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### COMX 111A.12: Introduction to Public Speaking

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# SPRING 2022

## COMX 111 A, SECTION 12

CLASS TIME: T/TH 11:00 – 12:20 PM

INSTRUCTOR: MARLEY MERCHEN

[marley.merchen@umontana.edu](mailto:marley.merchen@umontana.edu)

OFFICE HOURS: DROP-IN MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY 12:30-2:00 PM IN LA 339,  
BY APPOINTMENT, OR VIA ZOOM

Hi there! Welcome to Intro to Public Speaking! I'm so glad that you decided to take this course. It can be a difficult course, but I can assure you that this class will greatly benefit you not only in your academic life, but also in your future careers. I'm looking forward to getting to know all of you and watching you develop your public speaking skills!

### Required Course Materials:

**Book:** Kristina Ruiz-Mesa & Melissa A. Broeckelman-Post. *Inclusive Public Speaking: Communicating in a Diverse World*

All readings for this course will be through the Top Hat digital learning platform, which hosts this semester's **online textbook**. Embedded throughout this text are interactive questions pertaining to the readings, which will be factored into your overall grade for the course. The textbook can be purchased directly through Top Hat or through the campus bookstore where you will purchase a code and then log into Top Hat to join the course textbook. Please use the personalized course link and course code provided to you for this section of Public Speaking which is on Moodle. If you are new to Top Hat and don't have an account, watch this orientation video to learn more: <https://youtu.be/kKM34vIcCbQ>. If you have any trouble signing into Top Hat or gaining access to the course, email [support@tophat.com](mailto:support@tophat.com).

Recently we learned that not all parts of the Top Hat platform used in this course are accessible to individuals who use screen readers or speech to text technologies. If you use this technology and can't access the course content or have difficulties using TOPHAT please contact [Accessible Technology Services](#). They will assist you with finding a solution.

There will also be readings from the **Course Packet (CP)**, which is also embedded within the textbook. This is material specifically designed by the Communication Studies Department for this class that includes activities and readings. Make sure you are reading from not only the textbook chapter, but also the assigned CP content throughout the semester.

**Electronic Device:** You will need access to a smartphone, laptop, or tablet to read the textbook and complete certain assignments. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are unable to access a suitable device either at home or on campus.

## Format of the Course:

### Instruction

- For the time being, **this class will be held in-person in JRH 205.**
- You will need to complete all readings/videos and assignments by a certain date. Class time will be used to reinforce difficult material, have question and answer time, and complete activities.
- Attendance will be taken every class for participation.
- In class sessions, I will give a short lecture going over material I think is most important from the week's readings and assignments. You will have the opportunity to ask questions, and we will work on activities that strengthen the skills you are building through readings, videos, and assignments.
- You are expected to come on both Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Class will meet for the full 80 minutes allotted to us.
- You will earn participation points for the activities we do in class. If you cannot attend class in person, you will still be responsible for the activities completed in class. Please let me know as soon as possible if you know that you will not be attending class, and we can set up a comparable activity for you to receive participation points.
- For some class sessions, you may be asked to download/print off worksheets or activities. It is unlikely, but just in case, make sure to check Moodle before class to make sure you are prepared for the day!

### COVID-19 Protocols:

My goal is for this semester is for it to be both engaging and safe. If for some reason you do not feel physically safe coming to class or if you have been exposed to

COVID, please do not attend class in-person. There will always be an opportunity to make up coursework! Below are the current University policies regarding COVID-19:

- If you feel sick and/or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, please don't come to class and contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330.
- Up-to-Date COVID-19 Information from the University of Montana:
  - UM Coronavirus Website: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus>
- We strongly encourage you to remain vigilant outside the classroom in mitigating the spread of COVID-19

## Grading & Class Points

### Points Breakdown

#### **Speech 1: Narrative Speech**

- Performance: 75 points
- Speaking Notes and Outline: 25 Points

Total: 100 points

#### **Speech 2: Informative Speech**

- Draft working outline: 15 points
- Performance: 125 points
- Final working outline: 25 points
- Speaking Notes, Bibliography, Sources: 25 points

Total: 190 points

#### **Speech 3: Persuasive Speech**

- Performance: 150 points
- Final working outline: 25 points
- Speaking Notes, Bibliography, Sources: 25 points

