Communication 103
Public Speaking
Spring 2012

TBA

"JUST AS DOCTORS OR GENERALS, PUBLIC SPEAKERS HOWEVER WELL THEY KNOW THE THEORY OF THEIR ART, CAN NEVER WIN ANY VERY ADMIRABLE SUCCESS WITHOUT EXPERIENCE AND PRACTICE"
~ Cicero

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OVERVIEW
This course introduces basic principles of public address with emphasis on the theory, composition, and presentation of speeches. This course may be your only chance during your education at UWM to take a course focused on improving your oral communication skills. In this course, you’ll get the chance to stand up and speak to some of your peers on topics that interest you -- and them. This class is not about acting or performing; it’s about designing some talk that is smart, organized and persuasive. Even though you are graded on the speeches you give, ninety percent of your grade on any given assignment will be determined by the work you put in before coming to class; in other words, good preparation is the key to success in this class.

GER
As a Humanities General Education Requirement, this course also meets this criterion: “Approaching its subject using humanistic means of inquiry, such as: the critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, the exercise of judgment and expression of ideas, the organization, logical analysis, and creative use of substantial bodies of knowledge.”
COURSE GOALS
Successfully completing the course assignments will teach students the fundamental skills of public speaking. These skill include

*Critical Thinking skills:* The ability to make reasoned decisions about communication choices: knowing what to do, as well as how and when to do it.

*Political Awareness:* Understanding the role, possibilities and norms of individual speech in public discourse.

*Performance skills:* Delivery, preparation, outlining, note taking.

*Listening Skills:* Engaging class speakers. Improving listening skills increases your knowledge of people and the world. Listening helps us to better know the people with whom we communicate.

Text
William Keith and Christian Lundberg, *Public Speaking: Choosing Engagement.* (2011) Available at the UWM Bookstore. $35.50

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS
One (1) pack of 4x6 notecards
Access to the course Desire2Learn (D2L) website

ADMINISTRATIVE DROPS
Following Department policy, any student who does not attend the first week of classes may be dropped from the course.

OFFICE HOURS
TBA
I really enjoy teaching and I enjoy talking with students. If you have questions or just want to explore an idea, please come by. Office hours provide us a chance to talk about the course, assignments, exams, study strategies, and anything else you would like to discuss. You don’t have to have a problem to visit. However, if you are having difficulty with an assignment, I would really like to see you because I might be able to help. If scheduled office hours are impossible for you to attend please let me know and we can make an appointment for another time that works for you. Please do not hesitate to ask for my assistance. Believe it or not, that's what they pay me for!
Course Schedule: TBA

**Each student is responsible for reading all the material on his/her own time, before the class period indicated.

***This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. If any changes occur, students will be notified by the instructor. Ignorance of the schedule does not excuse its violation.

Note: To be eligible to declare Communication as their major, students must get a B- or better in Commun 103.

Note: The last day to drop this course is October 28. After that an appeal will be necessary.
**Evaluation**

Speech 1 = 10% (.10)
Speech 2 = 20% (.20)
Speech 3 = 25% (.25)
First exam = 10% (.10)
Second exam = 10% (.10)
Homework = 10% (.10)
Commitment = 15% (.15)

**Speeches**

There will be three speeches of increasing length and difficulty. Each speech’s grade is weighted more heavily than the last to account for improvement over the course of the term. *You must give your speeches on the day assigned.* Under normal conditions, no make-ups will be allowed.

**Exams**

There will be two examinations, given during the lecture period on indicated days. These will consist of short answer/definition, as well as essay questions, that will ask you to apply the concepts discussed in class and used in speaking assignments. There are no make-ups without an acceptable excuse, which is verified within one week of the exam.

**Homework**

There will be a variety of low stakes assignments that will ask students to bring completed work to class and/or complete quizzes on Desire2Learn (D2L). Ask your classroom instructor for a list of these.

