

**Syllabus**  
Communication Arts and Sciences 100A Section 205  
Effective Public Speaking  
Summer, 2003

Instructor: Brett Lunceford  
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Please note: Penn State encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. This syllabus can be made available in alternate formats for students who require this assistance. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please let me know as soon as possible.

**Texts and Materials:**

- Zarefsky, David. Public Speaking: Strategies for Success. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (custom edition) Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2002.
- OLLE (available through registration materials in textbook)
- *The New York Times*
- VHS videotape
- 3x5 or 4x6 note cards

**Course Description:** This course is designed to help you develop your public speaking, critical listening and evaluation skills. In addition, you will have the opportunity to select topics of significance to you and to the greater society. We will explore the key components of public speaking, including speaker, audience, message, and occasion. Through readings, assignments, lecture, discussion and classroom speaking-listening situations, you will have the opportunity to increase your understanding of, and skill in, public presentations and critical message analysis.

**Course Objectives:**

- To develop critical thinking skills
- To develop active listening skills
- To develop outlining skills and general organizational ability
- To apply concepts of reasoning and evidence to present ideas more clearly
- To understand the importance of personal ethics in public speaking
- To evaluate the role of public speaking within society
- To develop a greater sense of confidence speaking in front of a group

## **REQUIRED ACTIVITIES:**

### **Oral Assignments**

**Speech of Introduction:** You will give a 1-2 minute speech in which you introduce yourself to your audience. You are not required to disclose any information that you consider too personal or private. The goals of this speech are to allow you and your classmates to get to know each other better (you are all in the same boat!), and to give you a “free” opportunity to speak in front of a group. This speech is evaluated as part of your overall participation in the course.

**Informative Speech:** You will inform the audience about an important idea, process or concept. The speech will be 4-6 minutes in length and accounts for 10% of the course grade. A visual aid is optional for this speech.

**Persuasive Speech I:** You will persuade your audience that there is a problem and that you have a clear solution to the problem. The speech will be 5-7 minutes in length and accounts for 15% of the course grade. A visual aid is required for this speech.

**Persuasive Speech II:** In this speech you will persuade your audience regarding a question of fact, value, or policy. You may seek either passive agreement or immediate action from the audience. The speech will be 6-8 minutes in length and accounts for 25% of the course grade. A visual aid is optional for this speech.

**Group Symposium Speech:** You will work with a group of your classmates to analyze a message or set of messages and present your findings to the class. Your goal might be to inform the audience, or you may find that your group needs to both inform and persuade the audience. The group presentation will be 15-20 minutes in length and accounts for 15% of the course grade. A visual aid is optional for this speech.

**Miscellaneous speech assignments:** You will have the opportunity to present brief speeches throughout the semester. These generally will be of an impromptu nature and are graded as part of your participation in the class.

### **Written Assignments**

**Topic Memos:** Prior to giving each speech (except for the speech of introduction), you will submit a memo identifying your topic, thesis statement, exigency, and why you are a credible source for this topic. Due dates are indicated in the syllabus. Topic memos are graded as part of your overall participation in the course.

**Outlines:** A full sentence outline for each of the three graded presentations is due on the day you speak-- **before** you give your speech. Outlines must be typed and must include a full bibliography. Your outline is graded as part of your overall speech grade for each speech. This means that you can lose up to a full letter grade on your overall speech grade by submitting a poor quality outline.

**Exam:** There will be one in-class exam, designed to test your knowledge of the theoretical and practical aspects of public speaking and message analysis. The exam is based on both reading and lecture materials. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the substantive aspects of the course. The exam accounts for 10% of the course grade.

**Rhetorical Critique:** You will write an individual short paper on the message(s) that you are analyzing for the group symposium. The paper will be approximately four (4) pages in length and will account for 10% of the course grade.

**Miscellaneous written assignments:** You will engage in various written assignments throughout the semester. These are graded as part of your participation in the course. Unless otherwise specified, these assignments will be typed.

