

PUBLIC SPEAKING · COMM 1110 · SUMMER 2009

Georgia Southern University | College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences | Communication Arts

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce you to the study and application of principles and practices of public speaking. Because public speaking is a primary form of information sharing in our society, you will have several opportunities to produce and consume public speeches. Most of you will be called upon to give public speeches in your careers, both during and after your collegiate experience. This course offers a great opportunity for you to apply your learning now and in the future. With that in mind, consider this syllabus as a guide for class activities, including the subjects to be addressed and the assignments for which you are responsible.

REQUIRED TEXT:

German, K. M., Gronbeck, B. E., Ehninger, D., & Monroe, A. H. (2007). *Principles of public speaking* (16th ed.). New York: Allyn & Bacon.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Many public speaking students have found the skills learned in COMM 1110 valuable to their education and their preparation for life outside of and beyond college. However, no professor can make you learn. It is your responsibility to attend class, participate in class discussion and exercises, and make a concerted effort in completing the various assignments if you hope to reach the following objectives:

- 1. Audience Adaptation:** Become audience-centered. Understanding what people are thinking and expecting will help you to convey your message more effectively.
- 2. Inventional and organizational skills:** You will learn techniques for producing ideas, finding supporting materials, and organizing information. These will all add depth, interest, and credibility to what you want to say. When you arrange what you want to say in a coherent pattern, you help your listeners follow your path of reasoning and thought.
- 3. Language sensitivity:** Sensitizing yourself to cultural and gender differences in language use is becoming more and more critical as communication technologies shrink the globe.
- 4. Creative and polished delivery:** You will learn to add color and interest to your speeches through an understanding of the use of language and nonverbal communication. You will learn to fine tune your delivery style and control your nervous speech habits. Vocal variety, eye contact, posture and movement, and dramatic gestures will improve with practice and add interest to your speech.

5. **Critical thinking and listening:** As you listen to other speakers, you will learn to ask critical questions about their intents, biases, language use, organization, support, and messages. The critical consumption of messages is an important skill for life.

COURSE POLICIES:

1. Attendance: Your attendance in class is expected and necessary for your success in this course. Because every speaker needs an audience, you need to be an active class participant, even on days when you are not speaking. In addition, to achieve the objectives of this course, your involvement and participation are necessary.



Four (4) or more total absences (on any course day, lecture or speech) will automatically result in a failing grade for the course. THERE ARE NO EXCUSED ABSENCES; AN ABSENCE IS AN ABSENCE, for whatever reason. Additionally, to insure that each of you has an audience, NO MORE THAN ONE (1) ABSENCE WILL BE PERMITTED ON SPEECH DAYS. Each subsequent absence on a speech day will result in the loss of half a letter grade (5 percentage points) off your final grade for the course.

The current Georgia Southern University catalog states the following in regard to class attendance: “The student is responsible for all material presented in class and for all announcements and assignments whether or not the student is in attendance. The University does not issue an excuse to students for class absences. In case of absences as a result of illness, representation of the University in athletic and other activities or special situations, instructors may be informed of reasons for absences, but these are not excuses.”

Think of your schoolwork as your job, just as you would not miss work, you should not miss class. Schedule doctors’ appointments, advising appointments, etc., for times that do not conflict with this class. *It is your job to keep track of your total absences; I am not responsible for reminding you about your total absences.*

2. Tardiness: You are expected to be in class on time for every class meeting. Coming into class late is disruptive, not only for the other students, but for me. *Tardiness in excess of 15 minutes will be considered an absence.* At my discretion, excessive tardiness (less than 15 minutes on multiple occasions) may be converted to an absence. Similarly, you are expected to remain in class for the entire class period; early departures will be treated in the same manner as tardy arrivals. Thus, you should schedule appointments (such as advising, doctor, etc.) in such a manner that they do not overlap with class time.

On speech days, if you are tardy you must wait to enter the class until the speaker has completed her or his speech. Under no circumstances should you enter the class during a student speech. This is distracting to the speaker and is considered a violation of violation of the statements regarding classroom decorum and speech day behavior found below.

