Successfully completing the course assignments will help students learn the fundamental skills of public speaking such as critical thinking, political awareness, performance skills, and listening skills. By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand and apply fundamental speech concepts and strategies
- Conduct research and present evidence to support their ideas
- Make reasoned decisions about communication choices, knowing what to do, as well as how and when to do it

- Analyze the role, opportunities, norms, and limitations of individual speech in public discourse
- Effectively create, organize, and utilize speech materials
- Understand, analyze, evaluate, and create speeches surrounding social justice
- Supplement speeches with multimedia tools and visual aids
- Critically and creatively express themselves through public speaking
- Develop critical, constructive, and compassionate listening skills as audience members and practice critical evaluation of classroom speakers
- Make and deliver speeches that are accessible, inclusive, and ethical

IV. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Leslie J. Harris, Marnie Lawler-McDonough, Josh Miller, Emily Mueller, Megan Orcholski, Kristin Woodward, and Lisa Roth, *Stand up, Speak out – The Practice and Ethics of Public Speaking* (2017). Available online at University of Wisconsin Milwaukee UWM Digital Commons and is posted on the course Blackboard site. Use prior editions at your own risk; they are not the same material. All class assignments, including exams, presume students are using the assigned textbook.

Announcements, Content, Discussion Postings, Links, Etc. on Blackboard.

Recommended Reading

Public Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition

Course Notes

Course information and materials will be posted on Blackboard. Please note that this syllabus may change based on student feedback, the progress of the class, and/or events. I will communicate any syllabus and content changes via email and Blackboard.

Remote learning resources and information about accessing and navigating Blackboard and Zoom can be found through USC Keep Teaching (<https://keepteaching.usc.edu/students/student-toolkit/>) and the Annenberg Digital Lounge (<http://www.annenbergdl.org/>)

V. Description and Assessment of Assignments & Assignment Submission Policy

Class Participation

Participation

A portion of your grade for this class will be earned by productive participation in class sessions, as determined by your Instructor. It is imperative that you remember to **respect the opinion of others**, regardless of how much you disagree. Not participating productively will negatively impact your participation grade. Each class period your class participation will be evaluated. In each class, you have the potential to earn 1 point toward your overall class participation grade.

A-Level Daily Participation (1-.09 point(s))

Engages in class discussion by frequently doing the following:

- voluntarily and frequently offering creative or original responses/interpretations/observations beyond the

obvious,

- involving others in class discussion by asking questions, seeking others' responses, etc.
- eagerly and intelligently attempting to answer questions,
- offering follow-up responses,
- actively engaging and taking part during classroom activities/small group discussion,
- using technology responsibly (For example, your cell phone never went off in class, you were never on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were only using it to take notes), and
- treating classmates and the professor respectfully (For example, listening while the person is talking, not having side conversations, etc.).

Eagerly treats class discussion as a conversation among students and professor.

B-Level Daily Participation (.08-.07 points)

Participates in class discussion by doing the following:

- offering consistently appropriate and occasionally creative or original responses/interpretations/observations
- answering questions frequently,
- actively, taking part in classroom activities/small group discussion
- using technology responsibly (For example, your cell phone never went off in class, you were never on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were only using it to take notes), and
- treating classmates and the professor respectfully (For example, listening while the person is talking, not having side conversations, etc.).

Treats the class discussion as a conversation among students and professor.

C-Level Daily Participation (.06-.05 points)

Only sometimes participates in class discussion by doing the following:

- occasionally offering responses/interpretations/observations but nothing that really challenges the class to think beyond the obvious,
- answering questions every now and then,
- demonstrating overall competence in comments or raising good questions in response to discussion, but rarely actively or voluntarily contributes to discussion,
- occasionally engaging in classroom activities and small group discussion, but sometimes not involved,
- using technology responsibly (For example, your cell phone seldom went off in class, you were rarely on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were only using it to take notes), and
- treating classmates and the professor respectfully.

Many comments are merely factual statements or merely entertaining comments, neither of which demonstrates careful and intelligent responses to class content.