**Commitment**

The commitment grade will have several components. Basically, this grade is your instructor’s evaluation of the commitment you have displayed to making this course a better experience for everyone in your section. Commitment will include

- Showing up to class (see attendance policy below)
- Participating appropriately and effectively
- Commenting on speeches
- Contributing to classroom exercises
- Not disrupting class through side conversations
- Not being consistently late
- Insuring that your technology doesn’t disrupt class
- Asking productive questions
- Incorporating or building on other students’ comments
- Drawing other students into the discussion
- Synthesizing discussion
- Being a good timekeeper
In order for a public speaking class to function effectively, there must be both a speaker and an audience present for performances. Therefore, it is imperative that you attend class on speaking days. In addition, class lectures and exercises provide important material that will help you prepare your speeches; you will also be tested over this material. This is a skills course, and you cannot learn the skills just from the book. Thus, students who want to do even average work, even aiming at a C in this class, must attend every time.

On the days you are scheduled to speak: Due to the difficulty of verifying excuses, and the possibility that some students may be less than honest, there will be almost no excuses accepted for speaking days. Basically, if you don’t show up on the day you are assigned to speak, you will get a zero for that assignment.

If you think you have a truly compelling (and verifiable) reason for delaying a speech, and you call or email your TA in advance (as circumstances permit), there is some hope. If you do not call in advance there is probably no hope.

Attendance will be taken; students who miss more than 1 class/week will lose two letter grades from their commitment grade for every additionally day missed without a valid excuse. (Do the math: It adds up quickly.) You are responsible for getting any missed notes or information from your classmates, and any missed handouts from your instructor.

Extra Credit
Students will have the opportunity to earn extra credit to be applied towards their commitment grade (15% of the total grade). Students who attend an outside speaking event (as approved by the instructor) and do a written evaluation of the event will earn a 1/3 of a letter grade boost in their commitment grade; students can attend up to three total outside speaking events, for a possible full letter grade boost maximum (or 1/3 letter boost per event). None of these events can include the communication department's public speaking showcase. Please see your instructor for a full description of the written evaluation criteria.

Excuses
To be eligible to make up an exam or speech, you much provide

- Written evidence (emails are generally not acceptable)
- From an appropriate source
- Within one week of the assignment missed (though for speech days initial contact should be made that day)
The written evidence must show that due to circumstances beyond your control, you could not have been in school that day. If you have been admitted to the hospital, and a doctor can verify it, then that would be a circumstance beyond your control. If you have an illness that leaves you unable to walk, or speak, and a doctor can verify that, that is a circumstance beyond your control. If you are in the military reserves, and are called to duty, or must appear in court, those count as circumstances beyond your control.

In other words, while it is sometimes difficult to make it to school on test or speech days, students are very rarely prevented by things they can't control, and need to document it immediately when such a situations arises.

**Incomplete**

The grade of incomplete, by university policy, is reserved for students who, due to circumstances beyond their control, cannot complete the final exam or other final work in the course. Incompletes are given, therefore, only in those cases and with acceptable documentation. Students who find they have been missing a lot of the work in the course, or aren't doing as well on it as they'd like, should withdraw from the course before the drop date and take it another term.

**Assignment Requirements and Course Policies**

**Outlines:** Someone asked Abraham Lincoln “How long do a man’s legs need to be?” and Lincoln replied “Long enough to reach the ground.” Outlines do not have to contain, at each line, full grammatical sentences. However, they must contain enough information to allow your instructor to reconstruct your ideas while grading your speech. Single words won’t do it, though a phrase might, and a sentence probably will (if it is a good sentence). Outlines not in standard form will result in a grade deduction for the speech; see your instructor for directions.

**Bibliographies** Bibliographies need to be in APA (American Psychological Association) format. Be sure to use current formats for citing internet sources. See examples in the book.

**Requirements** Each speaking assignment has a series of minimum requirements pertaining to the number and size of notecards, the outline, bibliography and the attachment thereof. Failure to complete these will result in a 1/3 a letter grade deduction for each missing element.
**Course Policies**

If religious observances will prevent you from completing assigned work on a scheduled date, you are responsible to discuss this matter with me as soon as possible, or at least by the third week of classes to make arrangements. If you have a health condition or disability that may interfere with your attendance or your ability to complete course requirements, you should take the following steps. First, if you have not done so already, you should contact the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) and arrange to meet with a SAC counselor who will help you determine whether your condition qualifies you for accommodations and to complete a VISA form describing the approved accommodations. Second, you should inform your instructor of your need for accommodation and provide the instructor with a copy of the completed VISA form. You are expected to complete these steps within the first two weeks of class or as soon as possible after learning of the need for accommodation, unless legitimate circumstances prevent you from doing so. If you have any questions about this process, please contact a SAC counselor.