3. Late Work and Make-Ups: No late work for speeches will be accepted. You will be expected to speak, prepared or unprepared, on the day you are scheduled. Excuses such as forgetting your note cards or your visual aid or not being prepared are unacceptable. **Deadlines are a fact of real life.** If an unexpected occurrence (car accident, hospitalization, family death, etc.) keeps you from class, you must consult the professor prior to class or as soon as possible. If you know in advance that you will not be in class on a speech day, then you should sign-up for one of the other speech days for that set of speeches.

4. Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: The Georgia Southern University Honor Code states: "I will be academically honest in all of my course work and will not tolerate the academic dishonesty of others." As members of the campus community, students are encouraged to actively support academic honesty and integrity in the classroom. The Communication Arts Department and I take the issue of academic dishonesty very seriously and will pursue instances of alleged dishonesty to the fullest extent. Therefore, you should familiarize yourself with the provisions for academic dishonesty in the Georgia Southern University *Code of Student Conduct* found in the current *Student Guide*. This policy applies to all course work, oral and written. In this course, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, receiving or giving aid on any quiz or examination, submitting a speech outline written by another, and delivering a speech developed or written by another. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty shall be subjected to the procedures for adjudicating academic dishonesty outlined in the current *Student Guide*. For findings of a first offense within this course, the penalty shall be a zero on the assignment. For findings of a second offense within this course, the penalty shall be a final grade of "F." These penalties are in addition to any penalties imposed by the University per the above referenced procedures.

5. Speech Outlines: One week before each speech round, I will collect outlines and references for your upcoming speech. Submit your outline and references in the appropriate area of GeorgiaVIEW. NOTE: **No outline = No speech.** Outlines must be full-sentence or full-content outlines. This means that each point on the outline must be worded as a complete, declarative sentence. Incomplete sentences, commands, and questions are unacceptable outline points. References must be in APA or MLA format.

Outline grades are incorporated into your speech grade; typically, **they will count as 25% of your grade on a speech.** Failure to submit an outline by the due date will result in a lower speech grade. Outlines will not be accepted after the first speech begins. Due dates are noted on the tentative schedule; outlines will be returned to you with my comments before your scheduled speech. I reserve the right to compare topics, outlines, and bibliographies with other professors.

6. Speech Topics: In this class each student has the right to select a speech topic of her or his choice. While topic selection is covered in your text, it is important to remind you to avoid trite, trivial, frivolous, or inappropriate topics. Remember that you have a captive audience, in that attendance is required. Offensive or insensitive speech topics demonstrate a failure to adapt to your audience. If you have any questions, consult me prior to the deadline for submitting speech outlines. Additionally, animals (other than service/guide animals), firearms, alcohol, and illegal drugs are not permitted in the classroom (per the *Student Conduct Code*). Sample speech topics will be discussed in class.

7. Speech Sources: For three of the six speeches you will be required to do some research and use supporting materials from multiple, outside sources in your speech. The number of sources for each speech is noted below in the assignment descriptions. Personal knowledge and experience may be used but do not count as an outside source. All sources must be documented, retrievable sources (that means they are in print or available on the internet). Dictionaries and encyclopedias, in print or on-line, may be used as sources, but do not count toward the minimum number of sources required for any given speech assignment. Sources must be orally identified during the speech.

8. Classroom Decorum & Behavior: The Preamble to the *Student Conduct Code* states: “A student-centered University is characterized by civility, respect, cooperation, responsibility, and understanding among all its members. A student-centered University conveys high expectations for appropriate behavior and is designed to assist students in the development of an informed set of values, ethics, and beliefs. It fosters a climate that promotes civility and respect. Georgia Southern University students are expected to engage in behaviors that are consistent with the attainment of academic integrity and moral values. As members of the campus community, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to actively support . . . civil discourse among all members of the campus community, treating each student with dignity and respect regardless of personal differences.” Likewise, Section IV.6.C of the *Student Conduct Code* defines “any classroom behavior that interferes with the instructor’s ability to conduct class or the ability of other students to learn” as “disorderly conduct” and in violation of the *Student Conduct Code*.

