

# PUBLIC SPEAKING SYLLABUS

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Speaking well in public is a skill that requires practice, and it is relevant in all aspect of personal and professional life. This class offers students the opportunity to practice and develop their public speaking for both classroom presentations and for speeches in other contexts. We will read and discuss best practices and theories for 1) selecting appropriate content for the type of speech and audience, 2) strategies for researching a topic, 3) methods for organizing a speech, and 4) elements of delivery style. We will practice methods for combatting stage fright as well as active listening. The class is designed to give students the tools for becoming confident public speakers, in the classroom and beyond.

## TEACHING METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to attend class on time, take notes, and engage in class discussion. Students will be asked to offer constructive and detailed feedback and to ask follow-up questions on other students' speeches. Class will involve lecture, research methods, speech-delivery, engaged conversation, and listening. Each week we will address different strategies for gaining confidence in public speaking, and students are expected to integrate these strategies into their public speaking as the class progresses.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Students will research, outline, craft, and deliver five speeches: a short introductory speech, a celebratory speech, an informative speech, a persuasive speech, and a speech with visual aids. Students will also compose one analysis of a speech from outside of class and several informal feedback forms for other students' presentations.

## TEXTBOOKS

The textbook is *The Art of Public Speaking* by Stephen E. Lucas. Any recent edition, from the 8th edition (2003) to the most recent, is acceptable.

I also recommend *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace* by Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup. Any recent edition, such as the eleventh edition (2014) to the most recent, is acceptable.

## TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF THE CLASS

### Week 1: Introduction/Celebratory Speeches

Students will introduce themselves to the class and later in the week give a speech introducing a famous person whose achievements they admire and value. These two short speeches focus on constructing a cohesive and concise narrative for oneself and for someone else. Students will also learn strategies for body language when delivering a speech and for overcoming nervousness.

### Week 2: Informative Speech

Students will view selected videos inside and outside of class of informative speeches and the class will address their content, organization, and delivery in class. Students will research a chosen topic, outline their speech, and deliver the speech to the class. Students will learn verbal strategies for transitions, pauses, and responding to questions after their speeches. The class will also address active listening skills and productive forms of questions and feedback.

### Week 3: Persuasive Speech

Students will assess their areas for improvement and the class will focus on strategies for advancing their speech-making and delivery. Students will learn about elements of persuasion and debate in style, rhetoric, speech layout, and delivery.

### Week 4: Visual/Sensory Aid Speech

Students will develop the topic from either their informative speech or persuasive speech for their final speech that includes visual or sensory aids (PowerPoint, Prezi, posters, etc.). This final speech will be a cumulative presentation that incorporates strategies for delivery and presentation. Students will be able to offer constructive feedback to their peers based on the elements of speech-making, delivery, and listening skills from throughout the course.

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