

COM 1040: Public Speaking

Summer II 2003

Monday & Wednesday

9:00a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Brown Hall 2020

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About the course: Recent employer surveys indicate that strong verbal communication skills combined with solid writing skills are among the most desired skills for new employees. Although public speaking may cause apprehension for some, it is a method of communication that you will use every day of your life. This course will introduce you to the theory and practice of public speaking. Through class lectures, videos you watch and critique, assigned readings, presentations you make, feedback you provide others and feedback others provide you, it is my goal to help you achieve the following:

- To become a more confident public speaker than you are today.
- To become a more polished and competent public speaker than you are today.
- To increase your understanding of the theory and principles of public speaking.
- To heighten your appreciation of public speaking as a tool to create and convey effective messages

We will work together during class to achieve these objectives in a supportive classroom environment. Your continued practice will make you an effective public speaker. This may be one of the most important courses you take during your college career.

Course materials:

The required text for this class is:

- Beebe, S.A. and Beebe, S.J. (2000), *Public Speaking: An Audience Centered Approach*, 5th Ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

You will need to purchase the following materials to prepare yourself for your presentations:

- 4 x 6 index/note cards for your speaking notes.
- Visual aid materials as needed (poster board, markers, etc).
- A two pocket folder to submit your assignments in.

Course Policies

Attendance

In order to meet the requirements for this course, you are expected to attend each class session and present your speech at the assigned time. During lecture, plan to take notes, ask questions and

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participate in discussions. When speeches are being given I expect you to be an active listener, a courteous audience and to offer feedback to your peers.

You will be permitted one class absence without penalty, providing you do not have to give a speech or take a test that day. After that, each recorded absence will result in a 20 point penalty on the course grade. You will not be allowed to make up classroom assignments, even for excused absences; our schedule will not permit it.

Excessive absences will require verifiable documents such as a doctor's note, court documentation, etc. Documentation must be presented to the professor at the next scheduled class session.

Class will begin on time, so plan accordingly. If you are late, never enter a room during a presentation by a classmate. In order to be considered present, you must be in class at the beginning of the session and remain for the entire class period.

My primary concern is to provide you a positive learning experience; however I am also concerned about your emotional, physical and psychological well being. If you have problems meeting the requirements of this course, for any reason, please contact me as quickly as possible so we can determine a solution together.

Cell Phones and Pagers: Please turn them off during class.

Academic Integrity: You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate Catalog (p 268-269) that pertain to academic integrity. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test. (Western Michigan University Faculty Senate, December 4, 2002).

Writing Style:

APA style is to be used for all assignments. Copies of the APA handbook are available in the library, the University Writing Center and in the reserve folder in the Communication Resource Center. Make certain your work is proofed for grammar, spelling and neatness. **Do Not Rely on Spell Check to Proofread Your Work!** I will deduct ½ point for each spelling and/or grammar error I detect.

Only typewritten assignments will be accepted. Please staple papers. Always save your work on a disk or keep a hard copy. While I hope never to lose a student's assignment, you should make and retain a copy of all work you submit.

Deadlines:

All outlines are due immediately after your speech. Submit your speech in your 2 pocket folder at the conclusion of your speech. Speech outlines will not be accepted after the class ends.

Speech and Test Cancellation:

Speeches cannot be re-scheduled, unless an absence is approved (see attendance above). Our schedule does not allow time for make-ups. If you switch speaking times with a classmate, please let me of the switch, in advance. In order to switch times, both parties must agree to the switch.

If I cannot make it to class, either someone will substitute for me, or someone will arrive near the beginning of class to inform you of my absence. Allow fifteen (15) minutes for me to arrive before you leave the classroom.

If class is canceled on the day of an exam, presume the exam will be given during the next class meeting. If class is canceled during the session prior to an exam, presume the exam will be given at its scheduled time. If class is canceled on the day of assigned speeches, presume we will continue with the speeches assigned for the class session we resume, **NOT** those speeches that were scheduled for the missed class session.

If a student has an excused absence during the mid-term exam class session, they will be allowed to take the exam early. Students must take the final exam when scheduled.

Assignments**Speech Assignments**

Five primary speeches will be assigned. These speeches are designed to improve your speaking skills in a variety of ways. While each speech will be discussed in detail later, here is a brief description of each:

Introductory speech: This 2-4 minutes speech will allow you to speak about a topic you are familiar with...you. You should provide a brief history of yourself (birthplace, family, significant life events), your academic goals, future career and family plans, hobbies, what makes you who you are and if you had it all to do over again, what would you change, if anything, personal and community interests. No outline is required for this speech. However, you must hand in a 4 x 6 card to me that includes your name, address, e-mail address and phone number. The card serves two purposes. First, they let me know how to contact you. Secondly, they will be used to create a class phone and email list. If you do not want your phone number or email address distributed, please indicate so on your card. Since this is the first speech you present, it will be graded with the most leniency. No visual aids or audio-visual will be allowed during this presentation.

