

Session: Fall 2023, Mon/Wed 10:00am–11:50am

Section: 20378R

Location: ANN 406

Instructor: Michael J. Wissot, MBA, MIM

Office: ASC 333

Office Hours: appointment only (virtual / in-person)

Contact Info: mwissot@usc.edu / 805-490-2460 mobile

I. Course Description

This class will require an intensive examination of the principles of public speaking, as well as the application of the theory of public discourse to representative speaking situations. Students will be exposed to a wide range of communication theory and vocabulary, and they will be asked to apply these approaches to informative and public speaking. The class will also cover a variety of contemporary topics, tied closely to public policy. *All students will be evaluated using a Letter Grade scale. Lectures vary between PPT slides and discussions of reading material. Students must take notes (handwritten or typed). Audio/video recordings of lectures are not permitted. For any class dates that cannot be offered in person, due to university policy and/or professor's unexpected absence, professor will strive to supplement with virtual learning.*

II. Student Learning Outcomes

1) To achieve excellence in constructing and delivering informative and persuasive speeches; **2)** To acquire skills in creating and integrating effective visual aids; **3)** To strengthen communicative competence through rhetorical analysis and criticism; **4)** To appreciate strategic challenges and ethical requirements of public speaking.

We will demonstrate the highest attainable work ethic and discover within us that which is superior to circumstance. We will persevere this semester toward the most rewarding pursuit in higher education – the stimulation of thought, emotion, and soul. It is my duty to prepare you, as future leaders of the Free World, to integrate your communication skills into all fields of endeavor. As individuals and as a collective unit, we will dare to be great.

Required Preparation: N/A

III. Course Attendance

Class will meet each Monday and Wednesday throughout the semester. You must complete ALL course requirements in order to earn a grade in this course. You are responsible for giving presentations on the dates when you are scheduled. Since your participation in this course – both as a speaker and listener – is vital, any absences from class will affect your final grade. You are, therefore, required to notify me BEFORE missing class and provide corresponding documentation AFTERWARD. In the event that both of these criteria are satisfied, you will receive “make up” assignments/projects to suffice for time missed from class. Please note that I will record an unexcused absence if you miss any considerable portion of the class period (arriving late, leaving early) without my prior authorization.

IV. Description and Assessment of Assignments

| | |
|--|--|
| Introduction Speech | You will deliver a 4-6 minute speech about a classmate, including a specific experience in their life and how it reflects on important personal/societal values. |
| Informative Speech | You will deliver a 6-8 minute Informative Speech – designed as a speech of demonstration, explanation or description – about an issue that will educate your audience on a new subject or expand their knowledge on a subject of familiarity. |
| Persuasive Speech (Fact or Value) | You will deliver an 8-10 minute Persuasive Speech on a question of fact or a question of value, arguing in support of that fact or value. |
| Persuasive Speech (Public Policy) | You will deliver an 8-11 minute Persuasive Speech on a question of public policy, supporting or opposing a specific policy mandated at a global, national, state or local level. |
| Term Paper: Rhetorical Analysis | You will write a 10-12 page (minimum) term paper that requires you to perform a rhetorical analysis of speeches given by two leaders in the public eye – one of which will be selected by your professor and the other by you. You will observe the speech via audio and video, and then analyze the speaker, the setting/context, the message and the impact on the immediate and intended audiences. |

V. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

| Assignment | Points | % of Grade |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Participation / Attendance / Projects | 50 | 8.33% |
| Introduction Speech: Narrative | 30 | 5.00% |
| Informative Speech | 60 | 10.00% |
| Persuasive Speech (Fact or Value) | 75 | 12.5% |
| Persuasive Speech (Public Policy) | 100 | 16.67% |
| Term Paper: Rhetorical Analysis | 100 | 16.67% |
| Midterm Exam | 75 | 12.5% |
| Final Report (Exam) | 110 | 18.33% |
| TOTAL | 600 | 100% |