**Grade Distribution:** Grading is based on a 1000 point scale:

|                           |               |     |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----|
| Informative Speech        | 4-6 minutes   | 100 |
| Persuasive Speech I       | 5-7 minutes   | 150 |
| Persuasive Speech II      | 6-8 minutes   | 250 |
| Group Symposium           | 15-20 minutes | 150 |
| Rhetorical Analysis Paper |               | 100 |
| Exam                      |               | 100 |
| Participation             |               | 150 |

**Grade Scale: (1000 points)**

|                |                |                   |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| A = 930 – 1000 | B = 830 - 869  | C = 700 - 749     |
| A- = 900 - 929 | B- = 800 - 829 | D = 600 - 699     |
| B+ = 870 - 899 | C+ = 750 - 799 | F = 599 and below |

**Teaching Philosophy and Course Policies**

I believe that every student in my class has the ability to succeed in this course. My goal is to create a comfortable environment in which you can explore and improve your ability to think critically and speak well in front of an audience. I do not “give” grades; students earn grades. While this may seem like semantic hair splitting, it is an important distinction. There are no secrets to getting a good grade in this course. Students receive the grading criteria early on. My job is to push students to do their best and to then exceed that standard. However, this is futile unless I also provide the support and assistance that each student needs to excel. Therefore, I provide office hours and expect students to use them. I strive to provide the tools and support necessary for each student to succeed.

Many of the policies below may seem obvious, but having these policies clearly stated allows you to understand fully the commitment you are making to this course and the commitment I am making to you. This course is audience-centered as well as speaker-centered. You will play a vital role as a member of "the public" for other speakers. In addition, you are paying in both money and time for your education. Therefore, I expect that you actively participate in your learning process. **This course is very demanding of your time and attention.**

1. Consider the syllabus required reading for the course. Make a note of how to contact me somewhere other than your syllabus. Due dates are indicated in the syllabus and you are responsible for submitting work by the due date. Any changes in the course schedule due to unforeseen circumstances will be discussed in class.
2. **Attendance**—Attendance is vital to the success of this course. Attendance will be taken at some point during each class, and you are responsible for making sure you are accounted for. At the end of the semester I will not accept "I came in late but forgot to make sure I was counted on the roll." You are responsible for obtaining assignments and notes on any missed lectures. Absences in excess of two will result in a loss of 40 points per absence, except for university sanctioned, fully documented excuses. Should you consistently arrive late or leave early, I will count these as partial absences; three late days will count as one full absence. **It is entirely possible to do extremely well on your speeches and to fail the course based on excess absences.**
3. **Speaking days**—You must speak on your scheduled days, which will be determined in advance. Failure to speak on your scheduled day without prior notification to the instructor will result in a zero for the presentation. If you need to change the date on which you speak, you may trade speaking days with another student, but you are responsible for making any switch with another student, and you must let me know in advance. You must be sure that both parties are prepared for the days on which they have agreed to speak. Speeches delivered after the scheduled speaking day without trading with a fellow student, **if permitted**, will earn (at best) a grade of "C."
4. **Exam**—You must complete the exam on the day it is given. Anyone missing the exam will receive an "F." The only exceptions made will be for fully documented, university sanctioned excuses.
5. All assignments must be typed unless otherwise specified. The outline, with full bibliography, is due on the day you speak, before giving your speech.
6. All speeches should be delivered extemporaneously (unless otherwise specified)--not memorized or read from a manuscript but spoken conversationally, using notes. Speakers are expected to present their speeches in a professional manner on the day assigned. I will give you thorough feedback regarding your speech and the grade you have earned.
7. **Speech Evaluation Questions**—Should you have questions about any of your assignments, please feel free to see me. I cannot answer your questions or help you improve your performance if you don't talk with me. Sometimes students confuse a speech evaluation with an evaluation of themselves as individuals. My comments about your speech are a reflection of that assignment, not a reflection of you as a person.
  - I will meet individually with each student in my office after the student has viewed the recording of his or her speech and completed the self-evaluation. The student should be prepared to discuss the speech based on the grading criteria and the parameters of the assignment.
  - After discussing the speech, the student and I will negotiate a grade for the

performance. If you believe that the grade that I would assign is unfair, this is your opportunity to defend your claim. However, this should be done within the confines of the grading criteria. Simply saying that you do not agree with the grading criteria is not sufficient.

