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# PUBLIC SPEECH, PUBLIC LIFE

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Class Time: MWF 12:30-1:20                      Olin 322  
Office Hours: Wed. – 11:00-12:20                      Mundy 116

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public speech refers not only to the addresses that occur on official occasions (e.g., graduations, funerals, rallies) but also to the numerous ways in which communication – the act of speaking and listening to others – works to forge or fracture connections between people. These connections form the basis of public life. You are all members of different *publics*, communities and groups oriented around the sharing and contesting of values, concerns, and goals. You might be a part of a religious community, service organization, the Southwestern community, and/or a political party – each of which will emphasize sometimes overlapping, sometimes contradictory public values and goals. The choices you make as a speaker about how, when, where, and to whom you speak about these issues opens, but also closes potential connections between you and your audience. Equally important, the kind of connections you make as a speaker will affect the choices your audience makes – whether to listen, to endorse new beliefs or attitudes, or to act as a result of your speech. This course aims to help you make those connections *deliberately, strategically, and ethically*.

This course is intended to provide you with theoretical and practical knowledge and experience in critical skills for public life: rhetoric, media literacy, and civic engagement. You will engage with theory and issues of civic importance while actively practicing delivery, writing, and critical thinking skills. Because public speech is integral to public life, this course features a significant community engagement component that allows you to apply these skills in social contexts. This course covers topics such as research, organization, critical listening, service-based learning, media criticism, reasoning, persuasion, audience analysis, delivery, and self and peer evaluation.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

- ❑ Keith and Lundberg's *The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*, 2008. ISBN – 0312472390
- ❑ DHC 16 gb Memory Card
- ❑ 120-page 8 ½ x 11 notebook with perforations

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

***By the end of the course, students will be able to:***

- ❑ identify and apply delivery techniques that contribute to effective public speaking
- ❑ employ a variety of resources for conducting research and organizing information
- ❑ apply research skills in partnerships with local community organizations
- ❑ develop, organize, and support arguments appropriate for civic advocacy
- ❑ practice meaningful, responsible civic engagement through public communication
- ❑ analyze and critique media and other public speech
- ❑ create and deliver speeches appropriate to specific purposes

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY:

Introductory Speech:	10pts	Debate:	10pts
Informative Speech:	50pts	Civic Engagement:	50pts
Ceremonial Speech:	75pts	Writing Assignments:	65pts
Persuasive Speech:	100pts	Media Review:	20pts
Impromptu Speeches (2):	20pts	<u>Participation:</u>	<u>100pts</u>
		Total:	500pts

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

*This class involves both individual and collaborative work. Much of that work is performative, which requires a culture of mutual respect. I've provided some guidelines below, which will increase our ability to communicate effectively with one another.*

- ❑ This class is intended to be a safe space for each student to develop as a speaker and listener. **No disrespectful or distracting behaviors while others are speaking will be tolerated.** Ex: eating, being on your phone, talking, making noise of any kind.
- ❑ You may only use your computer for class lectures. **No electronic devices may be used during speeches, roundtables, or activities unless otherwise indicated.** All cell phones must be silenced and put away when you enter.
- ❑ We will be using email and Moodle regularly for readings, rubrics, and announcements. **You are expected to access both habitually.**

## COMMUNICATION

I believe that you will learn the most from experiences that are relevant to your life and your community, and I have designed this course with that principle in mind. **Stay in contact with me if you are experiencing a circumstance or difficulty that affects your participation in the course.** Please take advantage of my office hours. You can sign up to meet with me during class or make an appointment via email. You can best reach me at [rigdonr@southwestern.edu](mailto:rigdonr@southwestern.edu).