D-Level Daily Participation (.04-.03 points)

Rarely participates in class discussion, and then primarily by doing the following:

- offering a few instances of response/interpretation/observation,
- answering a couple of questions or offering one-word responses to discussion,
- rarely participating in group activities/small group discussions,
- occasionally disrupting class by coming to class late, failing to contribute to the learning environment by blankly staring off into space/out the window or working on something else during class, talking with someone while someone else is speaking, being off topic, or being merely entertaining with little purpose beyond clowning around,
- using technology somewhat irresponsibly (For example, your cell phone went off in class, you were on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were not only using it to take notes), or
- treating classmates or the professor disrespectfully, disrupting the learning environment. Primarily a non-participant in topics relevant to class discussion.

F-Level Daily Participation (.02-0 points)

Does not participate in class discussion in a constructive manner, doing the following:

- never offering responses/interpretations/observations,
- constantly did not participate in class activities or small group discussion,
- actively disengaging from class so that others may not know what this person's voice sounds like, much less what his or her opinions/interpretations/observations might be, or what his or her face looks like when looking directly at them, participating only at the level of snide comments,
- constantly used technology disrespectfully within the classroom, or
- treating classmates or the professor disrespectfully, disrupting the learning environment. Never involved in class discussions, or serves as a disrupting voice in discussion.

Speeches

There are four required speeches – a informative speech, a pre-assigned persuasive speech, a persuasive problem/solution speech, and a ceremonial speech -- for this class. Each provides an opportunity to demonstrate your creativity and mastery of class concepts. In order to qualify for a passing grade in this class, you must give, for a grade, a speech in at least three of four speeches. Students who do not participate in at least three of four speeches will receive a failing grade for the course, regardless of their performance on other class tasks. **All assignments are due on the dates specified and assignments must be submitted via Blackboard as a .doc or .docx Word document.** In addition, you must complete one peer review for each assigned speech.

Outlines

An outline is required for each of the four assigned speeches. The outlines must be uploaded to the appropriate Blackboard assignment on the dates specified. In general outlines need to express the content of the speech and the thesis. The outline must also contain a bibliography for all cited materials used in the speech, formatted properly according to APA (American Psychological Association) guidelines. Outlines are part of your overall speech grade.

Exam

There is one final exam in this class which tests your knowledge of concepts covered in the lecture and reading. The exam will be given during class and is open-book. The exam is 100 points and will be taken on Blackboard.

VI. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points
Participation	30
Speech 1	100
Speech 2	150
Speech 3	200
Speech 4	200
Peer Evaluations	20
Final Exam	100
TOTAL	800

b. Grading Scale – Total Possible: 800 Points

800-744: A	663-640: B-	559-536: D+
743-720: A-	639-615: C+	535-504: D
719-696: B+	614-584: C	503-480: D-
695-664: B	583-560: C-	479-0: F

c. Grading Standards

Each assignment has stated requirements. While this is a lower level course, the standards are high. Careful preparation and dedication on your part will be necessary to earn even a C grade. Merely “getting through” a speech is not the same thing as delivering a successful speech. Only that work which demonstrates success at achieving beyond the basic requirements will earn higher grades, and work which does not demonstrate successful completion of the assignment objectives will earn less. This class is not merely about giving speeches; it’s about providing you the opportunity to learn how to use the power of language to understand, shape, and impact the world you share with your audience. Speeches which focus on the critical elements of thoughtfulness and decision-making will help you make the most of this opportunity.

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

Grading Timeframe

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.

Grade Reconsideration

All students must wait 24 hours from the time they receive their grade before contacting their Instructor about the grade, whether face-to-face or through email. When contacting your Instructor with a request for a grade reconsideration, students are expected to be extremely professional and rational. Rude, aggressive and/or threatening behavior toward your Instructor absolutely will not be tolerated and will be reported to the appropriate University authority for further action. Requests for grade reconsideration must make a positive argument based on the facts of the assignment and feedback. Simply “wanting” or “feeling” a higher grade is due are not satisfactory arguments, and such requests will be rejected. Requests for grade reconsideration are not guaranteed to be granted. Additionally, all grade reconsiderations must be initiated within seven days of receipt of the grade. After that time, the grade is final. Ultimately, the grade you receive in this class is the grade you have earned. If you desire a higher grade, seek out ways of improving your academic progress by taking advantage of the numerous class and University resources available to you.