**UWM Policies**

Information on departmental and university policies on topics including drop procedures, financial obligations, incompletes, sexual harassment, safety, grade appeal procedures, and degree requirements are available in UWM's current Graduate Bulletin, the Graduate School's Faculty/Graduate Handbook, the department's Graduate Student Handbook, the department’s webpage, and the Communication Department's office (Johnston 210). The L&S grievance policy can be found at:

http://www4.uwm.edu/letsci/upload/grievance_procedure.pdf

**Bad weather?**

We’ll meet unless the University has cancelled classes. Call 229-4444 and/or check out the UWM webpage to find out.

**Civility**

**Attendance** Speakers require an audience. Student attendance is thus mandatory. Students who miss class will lose part of their commitment grade for each day missed. If a genuine emergency forces you to miss class, please contact your instructor in advance, and be prepared to document your reasons.

**Interruptions** Late arrivals disrupt class and waste everyone’s time. Consistent lateness may be treated as absence. Interrupting a speaker, especially a student who is a novice, is extremely rude and inconsiderate. **Do not enter the room or knock on the door while someone is speaking;** if you do, you will
lose a third of a letter grade from your final course grade. (On speech days, wait to hear applause before entering.) The same penalty applies to a cell phone that rings or vibrates during a speech (including your own).

**Courtesy**

Students should observe common sense, traditional rules of behavior in class (including not chewing gum or wearing a hat when you speak). As an audience member, please do other students the courtesy of giving interested attention to their speeches. **Do not read, sleep, do homework, text message** or anything other than **listen, take notes, smile, and nod**. Failure to follow this guideline can result in losing a third of a letter grade your final course grade (and this penalty can be applied more than once). Remember, this is just the Golden Rule: It’s the same treatment you’ll expect when you’re in front of the class, watching somebody play with a phone or read the newspaper doesn’t help you do your best work.

Speakers should wear appropriate clothes for speaking: not too casual, not too revealing. On speaking days, students should aim for something dressier than daily wear, think business casual. Speakers may not wear hats, nor chew gum, while they speak.

**Technological courtesy**

The use or possession of technology in the classroom is a privilege, not a right. Students who text or use their phones disrupt the whole class (yes, we can all see you, you and the phone are not invisible) as well as disrespecting the speaker and the instructor. Laptops can be used to take notes, but often are not used only for that. In this course the ability to use them can be revoked at the discretion of the instructor. All computers must have enough battery life to last the class. Due to the fact that we will be doing a lot of class and small group discussion, we can’t have students tethered to a wall with a cord.

Students are also responsible for knowing how to access and use D2L resources for the class. If you’re not sure about anything, please ask! We’ll be happy to show you.

**Ideological courtesy**

The public speaking classroom should be a place of lively and challenging ideas. However, since other students don’t have a choice about being in the audience, some discretion is necessary. Speeches that proselytize for a particular religion are not appropriate to the classroom setting, since many people find such approaches offensive, and religion is a personal, not public, choice. General topics of public interest on religion are, of course, acceptable. Speeches on topics of **public** interest (rather than private, personal choices) may of course challenge the audience’s beliefs – within the limits of the assignment requirements, which always involve adaptation.
**Academic Honesty**

**Plagiarism** Representing the ideas or words of others as your own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a kind of theft, as essentially you steal words or ideas without giving credit; and it is always a deception, since your audience wrongly believes these are your words or ideas. Plagiarism is a serious offence, and students who plagiarize will receive the full punishment that University regulations allow. UWM’s official policy can be found at [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html)

**Honesty** There are many temptations for plagiarism nowadays. Other students may have given speeches to which you have access. We keep a record of those speeches, and there are programs that allow us to search the Web for material that may have been borrowed or pilfered. In other words, honesty is the best policy for many reasons. Collaborating with other students as you prepare is fine; just make sure that the words and ideas you present are either yours or attributed to their proper source. Academic dishonesty will be punished according to university regulations. Ultimately any course in college is what you make of it and doing your own work not only helps you grow intellectually but also enhances your sense of accomplishment once finished with the course (and ultimately your degree).