You are expected to behave in class in accordance with these provisions of the Student Conduct Code. Violations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

9. Speech Day Behavior: You are expected to show respect for speakers by being attentive and non-disruptive. This means that you should not be sleeping, reading, text messaging, engaging in conversation or any other potentially distracting behavior while others are delivering their speeches. Any inappropriate behavior observed by me will adversely affect your own speech grade.

10. Cell Phones and Electronic Devices: Because your friends and family may not know your class schedule, turn off your cell phones in class. Ringing cell phones are annoying and disruptive, especially during speeches. Furthermore, because of the advance technology of text messaging and digital imaging, the use of any personal electronic devices (cell phones, PDAs, iPods, headphones, etc) is prohibited during examinations. The use of any such item during an examination will result in immediate dismissal from the classroom and the examination.

11. Disability Accommodations: This class complies with the Americans with Disabilities (ADA). Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC); and, (2) provide a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating what your need may be for academic accommodation. The SDRC can be reached at 871-1566.

12. Religious Holiday Policy: In accordance with University Policy, students observing religious holidays will NOT be disadvantaged *when advance arrangements are made* with the professor to make-up course work.

13. Agreement with Syllabus Content: This syllabus is an agreement between the professor and the student, between me and you, to respectively provide and complete a worthy learning experience. By remaining a registered student in this course, you have identified your understanding of and agreement to the obligations set forth in this syllabus for satisfactory completion of this course, including the course policies as well as the assignments. The professor reserved the right to modify this syllabus during the term.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Self-Introduction (Favorite Quotation) Speech: What is your favorite quotation or line from a song? Share with the class the quotation and what makes it meaningful for you. Be creative and thoughtful in your choice and in your explanation. This assignment should last between 2 and 3 minutes. Each speaker is permitted to take any number of 4x6 note cards to the podium with a key-word outline. *Do not read the speech to the class! PRACTICE the speech several times ALOUD before coming to class.*

2. Demonstration Speech: Your task is to orally present a step-by-step demonstration (i.e., baking cookies, subscribing to a podcast, washing a pet, renting a movie, getting ready for class, etc.). Create the message so that it contains an introduction which gains the attention of your audience, in a manner relevant to your topic and contains a thesis statement in which you tell your audience precisely what you are going to talk about. The body of the demonstration speech will have at least three steps which are clearly identifiable and supported. The conclusion will summarize what has been said and brings your speech to a satisfying close. The speech should be between 4 and 6 minutes.

3. Informative Speech: The purpose of this speech is to inform your audience about a subject, service, organization, or other area of interest to you. (Consider choosing a topic that is related to your major.) The information should be presented in a way that is interesting to your audience, easy for them to understand, memorable, and include some type of visual aid. You have 5-7 minutes for this speech. Along with your outline, you must submit a bibliography with no fewer than three (3) outside and documented sources, and *you must cite those sources orally in the speech.* Your visual aid should be used to support and explain an idea in your speech; it should not be a mere prop such as a photo of the person or a collage. The speech should be between 4 and 6 minutes.

4. Persuasive Speech: The purpose of this speech is to demonstrate your ability to use reasoning and cognitive skills to persuade individuals in a course of action, opinion, value, etc. You should choose an area, issue, or problem of significance to you. (You may also choose to use this as a problem-solution speech, following Monroe's Motivated Sequence.) Along with your outline, you must submit a bibliography with no fewer than three (3) outside and documented sources, and *you must cite those sources orally in the speech.* The speech should be between 5 and 7 minutes.

5. Impromptu Speeches: You will deliver several (3-7) impromptu speeches in class. Topics will be drawn from a hat, and you will have approximately 5 minutes to prepare a 1- to 2-minute speech. The purpose of these speeches is to demonstrate your ability to clearly, effectively, and creatively organize your thoughts with little time for preparation. Depending on the topic drawn, your speech may be a speech to inform, persuade, or entertain. Dates for impromptu speeches will not be announced in advance.