Total: 200 points

#### **Speech 4: Ceremonial Speech**

- Performance: 125 points
- Manuscript: 25 points

Total: 150 points

### Other Assignments

- Email etiquette: introduce yourself to me 10 points
- Speeches 2 and 3: Two topic proposals at 10 points each
- Speeches 2 and 3: Two outline drafts at 15 points each
- Participation in class: 90 points
- Peer Evaluations: 100 points (10 points for one evaluation)
  - Speeches 2-4: 9 evaluations (three per speech) at 10 points each
- Self-Evaluations: 60 points (4 evaluations at 15 points each)
- Outside Speaker Assignment: 50 points

**Total Points Available: 1000**

*\*\*\*\*Tip: This means that every 10 points you earn is worth 1% of your grade...skipping small assignments adds up quickly and makes it tougher to earn an A at the end of the semester!*

Your course grade will be determined by your performance on four major speaking assignments, smaller assignments related to the speeches, and in-class exercises. Some assignment dates, point values, and readings are subject to change.

## Grading Breakdown:

This is a difficult course for a variety of reasons. **I don't expect you to be perfect! I want you to put in your best effort and do good work.** Keep in mind that a C means that you have all the criteria for a speech, while an A means that you gave an outstanding speech. Also, in order to earn your general education requirement for this course, you must obtain at least a C (72.5% or higher) per University general education standards.

>925 = A    924-900=A-    899-875 = B+    874-825 = B    824-800 = B-  
 799-775 = C+    774-725 = C    724-700 = C-    699-600 = D    <600 = F

**Speech Completion:** Failure to complete ALL FOUR formal speeches will result in a failing grade for this course, regardless of total points earned.

## Policies and Resources

**Schedule Changes:** I reserve the right to make modifications to this syllabus as needed, and I will inform you by email if changes are necessary. Like last semester, this semester is full of unknowns, so please be patient with me if I need to adjust dates or assignments along the way.

**Speech Time Limit:** Each speech has a different time limit. Be sure to double check the time limit and stick to it. If the speech is 6-7 minutes, acceptable speeches would be between the 6th and 7th minute. Any speech longer or shorter than the assigned time range will be severely penalized: For every 10 seconds over or under 1 point will be removed. I will be strict about time limits for your benefit and mine – since speeches are given during class time, going over time reduces the chance that everyone can get their speeches done in the scheduled class days.

**Extra Credit Opportunities:** I may assign extra credit opportunities if they are needed. I will share with you all what these opportunities are and the expectations for them if they arise.

**Sharing Videos:** Please do not share, record, store, or repost the videos assigned through this course that were curated specifically for COMX111 (i.e., videos that I or another TA appear in) without express permission from me.

**Campus Resources – Basic Needs Statement:** Any student who faces challenges securing food, housing, or healthcare and believes that this could affect their performance in this course is urged to contact the appropriate campus resource. I have a document on our Moodle page that has a list of several services. If those resources don't fit your situation, please come see me with concerns you have, and I will do my best to help connect you with additional resources (if you are comfortable with doing that!).

**Respect:** Please show respect for your instructor and your peers at all times. This class will maintain a civil, safe, and professional atmosphere. Respect

differing opinions, backgrounds, and identities. Do not use vulgar or offensive language. We will create a supportive learning environment throughout the semester, and everyone is responsible for maintaining it. This not only includes communication in the classroom, but also online. Please be mindful of your grammar and language as you post on the Moodle page and write emails to me.

If the name on my roster is not the name you wish to be called, please send me an email, and let me know how I should address you. I will also do my best to pronounce your name correctly; if I am mispronouncing your name, you are welcome to correct me. Finally, you have the right to be referred to with the pronouns you are most comfortable with, and I encourage you list your pronouns in the extra credit email assignment and/or let me know if I have incorrectly addressed you.

**Communication:** This is a communication course. Beyond just public speaking, communication involves interpersonal interaction, addressing conflict, and using your voice. If you have any questions, concerns, complications, or need any accommodations regarding assignments, grades, policies, etc., I expect you to communicate with me! Please let me know in a timely, respectful, and professional manner, and I will do my best to work out a solution with you.

