

# **Introduction to Public Speaking COMM 111A**

**Course Packet  
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# Introduction to Public Speaking

## COMM 111A

Your Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office: LA 339  
Office Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Info  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: 243-6604 (shared phone)

### Course Materials (available at University Bookstore)

1. Michael Osborn, Suzanne Osborn, and Randall Osborn, *Public Speaking*, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed.
2. COMM 111 Course Packet
3. A two-pocket folder – for handing in materials related to your major speeches.

### Course Description

This course introduces students to the *conceptual knowledge* and *practical skills* needed for effective public speaking. The course prepares students for other college courses that require research, critical thinking, and speaking skills, and it equips students to engage public speaking situations beyond the classroom.

Students will give *four formal speeches* during the course, and they will evaluate speeches during and outside class sessions. By offering multiple opportunities to analyze and produce public discourse, the course intends to reinforce the principles and qualities of good public speaking.

In addition, this course emphasizes the *public* dimension of public speaking. You will be asked to engage with issue of public importance throughout the semester and demonstrate how your personal interests and concerns intersect with the interests and concerns of others. Our goal is to empower you with the skills necessary for active and meaningful participation in democratic culture.

### Course Objectives

The course is designed to help students meet two sets of learning objectives. The first set is specific to public speaking, the second set regards general education. To start:

- *You will understand the elements of the communication process.*  
This will be demonstrated by quizzes and the Outside Speaker Assignment.
- *You will understand the components of effective speech delivery.*  
This will be demonstrated by speech performances and feedback on speeches.
- *You will improve your listening skills and your ability to offer constructive feedback to others.*  
This will be demonstrated by feedback on speeches.

- *You will learn how to conduct basic college-level research on contemporary public issues and incorporate that research in public discourse.*  
This will be demonstrated by a library assignment and the construction of speech outlines for your informative and persuasive speeches.
- *You will be able to craft public speeches that are oriented by a clear purpose, that articulate a cogent central idea or claim, that are organized thoughtfully, and that are adapted appropriately to the audience and the situation.*  
This will be developed throughout all of the work you do for this class, and ultimately demonstrated by your speech performances.

In addition, COMM 111 is an approved course for the Expressive Arts Perspective or 'A' category of General Education. The course has been designed so that students will demonstrate their ability to meet the learning outcomes for the perspective throughout the course. The outcomes, taken from the UM Course Catalog, and the means for demonstrating student achievement, are as follows:

*Upon completion of this perspective, through the creation of original works of art or artistic performances, students will be able to:*

*1. Apply the techniques and processes of the medium*

This will be demonstrated by successful performance of four major speeches during the semester.

*2. Incorporate the structures and forms of the artistic language to convey meaning*

This will be demonstrated by successful composition of an outline and/or manuscript for each of the informative, persuasive and ceremonial speeches.

*3. Reflect upon and critically assess the merits of their work and the work of others*

This will be demonstrated by successful completion of feedback forms for other students' speeches and self-evaluations for each of their own major speeches.

*4. Perceive and articulate the relevance of artistic expression in the human experience*

This will be demonstrated by successful completion of the Outside Speaker Assignment.

As you can see, the course objectives and the general education objectives converge in a set of activities and assignments designed to promote specific learning outcomes. If you work hard and take the course seriously, you should see improvement in all these areas.

## Student Responsibilities and Expectations

In order to achieve these objectives, students need to do the following:

- *Respect your instructor and your colleagues.* This encompasses all of the following items. It is absolutely necessary for a positive educational experience. Whether it is turning off your cellphone, behaving ethically toward your instructor and classmates, or contributing to a positive classroom climate, please act respectfully.
- *Follow your instructor's guidance.* Although COMM111 has a common syllabus and assignments, each instructor is entirely responsible for his or her section and may make adjustments specific to those sections. Their instructions supersede the packet. Therefore, it is crucial to attend class and follow your instructor's guidance.
- *Attend all class sessions and arrive on time.* There is a *de facto* attendance policy for this course. During nearly every class session, you can earn points for quizzes, exercises, or feedback on your colleagues' speeches. Therefore, if you do not attend class, arrive late, or leave early, or skip class, you will miss these opportunities. In other words, you earn points for your performance, not merely your attendance.
- *Read the textbook and packet.* Students who fail to keep up with reading assignments will perform poorly on quizzes and have problems with speeches.
- *Give your speech on the day you are assigned.* If you know ahead of time that you will miss class on the assigned day, inform your instructor immediately and negotiate a switch with a classmate. Students who anticipate missing speech days because of University-approved activities (athletics, debate, music) are responsible for making arrangements with their instructors to make up speeches.

Instructors have the discretion to define additional policies for missed speeches. In case of extenuating circumstances (significant illness, family emergency), your instructor may give you an opportunity to make up a speech if the following conditions are met:

- ✓ You are in good standing in the course (passing grades on all assignments, no late assignments, consistent attendance)
- ✓ You notify your instructor prior to missing the speech, and you provide documentation verifying your excuse.
- ✓ You turn in your outline within 24 hours of missing the speech.
- ✓ You schedule a make-up time within one week of missing the speech.