6. Quizzes & In-class Activities: There will be numerous opportunities designed to demonstrate your understanding of the principles of public speaking and to further enhance the learning of such principles. Quizzes come in a variety of formats, including in-class and online. Cognitive knowledge of the principles of public speaking is necessary for you to be an effective speaker.

7. Learning Journal: Your Learning Journal for this class will consist of several items: responses to selected discussion questions, peer evaluations, speech-related information (outlines, bibliographies, instructor evaluation forms) and your final self-evaluation. More details on the Learning Journal will be discussed before the end of the second week of class.

8. Exam: There will be one exam—a final. The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and is designed to test your cognitive understanding of the principles of public speaking that you have learned and applied to your speeches. Questions will be similar to the questions on the quizzes.

GRADING:

Each assignment counts differently toward your final grade. Your final grade in this course will be determined according to the following percentages for each assignment:

Impromptu Speeches	5%
Demonstration Speech	10%
Informative Speech	15%
Persuasive Speech	20%
Quizzes	15%
Learning Journal	20%
Final Exam	15%

SPEECH GRADING STANDARDS:

You may be wondering what factors determine your grades on your speaking assignments. The following explains, in general terms, the differences between an A, B, and C speech.

1. THE C SPEECH: To earn a grade of C, a speech must be basically *COMPETENT*. The C speech is one in which nothing major goes wrong. The introduction gets the speech started appropriately—capturing your audience’s attention and directing the audience toward your speech’s theme; it relates the topic to the audience in some clear way. Establishes your credibility on the topic, and leads smoothly to the body of the speech. The body of the C speech is divided in a way that is appropriate to the topic, is developed with appropriate supporting materials, and is cast into language that accurately and clearly expresses your ideas. The conclusion fulfills the minimum essentials—summarizing either your main theme or major points, and giving the speech a definite sense of conclusion.

The delivery of the C speech is one in which you do not look visibly nervous, nor do you have distracting posture, gestures, or movements (such as slouching over the lectern or rocking while you speak). Furthermore, to receive a grade of C you should at least maintain more eye contact with your audience than with your notes, the walls, the floor, or the ceiling. Your voice should be relatively flowing, loud enough to be heard without the audience having to strain, and virtually free of vocalized pauses such as “ums,” “uhs,” “you knows,” etc. Finally, the C speech keeps the audience at least politely attentive. The topic must be interesting and significant enough to be worthy of their time.

The vast majority of the speeches in a beginning public speaking class fall into this category. For most students, being able to present their ideas in a coherent and reasonably well-developed manner, while looking poised and confident in front of your classmates and your professor, is an important and significant accomplishment for a single semester. A grade of C on your speech is an indication that you have achieved this level of competence.

2. THE B SPEECH: To earn a grade of B, a speech must be more than simply competent; it must also be *INTERESTING*. The introduction of the B speech is usually more fully developed, with more time and effort spent relating the topic to the audience and preparing them for what is to follow. The body of the B speech has a clear pattern of organization that is closely related to the central theme. The B speech also has a fuller development and employs a wider variety of interesting supporting material (such as anecdotes, examples, visual aids, statistics, analogies, comparisons and contrasts), as well as more fully adapting those materials to this particular audience. Often, the conclusion of the B speech is more fully developed and better integrated with the theme of the speech as well.

Delivery in the B speech has you more animated and fluid; not only do you NOT look uncomfortable, but you actually begin to look comfortable and at ease. Your posture remains good, you are beginning to gesture naturally and expressively, and your movement on the platform begins to serve the conveyance of your speech's content instead of merely using up excess adrenaline. Your voice is becoming more expressive and empathic and your audience shows signs of active interest in your speech.

3. THE A SPEECH: To earn a grade of A, your speech must be more than interesting; it must also be *MEMORABLE*. The introduction actively involves us with your topic in some way and makes us want to hear more, starting the speech out with a bang. Your analysis of the subject is unusual, insightful, novel, or unexpected. Your examples are especially apt and well-adapted to your particular audience. Your language choices are vivid (perhaps employing some effective imagery or sustained metaphor that unifies the entire speech); the statements of your main points are memorable (they alliterate, or are grammatically parallel, and so on). Transitions between points are varied and appropriate; the audience knows at all times precisely where you are in your speech and how the parts relate to the whole. The conclusion of the A speech not only rounds the speech out by giving it a sense of completeness, it actually gives the speech a sense of *IMPACT* or forcefulness.

