

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SPEAKING, COMM 103-204
SPRING 2024, MWF 11:30a—12:20p, SOC 015

Instructor: Sue Castorino, scastorinominkoff@luc.edu

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

Course overview: “*Professional speaking*”: What does it *really* mean in the 21st century as we interact in many different and distinct ways? Why is it still relevant in this changing world? Most importantly, what can you do to personally overcome anxiety, gain poise, show confidence, be persuasive and sound professional in all situations?

Professional communication takes dozens of forms. 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 communicate clearly 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 comes naturally for few people but there will be improvement with learned skills and lots of practice. This interactive class is designed to thoroughly prepare you for all types of public communication with practical applications that will be useful in the real world of business endeavors. You will also actively participate as observers from the audience point of view. You will gain valuable insight to help 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
- Improve your vocal delivery, articulation, poise 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
- Persuasively support your point of view through in-class dialogue
- Convey your passion on a subject to avoid the ‘wooden syndrome’
- Answer audience questions and address relevant issues in a variety of situations
- Speak up in random impromptu situations on issues of the day
- Recognize how business (and other) leaders react and respond to issues
- Stop rambling and start connecting every time you speak and communicate

Course specifics: You will be called upon to deliver several different types of presentations during the semester. You will be required to email a hard copy of most assignments, even if you don't present on a particular day. In many classes you will also participate in a segment entitled "Newsworthy/Cringeworthy"—discussing examples of people or groups who have made a positive or negative impression on you in any type of communication. Be prepared to actively engage in discussion. There will also be random "Lightning Rounds" of impromptu mini-speeches on topics of the day. There is no right or wrong here--just your observations and opinions. These portions of class will be factored into your final grade; you are highly encouraged to actively participate.

There is no required textbook for this class. *All material will be shown & discussed in real time during class and won't appear anywhere else. It is imperative that you take handwritten notes; electronic devices may not be used.* Many topics will be covered at a fairly rapid pace. If you absolutely cannot attend, you must let me know immediately. It is your responsibility to seek out a classmate regarding material covered that day. You must still turn in *all* assignments by the designated deadline, even if you are unable to attend class for a specific reason. *Attendance is mandatory. Any unexcused absences (failure to notify me prior to start of class) or missed assignment deadlines will result in a markdown of your overall semester grade. No exceptions.*

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 grade is based upon these factors:

1/3: Graded speeches, for-credit assignments, quizzes.

1/3: Mid-term group presentation and final oral presentation.

1/3: Attendance and active participation in class.

I will be very clear up front about grade expectations during each project. You will receive each grade in a timely fashion along with critique and/or observations.

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

--Be on time and complete all assignments on time; *lateness will not be tolerated.*

--Be original. Be ethical. Be fair. Be open-minded. Be honest...*Always.*

--Encourage and respect your fellow classmates as they present.

--Don't ever hesitate to ask for clarification or direction.

--Be aware of current events and be prepared to offer your observations in discussions.

--Take this seriously and you'll learn techniques that will help you in life every day during and after Loyola.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

Jan 17--19: Conquer your fears, recognize your talents

- Understanding yourself, understanding the audience; putting it in perspective
- Important phrases to guide your presentation
- The anniversary & impact of one memorable speech
- In-class exercises with valuable techniques

Jan 22--26: What we can learn from the ancients and a few contemporaries

- From Aristotle to today: A brief, somewhat revisionist history of the art of rhetoric
- The First Amendment in modern terms; why it matters more than ever
- Issue Management: What to do and say when things happen, because they will

Jan 29—Feb 2: Putting it all together: The formal business presentation

- Organizing your thoughts, from a great opening to a memorable close
- How to say what you mean & mean what you say
- The format: The essential template and how to effectively use it
- Effective use of the TelePrompter

Feb 5 & 12: Spotlight on Abraham Lincoln

- The impact of the Lincoln-Douglas debates
- The all important address that forever changed speechmaking

Feb 7 & 14: “That’s a great question...”: Proper techniques for Q&A

- How the dynamics shift during the question & answer period
- How to deal with emotions and the ‘know-it-all’
- Techniques for addressing issues and staying focused

Feb 16--21: Prepare for mid-term presentations

Feb 23--28: Mid-term presentations

- Formal business presentations delivered in teams with q&a

Mar 4--8 Spring break/no classes

Syllabus/page 2

Mar 11-18: “I’d like to thank the Academy”: The art of the acceptance speech

- Celebrities are human: Grace (or not) under pressure before a live audience
- Elements of effective(or not) awards speeches
- In-class viewing of recent Oscar ceremony speeches/assignment & critique**

Mar 20--27: Lyric Karaoke: Emphasis on vocal delivery

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

Mar 29 & Apr 1: Good Friday/Easter Monday, no classes

Apr 3--5: Special class in the SOC television studio

- The opportunity to experience the inner workings of a real studio
- A realistic town hall meeting/panel discussion

Apr 8: 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 unusual questions

Apr 10: Special in-class assignment with active participation

Apr 12: Prepare for upcoming presentation

Apr 15--19: Your personal TED talk

- Individual formal presentations without notes

Apr 22--26: Mandatory one-on-one interviews & personal assessments
