

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
PUBLIC SPEAKING & CRITICAL THINKING, COMM 101-003
SPRING SEMESTER 2015
CORBOY LAW CENTER 325; THURSDAYS 7:00—9:30 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 which have practical applications and will 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
- Persuasively support your point of view through weekly dialogue
- 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 and communicate

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”—discussing visible public speakers who have made a positive or negative impression on you in any type of communication. You should come prepared with examples every week and actively engage in discussion. There is no right or wrong here; just your observations and opinions. This portion of class will be factored into your final grade, so everyone is highly encouraged to participate

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. You must still turn in *all* assignments in a timely manner, even if you are unable to attend class for a specific reason.

Grades: For most assignments you will receive a letter grade: A(excellent), B(very good), C(average), D(poor), F (automatic for any incomplete assignments). Your grades are based upon many factors: mandatory attendance, active participation, periodic written quizzes and understanding of material, personal development & oral delivery, originality and creativity, and overall progress and improvement. The last factor is very important: you are encouraged to make every effort to *try* during the various projects. Personal progress is important and will be noted. In some isolated cases you will receive a 'complete' for an assignment; I will be very clear up front about grade expectations during each project. 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 original. Be ethical. Be honest—*always*.
- Be fair and open-minded.
- Encourage and respect your fellow classmates as they present.
- Don't ever hesitate to ask for clarification or direction.
- Be aware of what's going on in the world and be prepared to participate in all discussions.

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 15: 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 22: What we can learn from the ancients and the contemporaries

- From Aristotle to today: A brief (and somewhat revisionist) history of the art of rhetoric
- Presidential presentations still 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
- Issue Management: What to do when crises occur, because they will

January 29 & February 5:

Putting it all together: The formal business presentation

- 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
- The format: An important template and how to use it
- 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 12: Prepare for mid-term presentations

February 19 & 26: Mid-term dual presentations

- Formal business presentations delivered in teams with audience critique

March 5: Spring Break, no class

March 12: “I’d like to thank the Academy...”

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

March 19: 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 26: Lyric Karaoke

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

April 2: Holy Thursday, no class

April 9: 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 16: 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 23: Corboy Auditorium 211: Final individual oral presentations

- Individual formal presentations without notes and with audience critique

April 30: Individual interviews & final personal assessments (MANDATORY)