Delivery in an A speech goes beyond general poise and a sense of looking comfortable in front of your audience; in the A speech you are actively projecting your personality to your audience, actively employing good posture, effective gestures, and smooth movements to engage your audience's attention to your speech, and taking advantage of the natural ebb and flow of their attention as you present the speech—adapting your presentation to the audience as you progress through the speech. Your voice becomes more than simply a means for conveying your ideas; instead, it becomes more like a musical instrument which you control for tempo, volume, rhythm, and rate building crescendos, climaxes, and decrescendos to heighten the impact of your ideas. Finally, the A speech has the audience actively listening— responsive and eagerly awaiting what comes next.

BARBARA NIXON'S TEACHING & LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

Several years ago, a colleague shared with me this quotation by longshoreman and philosopher Eric Hoffer:

"In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

This quotation struck a chord with me. Put simply, my overarching goal in teaching is to ensure that our world has more learners than learned. I am fortunate to be in a role in life where I can have an impact on our future world leaders.

What do I expect from my students?

- Students should be fully read on all of the chapters (or other reading assignments) and to be ready to discuss any part of the readings.
- Students should raise questions when they are uncertain of the material we are discussing, including questions that I will have no easy ("pat") answer for.
- Students should make every effort to gain the most value that they can from the class. They should want to become independent learners.
- Students should become aware of not only how what happens in the world (current events) impacts them, but also how what they do impacts the world. Campus is not a cocoon.

And what can my students expect from me?

- Because I am aware that students learn in many different ways, I will not lecture at my students daily from behind a raised podium. Instead, I will provide instruction to them in an interactive manner. In a typical week, students will experience partner discussions, small group discussions, Internet scavenger hunts, and even crossword puzzles, in addition to short (less than 20 minute) min-lectures. "Death by PowerPoint" will not happen in my class.
- I will provide them with the most current information I have available. I stay current on topics and trends in the industry.
- I will stay abreast of current technology and apply it in the classroom whenever it adds to the learning experience. (Examples include current software, GeorgiaVIEW, podcasts and blogging, to name a few.)
- I will make every effort to help guide students through the issues that they raise, and we will seek resolution together.
- I will make every effort I can to make sure that students understand the issues and concepts my courses present.
- When I have positive feedback to share, I will share it openly in the classroom and call attention to students by name in the process. My goal in this is to enhance or maintain the students' self-esteem, not to break it down. There are plenty of other places in the world where their self-esteem may be diminished. Constructive criticism will still be provided to students, but not by name in front of a whole class.
- I expect for us to have fun in class. Laughter and learning go hand in hand in my book. If we are not enjoying ourselves in class, there's something amiss.
- And perhaps most importantly, I will listen to my students so that I can learn from them, too.

Department of Communication Arts – Academic Policies Statement

Responsibility and Accountability

The Department considers students to be individuals who are responsible for their own behaviors. Students are expected to make decisions with an awareness of the consequences which will most likely result from these decisions. Decision-making without considering the resulting consequences is not justifiable behavior if the consequences put the student's academic efforts at risk. In other words, if you enroll in a class, you are obligated to meet the responsibilities of this class, regardless of other commitments, including work, family, and other class obligations.

Civility

Students are expected to communicate in a civil manner in their academic interaction at all times, both in and out of the classroom. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified manner, which are respectful and understanding toward both peers and professors. Failure to behave in a civil manner may result in disciplinary actions as described by the Student Conduct Code.

Plagiarism

Cheating, in its multitude of forms, is a serious offense to the University and compromises the learning process of the violators and their classmates. Ultimately, the reputation of the institution is at risk. For these reasons, the Department expects students to understand the provision of the Student Conduct Code that addresses academic dishonesty and the penalties for it, and to conduct themselves with integrity in their academic efforts. To that end, students are expected to follow both the letter and the spirit of academic honesty and to consult beforehand with their instructors whenever those ethical standards are even remotely at risk.