b. Grading Scale

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

c. Grading Standards

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| A Level Grades | Demonstrates superior work performance and organizational skills, as well as mastery of subject matter and/or project requirements, including, but not limited to exceeding expectations in written/verbal communication, research methodologies, knowledge of material and practical application. |
| B Level Grades | Demonstrates commendable work performance and organizational skills, as well as a clear understanding of subject matter and/or project requirements, including, but not limited to reasonably meeting expectations in written/verbal communication, research methodologies, knowledge of material and practical application. |
| C Level Grades | Demonstrates basic level of work performance and organizational skills, as well as a basic understanding of subject matter and/or project requirements, including, but not limited to marginally meeting expectations in written/verbal communication, research methodologies, knowledge of material and practical application. |
| D Level Grades or Below | Demonstrates insufficient work performance and organizational skills, as well as an insufficient understanding of subject matter and/or project requirements; including a deficiency in fulfilling expectations in written/verbal communication, research methodologies, knowledge of material and practical application. |

d. Grading Timeline

I make myself available to review any work, except exams and term papers, if student sends me a complete rough draft at least one week prior to the due date (or delivery date). Most projects are graded within one to two weeks of the assignment being completed by all students (note: presentations are not always delivered on the same date). I offer extensive feedback on my evaluation forms for presentations.

VI. Assignment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics are discussed individually during class.

VII. Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments are posted on Blackboard with detailed instructions and due dates. Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Late work, if accepted, may be penalized. Typically, late submissions will result in 10% grade deduction per day late. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with me of any late assignment may result in the student receiving a grade of F for that late assignment. **Assignments must be submitted via e-mail with Word, PPT or PDF attachments** (not Google Drive, not Blackboard, not MAM).

VIII. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Osborn, M & Osborn, S. *Public Speaking: Finding Your Voice. 11th ed.*
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2017.
ISBN-13: 9780134380926

Additional materials are available via e-mail and/or the university's Blackboard course site

IX. 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.

X. Add/Drop Dates

Fall Semester 2023 (15 weeks: 8/21/23 – 12/1/23)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Friday, September 8: | Last day to register and add classes |
| Friday, September 8: | Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance |
| Friday, October 6: | Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript |
| Friday, October 6: | Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade |
| Friday, November 10: | Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W" |

XI. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Subject to change, based on progress of the class, news events, activities, guest speaker availability, etc.

| | Daily Topics/Activities Covered in Class | Assigned Readings (O&O 11th ed) | Assign Dates / Due Dates |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Week 1 August 21 | Overview of Course | | |
| August 23 | Foundational Theory Finding Your Voice Communication Apprehension Preparing for the First Presentation | Chapters 1, 2, 3 | |
| Week 2 August 28 | Topic selection, Purpose of speech Speech Structure & Outlining | Chapter 6 Chapter 9 | Assign Speech #1 |
| August 30 | Supporting Your Ideas Building | Chapter 8 | |
| Week 3 September 4 | NO CLASS | | |
| September 6 | Adapting to Audience & Situation Responsible Knowledge (Class via Zoom) | Chapter 5 Chapter 7 | Outline DUE |
| Week 4 September 11 | Deliver Speech #1 | | |
| September 13 | Developing Presentation Types Informative Speaking | Chapter 12 Chapter 13 | Assign Speech #2 |
| Week 5 September 18 | Evolution of Rhetorical Theory Early Greek Oratory & Citizenship Plato's inquiry into rhetoric: ethics Aristotle: philosophical significance Cicero: wisdom and eloquence Impact of democracy on rhetoric | "Classical Origins of Public Speaking" | |
| September 20 | Classical Origins (cont.) | | |
| Week 6 September 25 | Deliver Speech #2 | | Outline DUE |
| September 27 | Deliver Speech #2 | | Outline DUE |

COMM 204 – Wissot
Syllabus (cont.)

