

**CA 110: Public Speaking**

**Dr. Brett Lunceford**

**MTWRF: 12:40-2:35**

**MCOB 213**

**Office: UCOM 1219**

**Office Hours: MTWRF 9.00-10.15AM, and by appointment**

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**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.

This course has four main goals. During this course students will:

- Develop critical thinking and active listening skills
- Apply concepts of reasoning and evidence to present ideas clearly
- Learn to create presentations designed for oral delivery
- Develop a greater sense of confidence speaking in front of a group

These goals will be assessed in several ways. First and foremost, students will prepare well researched speeches and deliver them to the class. Students will also learn to evaluate their own speeches and those of others through the process of peer evaluation. This is, to some extent, a skills course, but students will also learn relevant rhetorical and communication theory that demonstrates how the practice of public speaking works.

I expect that each student will come to class prepared to discuss the readings for the day. According to the University of South Alabama's Academic Policies and Procedures, "Each hour of lecture usually requires two hours of outside preparation. Thus, a student carrying sixteen semester hours should be prepared to spend at least 48 hours in class and study per week."

**Required Texts**

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings will be available through the library's online course reserves.

**Class Climate**

The questions that we address in public speaking have no easy answers. There will be points where you may disagree with someone else. This is appropriate and, to some degree, desirable.

However, respect for others in the class is an essential component of this class. Arguments should be made in a spirit of inquiry rather than as personal attacks.

### **Attendance Policy**

This is a performance course. This entails not only showing up for your own speech, but also in serving as a member of the public for your colleagues. A large part of the learning in this course comes from the experiences you gain by delivering speeches and watching others do so.

Attendance is essential in this course. Excessive absences will negatively impact your grade in this course. If you are not present, you are not able to participate and it is impossible to make up the discussion or to see the speeches again. You get three absences free—no questions asked. However, after these absences, each absence will decrease your final grade by 5 points (half a letter grade), so use them wisely. In addition, there may be in-class activities that are impossible to make up. If you are absent, please do not email me asking, “What did I miss?” You missed 115 minutes of discussion and perhaps an assignment. Make friends with your classmates and get the notes from them and/or come to my office hours.

### **Academic Honesty**

From the Student Academic Conduct Policies: “Any dishonesty related to academic work or records constitutes academic misconduct including, but not limited to, activities such as giving or receiving unauthorized aid in tests and examinations, improperly obtaining a copy of an examination, plagiarism, misrepresentation of information, or altering transcripts or university records. . . . Penalties may range from the loss of credit for a particular assignment to dismissal from the University” (*The Lowdown*, p. 249). In short, don’t do it. I don’t like to bust students for plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty but I will. It isn’t fair to others and it isn’t fair to yourself. If you have any questions on what constitutes plagiarism, see <http://www.southalabama.edu/univlib/sauer/plagiarismforstudents.html>.

### **Grading Scale**

There are a total of 100 points available in this course:

Ceremonial Speech: 15  
Persuasive Speech I: 25  
Persuasive Speech II: 30  
Impromptu: 10  
Participation: 20

A=90-100; B=80-89.99; C=70-79.99; D=60-69.99; F=below 60

**Speech Evaluation:** Speech grades will not be assigned; they will be negotiated. This is an opportunity to critically analyze your performance. You will each have a copy of the rubric that I will use to determine your grade, so the criteria will be known well in advance. Here is the process that each of you will follow.

- 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. If possible, this should be the day after the speech is given. 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.
- Recognize that 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. A speech is a performance 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.

### **Assignments**

**Ceremonial Speech:** This is the speech that you are most likely to give throughout your life. In this speech you will deliver a speech such as a funeral eulogy, a wedding toast, or a similar commemorative speech. With the occasion taking place before Independence Day, one could deliver a commemoration of the United States as a nation. This is open, but I require that you email me and tell me what you plan to speak on. This speech will be 3-5 minutes long.

**Persuasive Speech I:** In this speech you will attempt to persuade the audience concerning some question of fact, value, or policy. The only requirements for the speech is that there exists some reason for this audience to hear the speech at this time (you cannot pretend that you are addressing the United Nations, nor is this the time to convince the class that we should send our children to private high schools) and that you are a credible speaker. Come up with some reason besides demographics to establish your credibility. This is your opportunity to convince the class that we should do, think, or become something. You will need at least five credible sources for this speech. This speech will be 5-7 minutes long.

**Persuasive Speech II:** This is your chance to make adjustments based on the feedback from the first persuasive speech. The topic can be the same, but revised and expanded. A presentation aide is required for this speech. This speech will be 6-8 minutes long.

**Impromptu Speech:** You will be asked to deliver a 1-2 minute speech on a topic that will be given to you the day of the speech.