- After this meeting, grades will only be re-evaluated in extreme circumstances. Therefore, it is important to come to the meeting prepared to discuss your speech.
- Once again, this grade does not reflect my views on you as a person or on the topic itself. Most importantly, it cannot reflect the degree of effort that you have put into the speech. This is a performance based course and I can only grade the performance itself. A speech that does not meet even the basic criteria of the assignment cannot receive an “A” no matter how well intentioned or how much effort the student put into the speech.

8. **Other Evaluation Questions**—To help you think carefully about your speech and present a cogent case if you disagree with an evaluation, the following criteria will be applied:

- a. I **NEVER** discuss a student’s assignment immediately after returning a paper, outline, or exam. I spent time evaluating your work and you, in turn, can’t make an adequate assessment of your performance until you have taken the time to read my comments. I am happy to discuss your grades with you 24 hours or more after your speech or assignment has been returned to you.
- b. You must see me within one week of receiving your graded assignment from me.
- c. You must identify specifically what you disagree with in the evaluation, why you disagree with that point, and how you think you met or exceeded the requirements of the assignment.
- d. To help both of us clearly understand the issues in question, you must present your concerns in writing and meet me during office hours to discuss the issue.

9. **Course Director**—If you have a problem in the class, whether regarding grades or some other aspect of the course, please talk with me first. If we can’t resolve the situation, or if you feel uncomfortable talking with me, please contact Dr. Chris Johnstone, 221 Sparks, 865-1948, [clj3@psu.edu](mailto:clj3@psu.edu). We both want you to have a positive experience in this course.

10. **Respect and Courtesy**—You will likely hear class members express ideas and opinions very different from your own. You can listen to opposing viewpoints and respect others’ right to hold differing perspectives without compromising your own beliefs or values. Be polite. Constructive feedback is a balance of honesty, respect, and sensitivity. Provide your classmates with specific and useful comments in a helpful and supportive manner. If you are late on a speech day, make sure that you wait until the speaker has finished, and enter between speakers. Be mature in giving and accepting criticism as you will find yourself both receiving constructive feedback as well as giving it. Don’t over-react to suggestions for improvement. No presentation is perfect and no critique is all knowing. We are all learning as we engage in this experience. Constructive criticism is not a personal attack.

11. Part of your class participation will be in the form of providing written feedback for speakers throughout the semester. This feedback will focus on what the speaker did well and

what he or she needs to improve. All members of the class will provide speakers with feedback during the course of the semester. These evaluations will be handed in to the instructor at the end of the class in which the speech was given and will be given to the speaker along with my evaluation of the speech.

12. Assigned readings are to be completed before class on the day they will be discussed. You are responsible for asking questions based on the readings.

13. **Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty is defined as follows: “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students” (The University Faculty Senate Policies for Students). In this course, cases of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 49-20. For more details, you can access the University Faculty Senate Policies for Students from the Penn State home page. If you have any questions or concerns regarding what constitutes plagiarism, please see me. There are plenty of past speeches and assignments floating around a campus as large as Penn State. If you find yourself tempted to use someone else’s work and pass it off as your own, ask yourself this question: “Is cheating on this assignment worth failing the entire course, or being expelled from college?” The course director and I will vigorously pursue any suspected case of plagiarism.