VII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/22/22 – 12/2/22)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20223/calendar/>

Friday, September 9: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, September 9: Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, September 9: Last day to change enrollment option to audit for Session 001

Friday, September 9: Last day to change a Pass/No Pass to a letter grade for Session 001

Friday, September 9: Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance for fall

Tuesday, September 13: Last day to add or drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

Friday, October 7: Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. Mark of “W” will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, November 11: Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

VIII. 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, etc. Students should consult the [Registration Calendar](#) for dates regarding add/drop deadlines, fees, grading options, etc.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings/Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Dates: 8/22-8/26	Welcome, Course & Introduction; Public Speaking Today; Engaging Your Audience	Introduction Speeches (While introduction speeches are not graded, they are considered part of class participation) Syllabus Review	Syllabus Chapters 1 & 2
Week 2 Dates: 8/29-9/2	Understanding the Ethics of Public Speaking; Informative Speaking; Topic, Purpose, and Thesis		Chapters 3, 4, & 5
Week 3 Dates: 9/5-9/9		Speech 1: Informative	[Labor Day: Monday, September 5]
Week 4 Dates: 9/12-9/16		Speech 1: Informative	
Week 5 Dates: 9/19-9/23	Researching Your Speech; Building and Organizing Your Speech; Effective Introductions	Speech 1 Peer Review Due	Chapters 7 & 8

	and Powerful Conclusions		
Week 6 Dates: 9/26-9/30	Persuasive Speaking; Developing Strong Arguments	Speech 2 Workshop	Chapters 9 & 10
Week 7 Dates: 10/3-10/7	The Importance of Language and Style; Delivery: A Recipe for Great Speaking; Presentation Aids	Speech 2: Persuasive (Pre-assigned) Speech 2: Persuasive (Pre-assigned)	Chapters 11, 12, & 13
Week 8 Dates: 10/10-10/14		Speech 2: Persuasive (Pre-assigned)	[Fall Recess: Thursday, October 13 and Friday, October 14]
Week 9 Dates: 10/17-10/21		Speech 2 Peer Review Due	
Week 10 Dates: 10/24-10/28		Speech 3 Workshop	
Week 11 Dates: 10/31-11/4		Speech 3 Workshop	
Week 12 Dates: 11/7-11/11		Speech 3: Persuasive (Problem/Solution) Speech 3: Persuasive (Problem/Solution)	[Veterans Day: Friday, November 11]
Week 13 Dates: 11/14-11/18		Speech 3: Persuasive (Problem/Solution) Speech 3 Peer Review Due	
Week 14 Dates: 11/21-11/25		Speech 4 Workshop	[Thanksgiving Recess: Wednesday, November 23 to Sunday, November 27]
Week 15		Speech 4: Ceremonial	

Dates: 11/28-12/2		Speech 4: Ceremonial	
STUDY DAYS Dates: 12/3-12/6			
FINAL EXAM PERIOD Dates: 12/7-12/14		Speech 4 Peer Review Final Exam Period: Tuesday, December 13 11:00am-1:00pm	

VIII. Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Zoom etiquette for Office Hours

Although you are not obligated to turn your camera on, we highly recommend it. Please wear **appropriate clothing**. Please use **appropriate backgrounds**.

Communication

If you cannot attend office hours and would like to chat, I encourage you to email me to arrange a meeting time. In your email correspondence please send all of your available dates and times. In addition, please allow for replies to emails to be within 48 working hours.

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.

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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.

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.

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. 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 Student Accessibility Services- (213) 740-0776
osas.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/annenberg-scholarships-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.