COMM 260-01 Public Speaking
Summer 2018
Session 1
May 21- June 29

Instructor: Carmen Hernández-Ojeda
Department of Communication, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Email: chernandezoj@umass.edu

Office hours: by appointment on Blackboard Collaborate

SYLLABUS CONTENT:
- Course Description
- Course Goals
- Course Policies
- Fear of Public Speaking
- Academic Honesty Policy Statement
- Disability Accommodation
- Your Well-Being
- Names and Pronouns
- Community Building
- Course Requirements
- Required Course Materials
- Assignments
- Grading
- Course Grade Scale

COURSE CONTENT
- Week 1
- Week 2
- Week 3
- Week 4
- Week 5
- Week 6
Course Description
After more than two thousand years, public speaking remains a central topic in a myriad of cultures. In order to understand the process of public speaking as well as to improve one’s public speaking skills in the 21st century, two steps prove fundamental. Firstly, behind every instance of public speaking, a complex intersection of factors takes place. Therefore, it becomes essential to critically examine these factors as well as to analyze the fluid relationship between speaker, audience, and context (at the micro and macro levels). Moreover, it is necessary to examine the role of public speaking in a democracy. Secondly, the theoretical dimension aims to enhance the personal application of critical public speaking skills in synchronous and asynchronous interactions, as speakers, listeners, and members of society at large.

For that purpose, COMM 260 emphasizes the theory of speech composition, presentation, and evaluation and its relationship to public discourse, civic engagement, and the ethics of persuasion. This course provides a critical application of theory through the online presentation of several formal and impromptu speeches. Requirements include frequent online speaking assignments and related practices, including written analyses of speeches. Thus, active online participation and critical engagement prove essential in this course. This course is fully online; students will not be required to be physically present for any component of the class.

Course Goals
Students—as speakers, listeners, and members of society—will improve their understanding and/or practice of:

- Critical public speaking skills.
- Critical thinking.
- Digital literacy skills.
- Ethical use of public speaking.
- Role of public speaking in building or preventing democratic practices.
- Role of context (micro and macro levels) in public speaking.
- Audience analysis.
- Types of speeches.
- Speech composition.
- Speech presentation in asynchronous and synchronous contexts using digital tools.
- The role of the body in public speaking.
- Active listening.
- Constructive evaluation (self-assessment and peer assessment).
Course Policies
The theoretical and practical nature of this course requires the commitment of every student and the instructor to create a safe, respectful, conducive, creative, critical, and empowering learning environment. By remaining enrolled in the course, every student commits to:

- Follow netiquette (please read attached document)
- Embrace diversity.
- Avoid any type of verbal or relational aggression.
- Be empathetic.
- Participate actively in online activities (i.e., discussions).
- Foster everybody’s participation.
- Provide constructive peer-assessment.
- Critically read/watch the required readings before participating in online discussions.
- Engage critically in online class discussions and class assignments.
- Submit assignments on time.
- Communicate with the instructor and classmates in a professional and respectful manner.
- Follow academic honesty policy.

Fear of Public Speaking
In Unit 1, we will address the fear of public speaking. Nonetheless, if the idea of speaking in public scares or intimidates you, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. You will need to make the required speeches, yet we can work together to address your fear of public speaking.

Academic Honesty Policy Statement
Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent. For more information about visit [http://umass.edu/honesty](http://umass.edu/honesty)
Disability Accommodation
The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to making reasonable, effective and appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and help create a barrier-free campus. If you have a disability and require accommodations, please register with Disability Services (161 Whitmore Administration building; phone 413-545-0892) to have an accommodation letter sent to your instructor. Information on services and materials for registering are also available on their website www.umass.edu/disability.

Your Well-Being
Being a college student can be highly demanding. Fostering our physical and psychological well-being is pivotal. Our campus offers multiple services that can help you prevent and cope with anxiety, stress, or mental health issues.
Dean of Students Office  https://www.umass.edu/dean_students/
Center for Counseling and Psychological Health  http://www.umass.edu/counseling
Center for Health Promotion  https://www.umass.edu/studentlife/health-safety/chp

Names and Pronouns
Everyone has the right to be addressed and referred to by the name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, including the use of non-binary pronouns. Class rosters have a student’s legal first name, unless they have entered a preferred/chosen first name on SPIRE. Pronouns are not included on rosters, so students will be asked to indicate the pronouns that they use for themselves whenever they are asked to share their names. A student’s chosen name and pronouns are to be respected always.

Community Building
Learning becomes easier and more pleasant when you are a part of a community of teachers/learners. How can we get to know each other better? We can use the section “Community” in the Discussion Board as well as the Open Mic Night on Blackboard Collaborate on Wednesdays to build community. If you have other suggestions, let us know!