**Fabrication** All sources and facts cited in a speech must be real; inventing facts or sources is also academic dishonesty and will be treated accordingly. And yes, we do check.
Grading

You will only receive letter grades in this course; there are no points. Convert letter grades into numerical scores using the table below, and then use the weights provided. For partial grades, simply divide by the percent of your grade you’ve received so far. Your grade in the course is calculated by multiplying all your assignment grades by the indicated percent, which will produce a number between 0 and 100. There is no round up of the final total.

NB: in order to pass this course, you must stand up and give, for a grade, at least 2 of the 3 speeches. Students who do not give at least two speeches will automatically receive an F.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Value (for assignments)</th>
<th>Grade Calculation (at the end of the term)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 95</td>
<td>93-100 = A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- = 91</td>
<td>90-92.99 = A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+ = 88</td>
<td>87-89.99 = B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 85</td>
<td>83-86.99 = B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B- = 81</td>
<td>80-82.99 = B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+ = 78</td>
<td>77-79.99 = C+</td>
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<td>C = 75</td>
<td>73-76.99 = C</td>
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<td>C- = 71</td>
<td>70-72.99 = C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+ = 68</td>
<td>67-69.99 = D+</td>
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<td>D = 65</td>
<td>63-66.99 = D</td>
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<tr>
<td>D- = 61</td>
<td>60-62.99 = D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F = 35 (earned)</td>
<td>F = &lt; 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F = 0 (no show)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Each assignment (speech, exam, commitment and homework) is assigned a letter grade. By translating that grade into the appropriate number, you can multiply by the percentage the assignment is worth, to discover your grade. The letter grades are not “points,” per se, but holistic evaluations of your performance on an assignment.

Grading Standards

Each speech assignment has stated requirements. The most important are those concerning the purpose and structure of the speech – How well did you compose a speech which adapted a particular topic, with a particular purpose, to the audience within the guidelines of the assignment? You’ll receive a letter grade that gives an overall evaluation of how well you did this speech, e.g., a C means you did a
competent but average job with the speech overall. Your instructor doesn’t
determine this grade by starting at an A and then “deducting points,” because
there are no points. Instead, it is a general evaluation of how well your speech
meets the goals of the assignment relative to other students at your level.

Even though this is a basic level course, expectations are high. Careful
preparation will be necessary even to get a C on a speech. Sometimes students
mistakenly believe that any reasonably coherent speech which isn't laughably
atrocious must be an A speech. Not true. Many of the C speeches you'll see in this
course are good, strong speeches – which is why they are getting a C instead of a
D. The key to doing better than a C is not to look at your speech and say to
yourself "I don't see anything wrong with this, must be an A!" If there's nothing
wrong with it, it's probably a C. Speeches that get As and Bs go beyond that and
have things that are especially right with them. They are superior in all the
elements of the speech and synthesize them into a compelling communication
experience.

**Grading Criteria for Speeches**

**A**  The A speech is one where the speaker integrates all the rhetorical aspects of
speaking into a seamless, coherent whole: The speech is clear and compelling for
the audience. Inventionally, the speech addresses a significant, well-adapted topic
and presents clear, consistent arguments and evidence, all precisely within the
guidelines of the assignment. The speaker has correctly and accurately assessed
the audience and crafted style, organization and delivery to be clear and
persuasive. All organizational elements are present, evident to the audience, and
designed to support a persuasive purpose. Stylistic devices are employed
judiciously to enhance the persuasiveness and coherence of the speech without
calling attention to themselves. Delivery is clear, natural and unforced, supporting
rather than overshadowing content. The audience doesn’t notice the cards,
transitions, or effort.