Attendance

It is the Department's policy that any student who misses twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the scheduled class days, for any reason, will receive a failing grade for the course. All days when a student is not present will be counted as an absence. Individual instructors may impose stricter attendance policies. Instructors are not responsible for reminding students about their total absences.

Definition of Grades

The Department adheres to the following definitions as found in the *Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog* (p. 38):

- The 'A' grade may be interpreted to mean that the instructor recognized exceptional capacities and exceptional performance.
- The grade of 'B' signifies that the student has, for any combination of reasons, demonstrated a significantly more effective command of the material than is generally expected.
- The 'C' grade is the instructor's certification that the student has demonstrated the required mastery of the material.
- The student is graded 'D' when his/her grasp of the course is minimal.
- The 'F' grade indicates failure to master the essentials and the necessity for repeating before credit is allowed."

Posting of Grades

It is the Department's policy ***NOT*** to post any student grades at any time during, or at the conclusion of, the semester.
[BBN Note: I will post grades to your password-protected GeorgiaVIEW account.]

Georgia Southern University General Education Outcomes

Georgia Southern University has identified ten categories of general education outcomes comprising knowledge, skills, and perspectives which it seeks to instill in its graduates. Please see http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/provost/instruction/gened_outcomes.html.

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TENTATIVE DAILY SCHEDULE (as of 11 May 2009)

DATE	Tuesday	Thursday	READINGS / QUIZZES / ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1 (May 19 & 21)	Welcome & Intro to Course Study Public Speaking in Higher Ed. Getting Started	Critical Listening Public Speaking and Cultural Life	Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4 Quiz on Ch. 1, 2, 3 & 4 due in GeorgiaVIEW before class on Thursday, May 21 ✍ Self-Introduction (Favorite Quotation) Speech Outline due in GeorgiaVIEW Friday, May 22
WEEK 2 (May 26 & 28)	Understanding Your Audience Speeches to Inform	✍ Self-Introduction (Favorite Quotation) Speeches	Chapters 5 & 12 Quiz on Ch. 5 & 12 due in GeorgiaVIEW before class on Tuesday, May 26
WEEK 3 (June 2 & 4)	✍ Self-Introduction (Favorite Quotation) Speeches, cont'd	Finding and Using Supporting Materials Organizing and Outlining Your Speech Beginning and Ending Your Speech Using Visual Aids	Chapter 6, 7, 8 & 11 Quiz on Ch. 6, 7, 8 & 11 due in GeorgiaVIEW before class on Tuesday, June 2 ✍ Demonstration Speech Outline due in GeorgiaVIEW Wednesday, June 3
WEEK 4 (June 9 & 11)	Meet in Library, Room TBA	TBA	
WEEK 5 (June 16 & 18)	✍ Demonstration Speeches	✍ Demonstration Speeches, cont'd	✍ Informative Speech Outline due in GeorgiaVIEW Friday, June 19
WEEK 6 (June 23 & 25)	Speeches to Persuade Argumentation and Critical Thinking	Wording Your Speech Delivering Your Speech	Chapters 9, 10, 13 & 14 Quiz on Ch. 9, 10, 13 & 14 due in GeorgiaVIEW before class on Tuesday, June 23
WEEK 7 (June 30 & July 2)	✍ Informative Speeches	✍ Informative Speeches, cont'd	✍ Persuasive Speech Outline due in GeorgiaVIEW Friday, July 3
WEEK 8 (July 7 & 9)	✍ Impromptu Speeches	✍ Persuasive Speeches	✍ Learning Journal due in GeorgiaVIEW Friday, July 10
WEEK 9 (July 14 only)	✍ Persuasive Speeches, cont'd Wrap Up & Review		
FINAL EXAM	Complete the Final Exam in GeorgiaVIEW before 3:50 pm on Wednesday, July 15		

NOTE: The above schedule and procedures are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. When possible, you will be provided at least one class day of advance notice of any changes. It's always smart to check your e-mail before coming to class each day.