Course Requirements
The practical dimension of this course requires that students follow the instructions and deadlines established for each unit. Once a Week is closed, late assignments from that Week will not be accepted unless the instructor grants you an extension due to extenuating circumstances. In that case, you must contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Required Course Materials
In this course, we will only use Open Educational Resources (OER) shared on Blackboard. We will read the digital textbook Stand Up, Speak Out: The Practice and Ethics of Public Speaking. (2011). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing. As a Creative Commons
Assignments

Participation (30%)
Your active, engaging, responsible, timely, respectful, and creative participation on Blackboard proves essential in order to achieve individual and group success. In every Unit, you are expected to read and watch the materials assigned, engage critically with the concepts addressed, and answer questions on the Discussion board. Likewise, you are expected to participate in online class activities (as speaker and audience)— including the elaboration and recording of impromptu speeches as well as speech assessments— and collaborate building a safe and productive online class environment.

Journal (12%)
Every week, you will need to address the questions provided by the instructor in your journal on Blackboard.

Oral Presentations (58%)
During the course, you will present two speeches: An Informative Speech and a Persuasive Speech (focusing on a social issue). You will also need to submit speech outlines. Evaluating your classmates will be part of your grade as well. After submitting your Informative Speech, you will need to meet with the instructor during online office hours (it is highly recommended to meet after presenting each speech).

Grading

A. Journal (6 entries) 12%
B. Oral Presentations- (speaking and audiencing)
   1st Speech (Informative) 25%
      • Preparation outline [7%]
      • Delivery outline [7%]
      • Speech [7%]
      • Feedback [4%]
   2nd Speech (Persuasive) 25%
      • Preparation outline [8%]
      • Delivery outline [8%]
      • Speech [9%]
C. Online Participation 30%
   • Activities [11%]
   • Discussion [14%]
   • Class Engagement [5%]
Course Grade Scale

Your final grade in the course will be based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72%</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-66%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62%</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Content

Due to the practical nature of this skill-based course, which aims to develop your public speaking skills, it is essential to follow the guidelines and deadlines established by the instructor. The semester is divided into six weeks. Each week comprises one or two Units of material to cover—video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts—as well as a set of assignments to prepare and submit. Please follow instructions.

WEEK 1 [May 21-28]

Unit 1 [May 21-23]

*Topic: Becoming Familiar with Our Course*

1.1. Syllabus and Netiquette, Exploring Blackboard, and Getting to Know Each Other

- Complete video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by May 23rd.

*Unit Objectives*

After finishing this unit, you should have a clear understanding of the description of this course (i.e., goals, policies, organization, deadlines, procedures). You should become more familiar with the instructor and your peers as well as the tools that we will use in the course (i.e., Blackboard—in particular, VoiceThread, Blackboard Collaborate, and Discussion Threads).

Unit 2 [May 23-28]

*Topic: Introduction to Public Speaking*

2.1. Why Take a Course on Public Speaking?
2.2. Ethics and Public Speaking
2.3. Communication Apprehension
2.4. Types of Speeches

- Complete video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by May 28th.

*Unit Objectives*

After finishing this unit and assignments, you should have a better understanding of the role of public speaking in our society and in your life—being more aware of ethical issues related to
public speaking, especially its social influence. Likewise, you will better understand the reasons why we may experience speech fright and reflect upon your own experience as a public speaker.

**Assignments Week 1**

*Weekly Journal*

After completing Units 1 and 2, please answer the prompt for Journal Post 1 on Blackboard by May 28\(^{th}\) at 11:55pm EDT.

*Optional*

Open Mic Night [volunteer participation] on Wednesday May 23\(^{rd}\) from 7-9pm EDT on Blackboard Collaborate.

*WEEK 1 closes on May 28\(^{th}\) at 11:55pm EDT. After May 28th, late submissions or participation in Discussion Threads will not be graded. If you need to ask for an extension due to extenuating circumstances, please contact your instructor asap.*

**WEEK 2 [May 29-June 4]**

**Unit 3**

*Topics: Understanding the Basics of Public Speaking*

- 3.1. Ethics II
- 3.2. Context Analysis
- 3.3. Audience Analysis
  - Complete video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by June 4\(^{th}\).

*Unit Objectives*

After finishing this unit and assignments, you should understand the relevance of context and audience analyses and conduct effective context and audience analyses.

**Assignments Week 2**

*Weekly Journal*

After completing Unit 3, please answer the prompt for Journal Post 2 on Blackboard by June 4\(^{th}\) at 11:55pm EDT.

*Optional*

Open Mic Night [volunteer participation] on Wednesday May 30\(^{th}\) from 7-9pm EDT on Blackboard Collaborate.