**B**  The B speech is well-crafted and engaging, yet marred by some flaws. The B
speech shows a thoughtful awareness of the audience, and the requirements of
adaptation, yet it falls short by not being specific enough, ignoring part of the
audience, or simply misjudging them. The arguments and evidence in this speech,
while intelligible and relevant, are not always complete, and not perfectly
consistent with the assignment. While the B speech is relatively well organized,
some transitions may be weak or unclear, or the structure may conform more to
the demands of the material than the audience's understanding. This speech makes
some creative use of stylistic devices, but sometimes misuses them, or misses
opportunities for using them. The effectiveness of this speaker's delivery is
mitigated by nervous habits, insufficient eye contact or a weak voice.
C  The C speech is competent: It attempts most of the rhetorical requirements of a good speech, yet is rarely more than adequate in meeting them. The C speech has all its main parts, in the correct order, and there is a recognizable topic and some argument. Yet this speech leaves much room for improvement. This speech is unevenly adapted, with little or no rationale for the relevance of the topic or arguments to the audience. Frequently, the persuasive purpose is unclear or divided. The information and arguments of this speech are sometimes inconsistent, and occasionally confusing; they do not "hang together." The organization is frequently unclear to the listener, and may not be relevant to the material or the assignment. Few stylistic elements appear, and they are not used creatively. Though generally adequate, the delivery may be distracting, due to poor eye contact, mannerisms, or the attempt to read the speech from the cards.

D  The D speech overall fails to meet the minimal requirements of public speaking. Adaptation is weak or ineffective, and the speaker may not appear to have thought about the audience carefully. Research may be weak or non-existent, or sometimes all too present: Some D speeches may strike the audience a tedious, though well-researched, essay read aloud. D speeches often contain serious inconsistencies; sometimes they just don't make sense. These speeches do not appear to be organized; they may be jumbled, or just lists of information. Stylistic devices are not employed, or they are tasteless or pointless. The delivery reflects a lack of concern with the audience, and perhaps a lack of self-respect. The speech often seems unrehearsed, and the speaker overwhelmed.

F  This mark is usually reserved for no-shows and cases of academic dishonesty. However, deductions can bring an otherwise passing speech into this range.

Deductions

The requirements on notecards, outline and bibliography are not part of this holistic grade. These aspects of the assignment are there to help you prepare and to help your instructor grade your work (e.g., your outline may be clearer on some point then you were in giving the speech, so you get credit for the composition). These items need to be adequate to the purpose, and turned in; they are part of the minimal requirements of the assignment. If you give a great speech, which deserves an A-, but don’t turn in the outline and bibliography, you’ll receive a B for the speech.

Notecards

If they are unintelligible, partial or missing, have writing on both sides, or if you have written out most or all of your speech on the cards, your instructor will deduct 1/3 of a letter grade from the holistic grade already assigned to the speech. (And yes, you need to invest a dollar in a pack of 4x6 notecards; it’s harder than you think to speak from ripped up pieces of paper and you get a deduction.)
Notecards are required for the style of delivery taught in this course; students who fail to use them will get a deduction.

**Time Limits**

Staying within time limits is an important skill of public speaking; your adaptation to time requirements (that is, the basic size of the speech) is major part of your composition process, and your ability to stay within time is an indication of the amount of practice you’ve put in. For each speech, you have a two-minute “window” within which to finish. If you fall short or exceed that time, you’ll get a letter grade deduction off your holistic grade for each minute (or part thereof) over or under the time limit. So if the speech is a 2-4 minute speech, you’ll get a letter grade deduction at 1:59 or 4:01, two letter grades at 5:01, etc. If you have practiced your speech in advance, it’s not too hard to fall within the two minute range.

**Outlines and Bibliographies**

These must be printed legibly and turned in at the time of speaking. Bibliographies should be in APA style, and include all the sources cited in the speech; including background sources is a good idea also. Outlines must be correctly formatted and no more than two pages, double-spaced. If you have more than one page of either, you need to **staple them together** before handing them in.
FIRST SPEECH ASSIGNMENT: *Encomium*, The Speech of Praise

The goal of this assignment is to get you up and talking in an organized fashion. The topic of the speech is someone you admire, and why s/he is an admirable person. Thus you will have to convince your audience, through argument, that this person is worthy of their admiration. The person could be someone you currently know, have known, someone contemporary or historical, a family member, friend, politician, musician, artist, philosopher—anybody for whom you can argue. This speech is difficult because you must show sincere regard for the person admired; speeches that are cynical, ironic or backhanded will not fulfill the assignment.