**Course Schedule**  
(Subject to change)

**Week 1**

|           |         |                    |  |
|-----------|---------|--------------------|--|
| Monday    | June 30 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 1 and Appendix A   |
|           |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Introduction to the course and policies<br>Introduction to public speaking<br>Using your voice<br>The rhetorical situation |
| Tuesday   | July 1  | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 2 & 3  |
|           |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Listening<br>Audience analysis<br>Prepare for speech of introduction   |
|           |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—The rhetorical situation<br>OLLE---Plagiarism<br>OLLE—Audience (Listening)<br>OLLE—Audience (Analysis)                |
| Wednesday | July 2  | <b>Activity:</b>   | Speech of introduction   |
| Thursday  | July 3  | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 4 & 5  |
|           |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Selecting a topic<br>Researching a speech topic  |
|           |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Speech (Topic Selection)<br>OLLE—Speech (Research)<br><b>Informative Speech Assigned</b>                              |
| Friday    | July 4  | <b>No Class</b>    |  |

**Week 2**

|           |        |                    |  |
|-----------|--------|--------------------|--|
| Monday    | July 7 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 13 & 14  |
|           |        | <b>Activity:</b>   | Informative vs. persuasive speaking  |
|           |        | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Occasion (Informative)<br><b>Topic Memo due—Informative Speech</b>        |
| Tuesday   | July 8 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 7 & 8  |
|           |        | <b>Activity:</b>   | Organizing the body of a speech<br>Introductions, conclusions, and transitions |
|           |        | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Speech (Speech Body)<br>OLLE—Speech (Intro/conclusion)                    |
| Wednesday | July 9 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 9 & Walter Ong handout   |

|               |         |                    |  |
|---------------|---------|--------------------|--|
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Outlining and structure<br>Ethical responsibilities of a speaker                         |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Speech (Outlining)<br>OLLE—Speaker (Ethics)   |
| Thursday      | July 10 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 10   |
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Language / Willard Preacher observation  |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Speaker (Language)  |
| Friday        | July 11 | <b>Activity:</b>   | Informative Speech due   |
| <b>Week 3</b> |         |                    |  |
| Monday        | July 14 | <b>Activity:</b>   | Informative Speech due   |
| Tuesday       | July 15 | <b>Activity:</b>   | Informative Speech due   |
| Wednesday     | July 16 | <b>Activity:</b>   | Informative Speech due<br><b>Form groups for symposium</b>                               |
| Thursday      | July 17 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 17 and handouts  |
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Rhetorical criticism   |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Citizen Critic (rhetorical criticism)   |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | <b>Rhetorical Critique assigned</b><br><b>Topic Memos due—Persuasive Speech I and II</b> |
| Friday        | July 18 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 14 (review) & 6  |
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Persuasion and reasoning   |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Occasion (Persuasive)   |
| <b>Week 4</b> |         |                    |  |
| Monday        | July 21 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 6  |
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Reasoning and fallacies  |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Speech (Reasoning)  |
| Tuesday       | July 22 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 16   |
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Small group communication  |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Occasion (Group Symposium)  |
| Wednesday     | July 23 | <b>Reading:</b>    | Ch. 11 & 12  |
|               |         | <b>Activity:</b>   | Visual aids<br>Delivery  |
|               |         | <b>Assignment:</b> | OLLE—Speaker (Delivery)<br><b>Rhetorical Critique Due</b>                                |



|               |          |                  |                            |
|---------------|----------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Thursday      | July 24  | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech I due    |
| Friday        | July 25  | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech I due    |
| <b>Week 5</b> |          |                  |                            |
| Monday        | July 28  | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech I due    |
| Tuesday       | July 29  | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech I due    |
| Wednesday     | July 30  | <b>Activity:</b> | <b>Exam</b>                |
| Thursday      | July 31  | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech II due   |
| Friday        | August 1 | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech II due   |
| <b>Week 6</b> |          |                  |                            |
| Monday        | August 4 | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech II due   |
| Tuesday       | August 5 | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech II due   |
| Wednesday     | August 6 | <b>Activity:</b> | Persuasive Speech II due   |
| Thursday      | August 7 | <b>Activity:</b> | Group Symposium Speech due |
| Friday        | August 8 | <b>Activity:</b> | Group Symposium Speech due |