Missed speeches may be penalized at the discretion of the instructor. Typically, this means a maximum performance grade of C.

- *Turn in assignments on time.* Late assignments will be penalized at the discretion of your instructor. You must complete all four major speaking assignments to receive a final grade for the course.
- *Do your own work.* Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will result in penalties ranging from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the University. This topic is addressed later in this document and will be discussed in class.

## Requirements and Grading

Your course grade will be determined by your performance on four major speaking assignments, smaller assignments related to the speeches, and in-class exercises and quizzes:

<b><u>SPEECH 1</u></b>		<b><u>Personal Experience Speech</u></b>		<b><u>100 pts.</u></b>	
	Performance		75		
	Speaking Notes		25		
<b><u>SPEECH 2</u></b>		<b><u>Informative Speech</u></b>		<b><u>200</u></b>	
	Preliminary Outline		50		
	Performance		125		
	Outline/Notes + Bibliography		25		
<b><u>SPEECH 3</u></b>		<b><u>Persuasive Speech</u></b>		<b><u>200</u></b>	
	Preliminary Outline		25		
	Performance		150		
	Outline/Notes + Bibliography		25		
<b><u>SPEECH 4</u></b>		<b><u>Ceremonial Speech</u></b>		<b><u>150</u></b>	
	Performance		125		
	Manuscript		25		
	Quizzes, Exercises, Short Assignments		150		
	Peer Evaluations		100		(For Speech 1, 10 pts. total; for Spchs 2-4, 9 evals x 10pts @)
	Self Evaluations		60		(4 evals x 15 pts @)
	Outside Speaker Evaluation		<u>40</u>		
					1000 pts possible
<b><u>Course Points/Final Grade</u></b>					
>925	=A	899-875	B+	799-775	C+
924-900	=A-	874-825	B	774-725	C
		824-800	B-	724-700	C-
				699-600	D
				<600	F

## Evaluation

Speech performances will be evaluated according to the criteria listed on the assignment sheet at the beginning of each section of this packet. Your instructor will discuss more detailed grading rubrics in your class. Outlines, bibliographies, and other assignments will be awarded points at the discretion of the instructor.

Like other arts, the art of public speaking can be taught and learned only to a certain point. The course is designed to help you learn basic techniques that make for effective speeches, but factors that contribute to excellent speeches – insight, creativity, captivating delivery – cannot be taught. That is why there is no “recipe” for getting an A on a speech, and it is why A speeches are the exception rather than the rule.

At the same time, evaluating speeches is not a sheerly “subjective” process. There are broad objective criteria that instructors use to make basic distinctions during grading. The following descriptions, which are adapted from instructors’ manuals for various public speaking textbooks, articulate these criteria for COMM 111:

To earn a C on your speech performance: The speech must fulfill the basic criteria of the assignment. It should conform to the purpose and time limit of the assignment, it should be free of basic errors in grammar, pronunciation, and usage, and it should exhibit a clear central idea and organizational strategy. *An average speech is a C speech.*

To earn a B on your speech performance: The speech needs to execute the assignment well. The speech must meet the criteria of a C speech. In addition, the speech should address a challenging or unique topic, it should execute the functions of a successful introduction and conclusion, it should use credible supporting materials, and it should exhibit proficient use of transitions or connectives. The delivery of the speech should not distract attention from its message. *An above-average speech is a B speech.*

To earn an A on your speech performance: The speech must be outstanding; it literally “stands out” from the majority of speeches in the class. Thus, the speech must meet the criteria of a B speech, meeting all of the assignment criteria in an above-average manner, but it also must stand out by meeting the criteria in an especially unique or creative way. It will exhibit effort above and beyond that of the rest of the class, and its delivery will be fluent and polished. *An exceptional speech is an A speech.*

Grades of D and F are earned by failing to meet the basic criteria of the assignment. Speeches that lack a clear central idea or organizational strategy, that fail to offer external support for ideas, that are obviously unprepared or not rehearsed, or that are inappropriate for the assignment or the audience will earn D or F grades.

As this outline suggests, the beginning assumption for grading is that everyone is capable of giving an average (or C) speech. The movement of your grade from that midpoint is largely in your hands.

## **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability which may require modification of the course, please obtain the appropriate documentation and then see your instructor to make arrangements.

## **Drop/Adds, Withdrawals, Incompletes, and Grading Options**

Read the University catalog for the details regarding these matters. In addition:

- If you do not attend the first two days of the course, the instructor can give your seat to another student. Still, you **MUST** submit a drop slip to get off the roster.
- Since the course fulfills a General Education requirement, students are allowed to take the course on the CR/NCR grading option **ONLY** if they are not seeking a degree. Students cannot switch to CR/NCR after the 30<sup>th</sup> instructional day.