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

- ❑ You can have three excused absences, for any reason. **Neither of these absences may be on ANY day on which you are speaking or giving peer critiques.** No excuse is needed but email me within 24 hours of the missed class to let me know. Additional absences will result in grade penalties: every unexcused absence will reduce your final score by one-third of a letter grade. For example, someone with a B+ who has one unexcused absence will earn a B for the term.
- ❑ **Every tardy will be counted as ½ of an absence.** If you arrive late, do not enter the classroom while any student is delivering a speech; wait for them to finish before opening the door.
- ❑ **If you do not attend class, you cannot make up missed assignments or speeches unless you have cleared it with me first. You must complete all major assignments to pass.**

## RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

Southwestern University recognizes that it has students from a variety of religious and cultural traditions that have special days of observance or celebration that may take students out of their regular activities on certain days during the school year. Since the academic calendar does not always coincide with these days, the following policy is to be followed in order to facilitate student absences due to cultural and religious observances: As far in advance as possible, the student is expected to notify the professor(s) or instructor(s) of the class(es) to be missed. The student is expected to learn what assignments or exams are due or will be assigned on those dates and negotiate with the professor(s) or instructor(s) alternate times for fulfilling those requirements. Students should be prepared to fulfill the requirements prior to the class(es) to be missed.

## INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL POLICY

When, prior to the last day to drop courses (after the 10<sup>th</sup> week of class), excessive absences, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus and the University Excused Absence Policy, jeopardize a student's work in any course, the instructor may request that the Records drop the student from the course. After the last day to drop, students missing an excessive number of class meetings could be dropped at the discretion of the instructor with an F. Students will be notified of this action by the Records Office.

## HONOR CODE AND PLAGIARISM

Students should act “with honesty and integrity”, as the SU honor code requires, which includes properly citing the work of others and collaborating with others only when it is specifically authorized (e.g., media reviews, peer evaluations).

Plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity are strictly prohibited and subject to penalty as defined by the University. Plagiarism is defined in the Faculty Handbook as “the submission of another’s work as one’s own without acknowledgement in the written work” (p. 85). Princeton University’s Word Net defines plagiarism as:

- (n) Plagiarism: a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work.
- (n) Plagiarism, plagiarization, plagiarisation, piracy: the act of plagiarizing; taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own.

## RECORDED SPEECHES

All student speeches recorded in class are created for educational use only, for the members of the class. They are not to be distributed, copied or shared by anyone outside of the class, at any time.

## ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Southwestern University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should register with the Center for Academic Success, located in the Prothro Center. Professors must be officially notified by the Access and Academic Resources Coordinator that documentation is on file at least two weeks before the accommodation is needed.

## DEBBY ELLIS WRITING CENTER

I highly encourage students to use the **Debby Ellis Writing Center** as a resource for help organizing a speech, fine-tuning a thesis, improving critical analyses, and clarifying outlines and ideas. You can make an appointment or drop-in at Mood-Bridwell Hall, Room 306. [www.southwestern.edu/offices/writing/](http://www.southwestern.edu/offices/writing/)

## ASSIGNMENTS

- ❑ Please submit all outlines and formal essays in hard copy with your full name and the title of the assignment in the header.
- ❑ Unless I have made a mathematical error, all grades are final.
- ❑ **The goal of this course is for you to increase your mastery of practical public speaking techniques and skills, from writing through delivery. One important basis for your grades will be your responsiveness to feedback—both from your peers and me.**

*Final letter grades will be computed according to the following percentage:*

Score	295	300	315	335	350	364	385	400	415	435	450	465	485
%	59%	60%	63%	67%	70%	73%	77%	80%	83%	87%	90%	93%	97%
Ltr Grade	F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+

## SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

“Civic engagement” describes the practices that exist at the intersection between knowledge, communication, and action. There are many actions we can take to engage with our community, including both speaking with others about social issues and volunteering with local service organizations. The service component of the course orients our class work toward the civic functions of public speaking.

### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

**6 HOURS**

**50 POINTS**

*You have the opportunity to select and partner with a local service group that addresses a social issue you care about. During the term, you'll learn more about the issue and your organization and share what you learn with the class. Documentation for a minimum of 6 hours is required.*

### PARTICIPATION

**100 POINTS**

*Participation includes attendance, timeliness, and active participation in class discussion and activities as evidenced by being both a good speaker and a good listener. Thoughtful peer evaluations, regular news consumption, and positive engagement with classmates are requisite indicators of healthy participation.*

## *MEDIA REVIEW*

*20 POINTS*

*You will work in a group to find, circulate, and lead discussion on a media text that connects to and advances themes within the course and class discussion. By noon on the day before, the group should email out at least 1 news article, clip, or other media text along with a series of questions, activities, thought experiments, or examples that help us connect the media practices and discourses to the class discussions and assigned reading material.*

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- ☐ All assignments must be typed in Times New Roman, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1" margins.
- ☐ Late work will not be accepted.
- ☐ Make-up work will only be allowed if cleared with me ahead of time.

### *SELF-REFLECTION 1*

*1-2 PAGES*

*15 POINTS*

*This is an informal essay reflecting upon your first speeches, goals for the class, how the class can improve your professional, academic, and civic participation, and your thoughts on the connections between public speech, public life, and your identity.*

### *SELF-REFLECTION 2*

*2-4 PAGES*

*20 POINTS*

*This is a short essay about your experience with your service organization and the connections you have found between public speaking and public life. It should also reflect upon your progress as a speaker and future goals and applications for course material.*

### *CRITICAL SPEECH ANALYSIS*

*3-5 PAGES*

*30 POINTS*

*You will analyze and critique a pre-approved speech referencing and engaging with the rhetorical theory we have covered.*

## SPEECHES

- ☐ You must deliver your speech on the date you are scheduled and you must be present to provide peer evaluations. **All major assignments are required in order to pass the course.**
- ☐ You will turn in an outline for revisions before every major speech. The honor code must be present on every outline.

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- ☐ A rubric will be provided for every assignment providing clear expectations for organization, delivery, and level of research.
- ☐ You may only use 3x5 notecards for delivery unless instructed otherwise.

<i>INTRODUCTORY SPEECH</i>	<i>2-3 MINUTES</i>	<i>10 POINTS</i>
<i>You will introduce yourself. You will provide a frame for how your identity is connected to the criteria you are using to select your service organization. We will discuss ideas for topics in class and this speech may require very basic research.</i>		
<i>INFORMATIVE SPEECH</i>	<i>3-5 MINUTES</i>	<i>50 POINTS</i>
<i>You will give a presentation about the problems that your service organization addresses. This speech will require outside research. Before delivery, you will submit an outline of your speech for revisions. You must have a visual aid and answer questions from the audience.</i>		
<i>CEREMONIAL SPEECH</i>	<i>4-6 MINUTES</i>	<i>75 POINTS</i>
<i>You will give an encomium or jeremiad on a topic or person related to your civic engagement experience. This speech will require outside research. Before delivery, you will submit an outline of your speech for revisions. This speech will include figurative language and you will be graded on your style; creativity is encouraged. This speech will be recorded and you will submit a short reflection on your performance.</i>		
<i>PERSUASIVE SPEECH</i>	<i>5-7 MINUTES</i>	<i>100 POINTS</i>
<i>For your final exam you will deliver a speech that moves your audience to action—whether it is a shift in perspective or specific actions, the speech should seek to present a problem and provide a solution of either local or global proportion. Before delivery, you will submit an outline of your speech for revisions. This speech will require substantial outside research.</i>		
<i>IMPROMPTU SPEECH</i>	<i>2-3 MINUTES</i>	<i>20 POINTS (10 POINTS EACH)</i>
<i>You will prepare and deliver a speech in one class period with a short amount of time for preparation. The topics will draw upon class discussion and news events.</i>		
<i>DEBATE</i>	<i>1 CLASS PERIOD</i>	<i>10 POINTS</i>

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*You will be divided into teams and debate opposing sides of an assigned issue. This speech will require minimal outside research.*