**Participation:** Participation is more than simply showing up. In order for you to succeed in this class it is imperative that you come prepared, having read the assignments for the day and ready to discuss them. Moreover, I expect that you will demonstrate appropriate respect to your peers.

If, during speeches, you are reading the newspaper, text messaging friends, working on other coursework, or doing anything other than listening to the speech, I will deduct heavily from your participation points. If your phone goes off, I will also deduct heavily from your participation points. **Think of this class as a cell free zone.**

**Peer Evaluations:** 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.

**Final Exam:** There will be no final exam in this course; the final speech will serve that purpose.

**A Note Concerning Speaking days:** You must speak on your scheduled day, which will be determined in advance. This course moves quickly and there is little room for make-up speeches. 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.”

### **Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodation. The Office of Special Student Services will certify a disability and advise faculty members of reasonable accommodations.

If you will need special accommodations please talk to me as soon as possible.

### **A Note on my Teaching Philosophy**

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 skillfully present your ideas to an audience. I do not “give” grades; students earn grades—no one is entitled to get an “A” in a class unless they earn it. I cannot grade on effort—I must grade what you actually do. My job is to push students to do their best and to then exceed that standard. I recognize that 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 and am generally available through email. I assume that attaining a university degree is your first priority. If this is not the case, it is less likely that you will excel. Some of you are here because you want to get a better job. I believe that education should do much more than job training, but if you see it as job training, at least take it seriously. Recognize that you will probably be required to work 40 hours a week (or more) from 8am until 5pm. If you are chronically late, they

fire you. If you do not do your work, they fire you. If you drop the ball, you probably will not get a raise, they may fire you, and in some cases legal action may be taken against you. Bottom line—you do your part to excel and I will be there to help you reach that goal.

## **Reading Schedule**

### Week 1

6/24 Introduction to the Course and to Each Other: The Rhetorical Situation

6/25 Types of Speaking: Informative, Persuasive, Ceremonial

Discuss Speech Assignments

#### **Readings:**

Clayton, John. "Presentations 101." *Harvard Management Communication Letter* 3, no. 11 (2000): 4-5.

McConnell, Charles R. "The Manager and Oral Presentations." *Health Care Manager* 24, no. 1 (2005): 77-88.

6/26 Research

6/27 Organization and Structure

#### **Readings:**

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London: Routledge, 1982. (pp. 36-57).

### Week 2

6/30 Reasoning and Fallacies

#### **Readings:**

Lager, Marshall. "Condemned by Every Syllable She Utters." *CRM Magazine* 11, no. 4 (2007): 15.

Maxey, Cyndi, and Kevin E. O'Connor. "Dealing with Blunders." *T+D* 61, no. 3 (2007): 78-79.

Morgan, Nick. "Lessons in Public Speaking from Recent Presidents." *Harvard Management Communication Letter* 4, no. 11 (2001): 9-11.

Tropiano Jr, Matthew. "Aristotle and the Art of Successful Presentations." *Defense & AT-L* 35, no. 3 (2006): 45-47.

7/1 Delivery and Visual Aides

#### **Readings:**

DuFrene, Debbie D., and Carol M. Lehman. "Concept, Content, Construction, and Contingencies: Getting the Horse before the PowerPoint Cart." *Business Communication Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (2004): 84-88.

Friedman, Karen. "Presentation Is Everything." *Pharmaceutical Executive* 25, no. 5 (2005): 184-86.

Jesitus, John. "Putting Passion into Presentations." *Cosmetic Surgery Times* 8, no. 4 (2005): 46-47.

7/2 **Ceremonial Speech**

7/3 **Ceremonial Speech**

7/4 No Class – Don't Blow Yourself Up  
Week 3

7/7 Persuasion

7/8 Audience Analysis and Listening

**Readings:**

Weinholdt, Rick. "Taking the Trauma out of the Talk." *Information Management Journal* 40, no. 6 (2006): 62-67.

Woolf, Reesa. "How to Talk So People Will Listen." *Business Credit* 106, no. 3 (2004): 12.

7/9 **Persuasive Speech I**

7/10 **Persuasive Speech I**

7/11 **Persuasive Speech I**

Week 4

7/14 Ethics of Speaking

7/15 **Impromptu Speeches**

7/16 **Persuasive Speech II**

7/17 **Persuasive Speech II**

7/18 **Persuasive Speech II**

Week 5

7/21 Last Day of Class: The Uses of Public Speaking

**Regarding Changes in Course Requirements**

Since all classes do not progress at the same rate, the instructor may wish to modify the above requirements or their timing as circumstances dictate. For example, the instructor may wish to change the number and frequency of exams, or the number and sequence of assignments. However, the students must be given adequate notification. Moreover, there may be non-typical classes for which these requirements are not strictly applicable in each instance and may need modification. If such modification is needed, it must be in writing and conform to the spirit of this policy statement.