## **Academic Misconduct**

As a student at the University of Montana, you must practice academic honesty and need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. It is available to download at:

**<http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/name/StudentConductCode>**

As the code explains, academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating, and deliberate interference with the work of others. It is the intellectual equivalent of fraud – a crime against the codes of the academy. *As an academic crime, plagiarism merits academic punishment, subject to an academic penalty by the instructor (F on the assignment or for the course) and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.*

In this course, the primary problem is the plagiarism of speeches. Plagiarism in this context includes, but is not limited to:

- using a “canned” speech written by someone else
- representing someone else’s words, ideas, or data as your own. This includes cutting and pasting from websites and then making minor alterations to wording.
- working with another person on a speech that each of you will present

## **How to Avoid Plagiarism**

1) **FULFILL THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE ASSIGNMENTS.** The most obvious sign of a plagiarized speech is that it doesn’t really do what the assignment asked you to do.

2) **COMPLETE THE SMALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS.** Among other objectives, they are designed to get you working on your own speech rather than relying on someone else’s work.

3) CREATE YOUR OUTLINE FIRST, THEN ADD SOURCES. This helps you create a speech that is “yours,” not merely a patchwork of other people’s words.

4) Remember that A SPEECH IS NOT AN ESSAY READ ALOUD. It is a performance of your own, so when you use the words of others you need to say “quote” and “endquote” during the performance. (More on this later in the packet.) In addition, if you read your speech, that is a dead giveaway that you haven’t prepared or rehearsed. Consequently, instructors will be more likely to investigate whether part or all of the speech has been “borrowed.”

5) DISCUSS YOUR SPEECH WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR AHEAD OF TIME. Show them the sources you are using in your speech, and consult them about the appropriate manner of citation needed for your sources

You will discuss plagiarism in your sections and you will learn how to avoid it. The bottom line is, DON’T DO IT.

### **Grievances**

There is a clear and specific process for raising grievances that is defined in the Student Conduct Code. Following this process is necessary for insuring that the rights of all parties to a grievance are respected. In a nutshell, the process simply directs you to address concerns with your instructor first and then proceed up the university hierarchy.

Therefore, please follow these steps if you have a concern with the course:

- 1) Read the Student Conduct Code (URL above).
- 2) If you are dissatisfied with some aspect of the course, speak first with your instructor.
- 3) If you are unable to resolve the issue, then contact the course director, Steve Schwarze. Email: [steven.schwarze@umontana.edu](mailto:steven.schwarze@umontana.edu). Office: LA 358. Mailbox in LA 301.
- 4) Most issues are resolved at that level. If not, then contact the Chair of Communication Studies, Betsy Bach (LA 301).

## COMM 111 Course Schedule (subject to revision by individual instructors)

Week	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
Mon., 1/26	Course Introduction In-Class Speaking Exercise	Speaking in Public; Managing Speech Anxiety Read Chapters 1 and 2
2/2	Inventing and Organizing the First Speech Read Chapter 3 and Packet on "Narrative" and "Speaking Notes"	Delivering and Responding to the First Speech Read Chapter 4 and Packet on "Speech Anxiety," "Etiquette" and "Descriptive Feedback"
2/9	<b>SPEECH 1</b>	<b>SPEECH 1</b>
2/16	Informative Speaking; Selecting a Topic & Purpose Read Chs 6, 14, and Packet through "Central Idea" <i>*NOTE: this week's sessions may be switched...</i>	Basic Research Techniques Read Chapter 7 <i>...consult with your instructor</i>
2/23	Audience Analysis; Organizing Your Speech Read Chapter 5; Review Chapter 14 Read Packet, "Audience Analysis"	Introductions and Conclusions; Speech Outlines Read Chapters 9 and 10
3/2	Supporting Your Central Idea Read Chapter 8, Packet "Attribution Statements"	Delivering Your Speech and Using Visual Aids Read Chapters 11, 13; Packet "Formal v. Speaking" "Transitions"
3/9, 3/16	<b>SPEECH 2</b> <b>SPEECH 2</b>	<b>SPEECH 2</b> <b>SPEECH 2</b>
3/23	Persuasive Speaking Read Chapter 16, Packet "Audience Analysis" "Brainstorming" "Phrasing the Central Idea"	Methods of Persuasion Read Chapter 15
3/30	SPRING BREAK	
4/6	Analyzing Persuasive Speeches Bring outline of speech for workshop	Instructor's Option
4/13	<b>SPEECH 3</b>	<b>SPEECH 3</b>
4/20	<b>SPEECH 3</b>	<b>SPEECH 3</b>
4/27	Commemorative Speaking Read Chapter 17	Language and Style Read Chapter 12
5/4	<b>SPEECH 4</b>	<b>SPEECH 4</b>
Finals	<b>SPEECH 4. Our section will meet at this time:</b>	