*WEEK 2 closes on June 4\(^{th}\) at 11:55pm EDT. After June 4\(^{th}\), late submissions or participation in Discussion Threads will not be graded. If you need to ask for an extension due to extenuating circumstances, please contact your instructor asap.*

---

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)
WEEK 3 [June 5-11]

Unit 4

Topics: Preparing Your Speech

4.1. Purpose of Public Speaking
4.2. Topics and Researching Content
4.3. Composition & Outlining
4.4. Informative Speech

- Complete video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by June 11th.

Week Objectives

After finishing this unit and assignments, you should be better equipped to prepare your speeches: deciding their purpose, choosing a proper topic and conducting research, as well as organizing and outlining your speech. You will become more familiar with the informative speech and ready to rehearse your informative speech.

Assignments Week 3

Informative Speech Outline

Prepare the outline for Speech 1, Informative Speech. Post it on Blackboard by June 11th at 11:55pm EDT.

Weekly Journal

After completing Unit 4, please answer the prompt for Journal Post 3 on Blackboard by June 11th at 11:55pm EDT.

Optional

Open Mic Night [volunteer participation] on Wednesday June 6th from 7-9pm EDT on Blackboard Collaborate.

WEEK 3 closes on June 11th at 11:55pm EDT. After June 11th, late submissions or participation in Discussion Threads will not be graded. If you need to ask for an extension due to extenuating circumstances, please contact your instructor asap.

WEEK 4 [June 12-18]

Unit 5

Topics: Listening and Speaking

5.1. Active listening
5.2. Bodies Communicating
5.3. Evaluating and Giving Feedback
5.4. Digital Communication
- Complete video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by June 18th.

**Week Objectives**
After finishing this unit and assignments, you should be aware of the central relevance of active listening and our bodies in public speaking as well as become a more effective active listener. Likewise, you should better know how to adapt your public speaking skills—as speaker and listener—to computer mediated communication, in both synchronous and asynchronous contexts, as well as provide effective, constructive, and caring feedback.

**Assignments Week 4**
*Informative Speech*
Rehearse and record your Informative Speech using VoiceThread. Post it on Blackboard by June 18th at 11:55pm EDT.

*Weekly Journal*
After completing Unit 5, please answer the prompt for Journal Post 4 on Blackboard by June 18th at 11:55pm EDT.

*Optional*
Open Mic Night [volunteer participation] on Wednesday June 13th from 7-9pm EDT on Blackboard Collaborate.

*WEEK 4 closes on June 18th at 11:55pm EDT. After June 18th, late submissions or participation in Discussion Threads will not be graded. If you need to ask for an extension due to extenuating circumstances, please contact your instructor asap.*

**WEEK 5 [June 19-25]**

**Unit 6**
*Topics: Persuasive Speech*
  7.1 Persuasive Speech
  - Complete video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by June 25th.

**Week Objectives**
After finishing this unit and assignments, you will be more familiar with persuasive speeches and ready to rehearse your persuasive speech.

**Assignments Week 5**
*Persuasive Speech Outline*
Post Persuasive Speech Outline on Blackboard by June 25th at 11:55pm EDT.
Feedback Informative Speech
Watch two Informative speeches and give feedback to your peers on VoiceThread by June 25th at 11:55pm EDT.

Weekly Journal
After completing Unit 6, please answer the prompt for Journal Post 5 on Blackboard by June 25th at 11:55pm EDT.

Consultation
Make an appointment with your instructor to discuss your speeches on Blackboard Collaborate.

Optional
Open Mic Night [volunteer participation] on Wednesday June 20th from 7-9pm EDT on Blackboard Collaborate.

WEEK 5 closes on June 25th at 11:55pm EDT. After June 25th, late submissions or participation in Discussion Threads will not be graded. If you need to ask for an extension due to extenuating circumstances, please contact your instructor asap.

WEEK 6 [June 26-29]
Unit 7
Topics: Public Speaking and Civic Engagement
  7.1 Public Speaking and Civic Engagement
  • Video-lectures, readings, activities, and discussion posts on Blackboard by June 29th.

Week Objectives
After finishing this unit and assignments, you should feel more prepared to use public speaking as civic engagement. Likewise, you should feel more confident as an effective public speaker and listener.

Assignments Week 6
Persuasive Speech
Rehearse and record your Persuasive Speech using VoiceThread. Post it on Blackboard by June 29th at 11:55pm EDT.

Weekly Journal
After completing Unit 7, please answer the prompt for Journal Post 6 on Blackboard by June 29th at 23:55 EDT.

Optional
Open Mic Night [volunteer participation] on Wednesday June 27th from 7-9pm EDT on Blackboard Collaborate.
WEEK 6 closes on June 29th at 11:55pm EDT. After June 29th, late submissions or participation in Discussion Threads will not be graded. If you need to ask for an extension due to extenuating circumstances, please contact your instructor asap.