How-to or demonstration speech: During this 4-6 minute speech, you will "TEACH" the class how to do something that you already know how to do. Explaining how to do something is not enough; it must be demonstrated. This means you will need props, visual aids, and be able to use them accordingly when presenting to the class. Some ideas may be:

1. How to perform a magic trick
2. How to make a peanut butter & jelly sandwich
3. How to swing dance
4. How to repot a plant

The key to this speech is your organizational skills and effective use of visual aids. If you are doing a presentation that requires advanced preparation, please let me know so arrangements can be made ahead of time. If you are doing a cooking or baking project, you can demonstrate all the steps in class and then present the finished product. You can have all ingredients pre-measured and ready to go. No cooking or baking can be done in class. Keep in mind that if you do a food presentation you must provide enough for the entire class.

Visual aids should be large enough for the entire class to see and be appropriate for the speech.

Impromptu Speech: Have you ever been asked to present something on the spur of the moment? Did you have anxiety? Did you feel unprepared? Impromptu speeches can cause the most anxiety and be the most difficult for any public speaker.

For this 2-3 minute speech you will draw a topic and have about 3 minutes to prepare your speech. Actually, you will draw your speech topic just before the person ahead of you begins their speech. Topics are random and have been selected by the instructor. You will not be graded on the validity of the facts, so have some fun with this.

To prepare for this speech you may want to prepare a blank outline to fill in as you prepare your speech. You will want to be organized and sound convincing.

Topics may include, but are not limited to: pro-athlete salaries, the value of a college education, the value of telemarketing, should freshman be bring cars to campus.

Infomercial speech: We have all seen them. Most of us dislike them, yet we watch them...infomercials. They are on our T.V, somewhere 24 hours a day. They sell “practical” products that we don’t know how we ever lived without, all for the low, low price of \$19.95 (plus shipping & handling).

For this 1-2 minute speech you need to create a product and put together you own infomercial, complete with “perks” for buying in the next 30 minutes. You need to provide a sample of your product, what it does, why we must buy it and how much it costs. If you can solicit someone to provide a testimonial, that is fine.

It doesn’t matter what the product does (as long as it can be presented in front of a co-ed group and the professor). Be creative, but remember **all products must be professor approved, in advance.**

Plan to bring props and be well organized. Since this is 1-2 minutes maximum, plan to hit quick, leave a phone number and a good impression and sit down.

Persuasive Speech: We have all been in arguments. We all hate to lose. This speech provides you an opportunity to present your side of an argument. You will select your own topic, based on your passion for it. You will need to research and present evidence during your presentation. Facts are the key! Facts from credible sources sway public opinion faster. You want to sound convincing.

Your topics should be suitable for a co-ed class. Some ideas include:

- Legalization of marijuana
- Raising the driving age from 16 to 18
- The seatbelt law
- Designated hitter rule in baseball

This speech will be 5-6 minutes long. It should be well organized, focused and presented in a logical order. This speech will be most effective if your materials are well organized. No visual aids or audio-visual is allowed.

Speech Expectations

Be mindful of the following:

- A full-sentence, **typed** outline is required for each speech. (Handwritten outlines will not be accepted). This outline should include references used in researching your speech topic. Your outline should be turned in to me at the conclusion of your speech.
- Appropriate dress is expected for each speech. With the exception of a speech which might necessitate clothing as part of the topic or for visual aids, professional dress is expected.
- Disrespect of any classmate during a speech presentation will result in a zero (0) for that speech. Laughing, talking, or distracting speakers is not acceptable. If I ask you to leave class because of your disruptive behavior, please do so quickly and quietly. If you are asked to leave class, it will result in an unexcused absence for the session and a zero (0) for your speech if it happens on your presentation day.
- Feedback is an important part of the speaking process. Constructive feedback for your classmates is expected. Personal attacks and insults of a speaker will result in a zero (0) of your speech grade for that topic.
- Time limits will be enforced on all speeches. There will be a 15 second grace period (over or under) for each speaker. After that, five (5) points will be deducted for every 15 seconds over or under. Practicing your speech will ensure you are within your time limits.

