



**Spring 2023 COMM 204: Public Speaking  
4 Units**

**Spring 2023 – T/TH – 9:30am-10:50am PST**

**Section: 20383**

**Location: ASC 240**

**Instructor: Professor Kiran Dhillon**

**Office: Online**

**Office Hours: M 8:00am-10:00am PST; M 1:30pm-  
2:30pm 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.

## VI. Grading

### a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points
Participation	30
Speech 1	100
Speech 2	150
Speech 3	200
Speech 4	220
Peer Evaluations	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>800</b>

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

#### **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. 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.

#### **VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001**

**(15 weeks: 1/9/2023 – 4/28/2023; Final Exam Period: 5/3-10/2023)**

**Link:** <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20231/calendar/>

**Last day to add:** Friday, January 27, 2023

**Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund:** Friday, January 27, 2023

**Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit:** Saturday, January 28, 2023 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Audit:** Tuesday, January 31, 2023

**Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade:**

Friday, February 24, 2023 [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 for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Last day to drop with a mark of "W":** Friday, April 7, 2023

### 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, news events, and/or guest speaker availability. Students should consult the [Registration Calendar](#) for dates regarding add/drop deadlines, fees, grading options, etc.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Dates: 1/9-1/13</b>		Syllabus  Chapters 1 & 2	Introduction Speeches (While introduction speeches are not graded, they are considered part of class participation)  Syllabus Review
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Dates: 1/16-1/20</b>		Chapters 3, 4, & 5	<b>[Martin Luther King's Birthday: Monday, January 16]</b>
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Dates: 1/23-1/27</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 1 to class  Chapters 7, 8, 12, & 15	Speech 1 Workshop  Speech 1: Workshop
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Dates: 1/30-2/3</b>			<b>Speech 1: Informative Speech DUE on Tuesday, January 31 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class. All Speech outlines are due on Tuesday, January 31 regardless of the day you are assigned to speak.</b>  <b>Speech 1: Informative Speech Day 2</b>
<b>Week 5</b> <b>Dates: 2/6-2/10</b>			<b>Speech 1: Informative Speech Day 3</b>  <b>Speech 1: Informative Speech Day 4</b>
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Dates: 2/13-2/17</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 2 to class	<b>Speech 1 Peer Evaluation Due on Tuesday, February 14 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class</b>



	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
		Chapters 6 & 9	Speech 2: Workshop Speech 2: Workshop
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Dates: 2/20-2/24</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 2 to class  Chapters 10 & 11	[ <b>President's Day:</b> Monday, February 20]  Speech 2: Workshop Speech 2: Workshop
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Dates: 2/27-3/3</b>			<b>Speech 2: Persuasive Speech (Pre-assigned) DUE on Tuesday, February 28 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class. All Speech outlines are due on Tuesday, February 28 regardless of the day you are assigned to speak.</b>  Speech 2: Persuasive Speech (Pre-assigned) Day 2
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Dates: 3/6-3/10</b>			Speech 2: Persuasive Speech (Pre-assigned) Day 3  Speech 2: Persuasive Speech (Pre-assigned) Day 4
<b>Spring Break</b> <b>Dates: 3/13-3/17</b>			SPRING BREAK – ENJOY!
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Dates: 3/20-3/24</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 3 to class  Chapter 13	<b>Speech 2 Peer Review Due Tuesday, March 21 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class.</b>  Speech 3: Workshop Speech 3: Workshop

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Dates: 3/27-3/31</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 3 to class	Speech 3: Workshop Speech 3: Workshop
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Dates: 4/3-4/7</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 3 to class	Speech 3: Workshop Speech 3: Workshop
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Dates: 4/10-4/14</b>			<b>Speech 3: Persuasive Speech DUE on Tuesday, April 11 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class (Problem/Solution). All Speech outlines are due on Tuesday, April 11 regardless of the day you are assigned to speak.</b>  Speech 3: Persuasive Speech (Problem/Solution) Day 2
<b>Week 14</b> <b>Dates: 4/17-4/21</b>			Speech 3: Persuasive Speech (Problem/Solution) Day 3  Speech 3: Persuasive Speech (Problem/Solution) Day 4
<b>Week 15</b> <b>Dates: 4/24-4/28</b>		Bring a working draft of Speech 4 to class  Chapter 14	<b>Speech 3 Peer Review Due on Tuesday, April 25 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class</b>  Speech 4: Workshop  Speech 4: Workshop
<b>FINAL EXAM PERIOD</b> <b>Dates: 5/3-5/10</b>		<b>Note: All classes must meet during their designated final exam date and time.</b>	<b>TUESDAY, MAY 9 8:00am-10:00am PST</b>  Speech 4: Ceremonial Speech DUE on Tuesday, May 9 via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the beginning of class

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
			<b>Speech 4 Peer Review Due via Blackboard Assignment Submission Portal by the end of class (Will be conducted in class).</b>

## XV. Policies and Procedures

### 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 Conduct

The USC Student Handbook ([https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC\\_StudentCode\\_August2022.pdf](https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf))

#### Academic Integrity

USC's Unifying Value of integrity is a foundational principle that inspires the community to match its values to its actions. Academic integrity is ultimately the sole guarantor of the legitimacy of one's education, and therefore, is vitally important not just for oneself, but for the entire USC community. The value of all USC degrees is negatively impacted by violations of academic integrity. In the classroom, general principles of academic integrity include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

Academic Integrity violations (academic dishonesty) include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism and Cheating

- The submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Re-using any portion of one's own work (essay, term paper, project, or other assignment) previously submitted without citation of such and without permission of the instructor(s) involved.

- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or papers, including drafts. Also, all students involved in collaborative work (as permitted by the instructor) are expected to proofread the work and are responsible for all particulars of the final draft.
- Acquisition of academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or other assignments, from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work, or providing academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or assignments that another student submits as their own work.

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.

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 or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

**Students and Disability Accommodations:**

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

**Support Systems:**

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

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

*988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call*

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-

8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

*Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086*

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*

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776*

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

*USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411*

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

*Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101*

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*

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call*

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)*

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

*Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or [otfp@med.usc.edu](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)*

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenbergscholarships.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.

*Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund*

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

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

**About Your Instructor**

Dr. Dhillon is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Communication. She was formerly the director of debate and forensics for USC's nationally recognized Trojan Debate Squad from 2017-2019. The Trojan Debate Squad includes intercollegiate competition, community debate programming and initiatives, and facilitating public and civic debates. In her spare time, she likes to make memories with her family, be outdoors, gardening, cooking, and baking.