Why do we admire people? Because in some way the person, or their actions and accomplishments, embody values that are important to us. By “us,” we mean the larger public, not us personally. So while being beautiful and rich may be satisfying to us personally, and we may envy people who are beautiful and rich (or just like them), we typically don’t admire them in the sense necessary for this speech. You’re trying to make your audience part of the “public” that could benefit from what’s valuable about your hero.

The values we do admire would include

- Hard work
- Showing/creating tolerance
- Putting one’s talents to work for others
- Giving back to one’s community
- Altruism/Helping others
- Putting the group before oneself
- Solving problems for others

It might be best to think of subjects for your speech as “public heroes,” and you have to include the class as part of the “public” for this speech. That is, you have to argue the speech in such a way that it positions your classmates (and you) as people whose common interest is addressed by actions and accomplishments of the person in your speech. Deeds on the football field or basketball court aren’t going to be relevant to this speech; athletes will only be relevant in their works off the field (and simply having a foundation for PR purposes doesn’t count), or in advancing some kind of larger purpose—breaking a color, gender or age barrier. People who end up in the media because they are rich or talented probably aren’t going to work, so you’ll have to do some research.

Someone who works two jobs and still does full time care of a sick parent is surely a hero, but the person who goes on to set up an agency that helps anybody in this situation is a public hero; all of us with living parents potentially face this situation. All across Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the US there are thousands of people making a huge public difference. If you don’t believe it, take a look at www.growingpower.org -- someone who lives a few miles from you is making an impact across the country. You can look at awards websites for a general idea, or follow up a particular area (housing, hunger, poverty, political change).

You may use any organizational pattern you wish: topical, spatial, etc. (See Chapter 9 for details.) You will be organizing the speech around the reasons why the
person should be admired. This speech should not be a recitation of why you admire the person (then the speech is actually about you); it should be focused on why the audience – who maybe skeptical or not even know the person – should admire him/her. Fictional “persons” (Homer Simpson, Elizabeth Bennett) aren’t really appropriate. Jesus, Mohammed or Buddha would also be difficult choices, since to meet the assignment, you’d have to evoke admiration in people who may not share the theology, and may even be hostile to it (and it’s very likely the theology is the basis of your admiration). Objects or ideas (monster trucks, Silly Putty, rap music, freedom) are not appropriate for this speech. Other people are so well known that it seems redundant to praise them again. Is there anyone around who doesn't know the Lance Armstrong story? The Oprah story? 

You must use sources. If Will Allen is making a difference in the world, you need the evidence. Do not make up information or BS about the person. To decide whether or not you need to cite a source, ask yourself: How do I know this? How could I prove I wasn’t making it up? If I don’t know this by personal experience, where did I find it out?

Requirements

1. **2-4 minutes in length.** A letter grade deduction will be made for each minute or partial minute under or over time.

2. Clear organizational structure; if all the necessary parts of the structure are not hearable, the speech will be graded accordingly.

3. No fewer than **two different sources cited in the speech**, with more citations required as appropriate.

4. A neatly typed outline of the speech, stapled to a typed bibliography turned in at the time of speaking. A second copy of each must be placed in the appropriate dropbox on D2L.

5. No more than two (2) 4 x 6 notecards are permitted, with writing on one side only.

6. The speech must fit the assignment, and incorporate principles and skills from class discussion and the book.
**SECOND SPEECH ASSIGNMENT**

**The Controversial Speech**

Each student will argue one side of a controversial topic; for each topic, there will be a student arguing on the other side as well. The goals of this assignment are:

To develop clear and cogent arguments, free from obvious logical flaws, which incorporate citations to sources. These speeches *must do more than simply restate their theses* in various ways. They must give reasons and evidence.

To argue strongly for one side of an issue without waffling or merely gesturing at argument, and without simply speaking from a sense of personal commitment. You’re not supposed to empty the contents of your heart, but present the best case you can muster. Do not moderate the controversial nature of the topic assigned; deal with it *rhetorically*.