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Week 7 October 2 | Midterm Exam | O&O 1-3, 5-9, 12-13 | Zoom / Blackboard |
| October 4 | Listening Group Communication | Chapter 4 Appendix A | |
| Week 8 October 9 | Presentation Aids Ceremonial Speaking | Chapter 10 Chapter 16 | Assign Speech #3 |
| October 11 | Using Language Effectively | Chapter 11 | |
| Week 9 October 16 | Persuasive Speaking | Chapter 14 | |
| October 18 | Building Powerful Arguments | Chapter 15 | |
| Week 10 October 23 | Deliver Speech #3 | | Outline DUE |
| October 25 | Deliver Speech #3 | | Outline DUE |
| Week 11 October 30 | Workshop on Speech #3 / Review Review Public Policies Debate Activity | | Assign Speech #4 |
| November 1 | Rhetorical Analysis: In-Class | RR | |
| Week 12 November 6 | Rhetorical Analysis: Group Project | RN/TB | Assign Term Paper |
| November 8 | Judging Rhetoric | Evaluating Rhetorical Act | |
| Week 13 November 13 | Deliver Speech #4 | | Outline DUE |
| November 15 | Deliver Speech #4 | | Outline DUE |
| Week 14 November 20 | Activity – TBD | | Term Paper DUE |
| November 22 | NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING | | |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Week 15 November 27 | Cultural Communication Activity | | |
| November 29 | Final Exam Review Session | | |
| Final Exam December 11 8am-10:30am | Final Examination | O&O 4, 10-11, 14-16 and partial material from Test 1 | Zoom / Blackboard |

XII. Additional Class Policies and Procedures

a. Technology

Using laptops and/or mobile device to access the Internet and/or e-mail during class time to partake in non-class-related activity is not permitted. **Any violation of this policy may result in the loss of all participation points for the entire semester, as well as other measures under university policy.**

b. Late Submissions

Late submissions on assignments will result in a 10% grade deduction for every day late.

c. Student Conduct

Class behavior will be predicated on an environment of mutual respect. Any level of disruptive or threatening student behavior is unacceptable. We are here to learn from each other in a non-threatening environment. You are encouraged to formulate and share opinions with due discretion, as well as be comfortable in practicing communication techniques and debating ideas in a safe environment. However, any behavior that is deemed disrespectful by the instructor will affect your participation points.

d. Lecture Slides & Notes

Lecture slides are not posted, so students are encouraged to attend all classes and take thorough notes. Students may request a review of prior material, which often occurs periodically throughout the semester.

XIII. Communication

Please e-mail, text or call me with any questions or concerns about anything related to the class and/or career planning, especially if you are unable to meet during my office hours. I typically respond fastest via e-mail (within 24-48 hours), and I'm interested in helping you with anything on your mind.

XIV. Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Integrity & Conduct

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code as detailed in the SCampus guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor. If you have any doubts about what is and is not an academic integrity violation, please check with me immediately. The University presumes that you are familiar with its standards and policies; should you be found to have committed a violation, ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse.

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

b. Support Systems

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

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. Please know that I care deeply about your mental health, and I want to make sure that you are receiving the full support of the university. Please let me know if you are struggling with any mental health issues. We all need support.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

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

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 / *Title IX* – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

**COMM 204 – Wissot
Syllabus (cont.)**

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

usc-advocate.symlicity.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

annenbergsuccessfund.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

undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/

Please note that I am always open to meeting separately with my students through USC's Breaking Bread Program, which is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal academic 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! The meal can take place outside of the normal academic setting. The venue can be a restaurant or eatery, on or off-campus.

XV. About Your Professor: [Michael Wissot](#)

Michael Wissot has transformed political and corporate communication platforms in every major sector, serving as the choice expert for many Fortune 500 executives and top elected officials seeking strategic counsel. His expertise includes message development, crisis communication, market research, labor disputes, press conferences, political debates, speechwriting, branding and advertising. He has provided counsel for Coca-Cola, Kroger, Safeway, Pfizer, Miller Brewing, FOX Sports, Comcast, Thomson Reuters, News Corporation, Ameriquest Mortgage, Paramount Pictures, Universal, 20th Century FOX, MPAA, Wynn Las Vegas, MGM Mirage, Starwood Hotels, University of Phoenix, Los Angeles Dodgers, Milwaukee Brewers, San Francisco Giants, Baltimore Orioles, Arizona Diamondbacks, and National Football League. He has managed communication initiatives for Senator John McCain, President George W. Bush, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor Luis Fortuño, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and other world leaders. He has served as a political analyst on national television and radio. He co-authored a popular business book, "The 10 People Who Suck: A Positive Prescription for Improving Communication in the Workplace." He has taught at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism since 2010 after serving seven years as an adjunct professor at Pepperdine University.