

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
PUBLIC SPEAKING & CRITICAL THINKING, COMM 101-003
SPRING SEMESTER 2014
INFO COMMONS 216; THURSDAYS 4:15—6:45 PM

Instructor: Sue Castorino, scastorinominkoff@luc.edu

Form of communication: E-mail is preferred and checked regularly.

Course overview: “*Public Speaking*”. What does it *really* mean in the 21st century and why is it still relevant and important? It takes dozens of forms, some you might not have even realized. Some have been with us since ancient times and others are contemporary and still evolving. One thing is certain: there will always be basic need for you to speak and speak well. You will have millions of communication encounters in your lifetime--from formal presentations to social media to impromptu conversations requiring you to persuade someone to listen to you and to take action. This can be extremely unnerving for most and comes naturally for a very few. This interactive class is designed to thoroughly prepare you for all types of public communication that will have practical applications and be useful in the real world. You will also actively participate as observers from the audience point of view. You will gain valuable insight that will help you sharpen and polish your own skills as well as broaden your overall awareness.

You will learn how to:

- Confront the dreaded speech anxiety and raise your comfort level
- Develop your personal style through improved vocal delivery and physical animation
- Logically reorganize your thoughts to motivate and persuade
- Edit yourself to adapt to the ‘clock’, using fewer words/better words
- Creatively impart information to engage your audience
- Use visuals sparingly, correctly, and effectively
- Convey your passion on a subject to avoid the ‘wooden syndrome’
- Answer audience questions and address relevant issues in a variety of situations
- Understand and critique presentations as an audience member
- Be aware that everything you say and do may be ‘on the record’
- Stop rambling and start connecting every time you speak

Course specifics: You will be called upon to deliver several different types of realistic presentations during the semester. You will be required to provide a hard copy of every assignment to be turned in, even if you don’t present on a particular day. At times you will also be asked to critique others’ presentations and are asked to be fair-minded in your assessments. Also, each week you will also participate in a segment entitled “Newsworthy/Cringeworthy”-- visible public speakers who have made a positive or negative impression on you. You should come prepared with examples every week and actively engage in discussion.

Special note: There is no required textbook for this class. Therefore, it is imperative that you take complete notes in class every week. Many topics will be covered at a fairly rapid pace. Your weekly attendance is mandatory. If you absolutely cannot attend, you must let me know immediately as it may impact your overall grade. It is your responsibility to seek out a classmate regarding material covered that day.

Grades: You will receive a letter grade on all assignments(except when noted where full credit will be given). These are based upon mandatory attendance, active participation, periodic written quizzes and understanding of material, personal development & delivery, originality and creativity, and overall improvement. You will receive each grade in a timely fashion at the beginning of the next class. Mid-term and final exam presentations will be more heavily weighted. You must complete all assignments *on time*: no exceptions.

A few last words: Some straight-forward rules that will make it easier for everyone:

- Be on time.
- Complete all assignments on time.
- Be honest.
- Be fair and open-minded.
- Be prepared to participate in all discussions.
- Encourage and respect your fellow classmates as they present.

You will have fun even as you take this seriously and I promise you'll learn techniques that will help you in life every single day during and after Loyola.

SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

January 16: Introduction & overview: Conquer your fears & recognize your talents

- Understanding yourself, understanding the audience; putting it in perspective
- Even celebrities struggle; how to avoid brain freeze and mouth lock
- Yes, correct grammar is still important; avoiding errors, sounding professional
- In-class exercises with valuable techniques

January 23: What we can learn from the ancients (and contemporaries)

- Aristotle to today: A brief (and somewhat revisionist) history of the art of rhetoric
- Presidential presentations resonate: Lincoln at Gettysburg, the Roosevelts at opposite ends of the speaking spectrum, the Nixon/Kennedy debates--a watershed event here in Chicago, and more
- Dr. King's famous remarks revisited and why they still matter
- The economy of words: why fewer words/better words work
- Those in the limelight who speak--techniques to admire and to avoid

January 30: Putting it all together

- How to organize your thoughts, from a great opening to a memorable close
- Getting the words out of your brain and onto paper
- Persuasion: How to say what you mean and mean what you say
- Listening with an open mind and heightened awareness
- Visuals: why 'more' is not always better; what works, what doesn't

February 6: Is that your final answer?: Dealing with Q & A

- How the dynamics shift during the question and answer period
- How to deal with emotion and the 'know-it-all'
- Maintaining control, keeping the audience interested and involved

February 13: Prepare for mid-term presentations

February 20 and 27: Mid-term dual presentations

- Formal business presentations delivered in teams with audience critique

March 6: Spring Break/no class

March 13: "I'd like to thank the Academy..."

- Post Oscar assignment discussion, what worked, what didn't.
- What was memorable (positive and negative) and why.
- Reinforcing the "Tom Hanks credo" in all speeches.

March 20: Meet in the SOC television studio:" Lights, Camera, Action"

- Experiencing the TV studio & teleprompter
- Freedom of Speech in the 21st century in the Internet Age
- The public airwaves: The FCC vs. The Supreme Court
- Public speaking as public persona/Facebook, Twitter & social media
- "Speaking your mind" vs. "Think before you speak"; debating pros and cons
- An in-depth in-studio panel discussion before a 'live' studio audience

March 27: Lyric Karaoke

- How spoken song lyrics can improve your overall delivery (yes, really!)
- Effective storytelling through personalization, repetition, & questions

April 3: The Gettysburg address revisited: Your personal presentation

- Reinforcing the importance of fewer words/better words and personalization
- Making it "short, sincere, & special"
- Planning ahead: Preparation for oral final exam/planned spontaneity

April 10: You're hired: 'Speed speaking' is like 'speed dating'

- Why your elevator speech is more important than ever
- Techniques for effective and persuasive job interviews
- Positively presenting yourself under pressure, answering difficult questions
- Talking from your resume, personalization is critical

April 17: Holy week/no class

April 24: (Corboy Auditorium/LSC: Final individual oral presentations

- Individual formal presentations without notes and with audience critique

May 1: Individual interviews & final personal assessments(MANDATORY)