To show a command of basic organization; to be able to craft a speech that is clearly structured and easy to follow, despite the complexity of evidence and arguments.

Students are on the pro or con side of a topic from a list provided by the instructor. Students do *not* need to be assigned an issue or side to which they feel strongly committed. Experience suggests, in fact, that such commitment frequently interferes with rational thought and successful completion of this assignment. There is nothing wrong, for the purposes of this assignment, in arguing a position with which you don’t agree. You are being evaluated on your argument and organization skills, not your values or politics. But you also shouldn’t argue a position you feel is personally shameful or morally reprehensible.

Despite the presence of two speakers for each issue, this is not a win/lose, zero-sum situation. Both speakers will be winners if their speeches are well-reasoned and well-organized. In fact, the speeches on each side might take such different approaches to the topic that they’re not really comparable. That’s OK, since the goal of the assignment learning to argue using evidence, not “defeat” someone.

**Requirements**

1. **4-6 minutes in length.** A letter grade will be deducted for each minute or partial minute under or over time.

2. Clear organizational structure; if all the necessary parts of the structure are not hearable, the speech will be graded accordingly.

3. No fewer than **four (4) different sources cited in the speech**, with more citations required as appropriate. At least 3 of the citations must *not* be to web sites or pages.
4. A neatly typed outline of the speech, stapled to a typed bibliography turned in at the time of speaking. A second copy of each must be placed in the appropriate dropbox on D2L.

5. No more than *three* (3) 4 x 6 notecards are permitted, with writing on one side only.

6. The speech must fit the assignment, and incorporate principles and skills from class discussion and the book.
Third Speech Assignment: The Problem-Solution Speech

The goal of this speech is to both convince the audience that there is a problem and persuade them to take action or change their beliefs about a solution to that problem. In other words, you are trying to convince your audience that something is a problem for them (it must be relevant to them) and that there is a solution they should believe in and act on. Thus you will have to keep in mind what the audience’s needs and interests are, since, for them, “problems” will be relative to these. The more concrete your action steps are, the better this speech will be. The overall organizational pattern of this speech is problem-solution. Beyond that, you have the usual choices. Remember that all requirements of organization and adaptation always apply.

Requirements

1. 5-7 minutes in length. Deductions will be made for speeches under or over time.

2. Clear problem-solution or problem-cause-solution structure.

3. No fewer than four (4) different sources cited in the speech, with more citations required as appropriate. At least three of the citations must not be to web sites or pages.

4. A neatly typed outline of the speech, stapled to a typed bibliography turned in at the time of speaking. A second copy of each must be placed in the appropriate Dropbox on D2L.

5. No more than four (4) 4 x 6 notecards are permitted, with writing or printing on one side only.

6. The speech must fit the assignment, and incorporate principles and skills from class discussion and the book.
Caveat Rhetor (Let the speaker beware)

We strongly discourage the following topics for classroom speeches. Some of these may reflect interesting and important issues, but they are so familiar, and so well worn, that it will be difficult for even the most skilled speaker to weave an effective speech around them. In addition, some of them are so complex and highly charged that it’s nearly impossible to say anything persuasive about them in a few minutes. Hence they are unsuitable to the classroom setting. Other topics (“You should exercise!”) are not only very familiar, but often pitched to a fairly personal and superficial level; there are plenty of public health topics around without having to resort to exhorting people to personal improvements they already know plenty about.

There are so many interesting public issues, local, state or national, that there is little reason to rehash familiar topics. If you feel you have an unusual take or different angle on one of these topics, please talk it over with your instructor before attempting it in class.

Alcohol — including drinking age, drunk driving, etc.
Smoking — “it’s bad”
Drugs (unless there’s something really new)
Abuse — wife, child, missing children
Rape
The “problem of terrorism” (unless you have something new and well adapted)
Abortion
Content labeling/rating for movies, music
Seatbelts are good
Gun Control
Prostitution is bad
Pornography is bad
Drug abuse in pro sports
Exercise is good
Diet
Stress
Global Warming/Climate Change