Grading

Criteria for Grading Speeches

A specific evaluation form will be used for evaluating speeches. The following information can serve as a guideline and understanding of what is expected of your speech presentation.

To receive an A on your speech, you must meet the following standards. You meet and exceed the requirements for a BA or B speech by demonstrating imagination and creativity in topic selection and development; developing and maintaining strong bonds of identification among the speaker, audience and topic; consistently adapting information and supporting materials to the experiences of your audience; having an even greater depth of research; making creative use of language and stylistic techniques, and giving a polished presentation that integrates verbal and nonverbal techniques.

To receive a BA or B on your speech, you must meet the following standards. You must meet and exceed the requirements of a CB or C speech by choosing a challenging topic and adapting it appropriately to your audience; reflecting a greater depth of research; identifying the sources of your information and ideas; creating and sustaining your audience's attention throughout the

speech; making effective use of transitions; making a poised presentation and having a good verbal style.

To receive a CB or C on your speech, you must meet the following standards. Your speech must be original, appropriate to the assignment and audience; sufficiently focused and timed; well supported with facts and figures, testimony, examples and/or narratives; well-developed with an introduction, body and conclusion; organized with main ideas arranged using an appropriate design strategy; delivered extemporaneously with effective language use and must satisfy the technical requirements of the specific assignment.

A DC or D speech does not meet one or more of the standards for a CB or C speech or it is obviously unrehearsed, and/or is based entirely on biased information or unsupported opinions.

An E speech does not meet three or more of the standards for a CB or C speech, reflects either of the problems associated with a DC or C speech, or it uses fabricated supporting material, deliberately distorts evidence, and/or is plagiarized.

Peer Speech Feedback

Peer feedback is an important part of the speaking process. You will learn effective speaking techniques by watching others and through practice. Evaluations are short and will be done in class. You are required to evaluate two classmates each speech. You will receive a total of three evaluations for each speech you give; mine and two of your peers.

Public Speech Evaluation

In addition to watching and evaluating your fellow classmates, it is also important to be able to evaluate public speakers in a “real” environment. To that end, each student will attend one public forum and evaluate one of the speakers. This evaluation may occur at an event on campus, in the community, at a local city council meeting, or at an event in your home town.

The only restriction is the person you are evaluating cannot be a student. You are responsible for finding a public speech appropriate for class. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of the speech, then it probably is not appropriate.

Your written evaluation of the speech should be 1-2 pages in length and answer the following questions:

- 1) What was the event?
- 2) Why was the speaker speaking?
- 3) What is the position or credentials of the speaker?
- 4) What were the main points of the speech?
- 5) What did the speaker do well?
- 6) What could the speaker have done to improve the speech?
- 7) What was your overall impression of the speech?

Tests and Other Assignments

The material presented in class lectures, reading assignments and videos will be tested through the mid-term and the final examination. In accordance with departmental and University policies, the

final exam will be comprehensive. Both of these exams will be multiple choice, true/false, matching and/or short answer in nature.

Bonus Points

During the course of the semester, there may be events I would like you to attend, but which are outside the scope of the class. In these instances, bonus points will be awarded for your attendance and participation in these activities. Any bonus activities will require proof of attendance and a short reflection paper on the experience. Paper length will be specified at the time the opportunity is announced.

Extra Credit Assignments

Extra credit assignments will not be offered to any student.

Grading Scale

Your assignments with corresponding points and grading scale are as follows:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|---------------|
| How to Speech | 10% | 100 pts |
| Persuasive Speech | 15% | 100 pts |
| Impromptu Speech | 10% | 100 pts |
| Introductory Speech | 5% | 100 pts |
| Infomercial Speech | 15% | 100 pts |
| Public Speech Evaluation | 10% | 100 pts |
| Attendance & Class Participation | 5% | 100 pts |
| Midterm | 15% | 100 pts |
| Final (Comprehensive) Exam | 15% | 100 pts |
| Total | | 900pts |

The grading scale is based up the Department of Communication standard scale and is listed below:

| | | |
|----|---|-------------|
| A | = | 94 % - 100% |
| BA | = | 88% - 93% |
| B | = | 82% - 87% |
| CB | = | 76% - 81% |
| C | = | 70% - 75% |
| DC | = | 65% - 69% |
| D | = | 60% - 64% |
| E | = | 0% - 59% |

Note to All Communication/Journalism Majors and Minors

Please refer to the Department of Communication website at www.wmich.edu/communication for important information regarding registration requirements, and academic policies. Also, please check our website periodically for any new announcements or news.

Changes to the Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.