- Please make sure that you are checking your email frequently! I will contact you to remind you of important events coming up throughout the semester, if there is a schedule change, or important announcements related to our course. **I expect you to keep up on the emails I send- you may miss important information if you don't!** If your university email is not working properly, please let me know and I will do my best to assist you.

**Office Hours and Appointments:** My office hours will be held on MONDAY OR TUESDAY 1:00-3:00 PM in LA 339. I am also available by appointment, or we can set up a Zoom call to discuss your questions or concerns about the course. **Masks will be worn within my office** if you want to meet with me without a mask we can set up a Zoom appointment.

**Academic Honesty:** I (and the entire COMX department) take academic honesty extremely seriously. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with plagiarism, to ensure your work is your own, and to properly attribute any information that you are including in assignments, speeches, etc. University of Montana's Student Conduct Code can be found at

<http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/documents/StudentConductCode1.pdf>. The following types of plagiarism, as well as all other forms of academic dishonesty outlined in the Student Conduct Code, will result in an F on the assignment and any additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate, including receiving an F as a final course grade:

- Incremental plagiarism (not attributing quotes or passages to a source properly)
- Patchwork plagiarism (cutting and pasting from multiple sources and making minor or no alterations)
- Global plagiarism (using a “canned” speech, reading a speech written by somebody else or in any other way using a source in its entirety without proper attribution)

**Please keep in mind that all work is expected to be completed only by you, unless given explicit permission to work with a partner or in a group.** If you are caught not turning in your own individual work, disciplinary action will be taken.

**For Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability that may require modification of the course, please obtain appropriate documentation from the Office for Disability Equity (ODE formerly DSS) and then see me to discuss what, if any, special arrangements need to be made. Please do so within the first 2 weeks of class in order to be effectively accommodated.

**Self-Evaluations:** We will not use the self-evaluations in your course pack—you will find alternate self-evaluations on the Moodle page of each speech week. Please download the document, fill out the rubric, and answer the questions before uploading to the appropriate Moodle submission box.

**Other Instructors:** Every once in a while, you will see that I have assigned a lesson video that is not by me. The other graduate students are amazing and have a lot of different strengths, and sometimes I will want to share their talents with y’all! I am hoping to feature some guest lecturers as well. I want you to have a diverse range of people who can offer you their best advice on how to speak well in public!

**Controversial Speech Topics:** For two of your speech topics, you will be asked to inform or persuade us on a topic. It is required to speak about controversial topics. I will ask you to look at both sides of the argument, however! I will also ask you to be creative about your perspective if you choose a topic that is discussed often. You will be writing topic proposals, so we will



have a chance to discuss your topics when the time comes. Always keep in mind that we need to respect our fellow classmates at all times.

**Flexibility:** I want to say right up front that I understand that this is an unusual time to be going to college, and I get that things are uncertain! If you need an extension on an assignment due to something beyond your control, please reach out. I want you to succeed! I won't be flexible about things that are in your control (like oversleeping, choosing not to complete an assignment, etc.), however. **Just communicate with me**, and hopefully we can work something out.

**Adding or Dropping a Class:** Turns out this class isn't right for you? That's okay! Please go to <http://www.umd.edu/undergrad-advising-center/i-need-to/add-drop.php> for details. If you add within the first seven days of class, it doesn't cost you anything and it's easy to do from Cyberbear. Dropping a class can be done from Cyberbear as well, and up to the fifteenth day of class, you won't get penalized for dropping. After that, it gets a little more complicated, but it can be done!

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1 Aug 29 <sup>th</sup> -Sep 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Introduction	Read chapters 1-2 and CP “Rhetorical Power of Narratives” Activity <b>Due: Email Etiquette Sep 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 11:59 PM via Email.</b>
Week 2 Sep 5 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup>	Read Chapter 6 and CP “Guidelines and Etiquette for Speech Day”, “Guidelines for Speaking Notes”, “Peer Feedback”	Read chapter 3 and 4 Activity <b>Due Sep 9<sup>th</sup>: Speech Day preference</b>
Week 3 Sep 12 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup>	Narrative Speeches	Narrative Speeches <b>Due Sep 16<sup>th</sup>: Self eval @ 11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 4 Sep 19 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Library Week	Library Week <b>Due Sep 23<sup>rd</sup>: Informative Topic Proposal @ 11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 5 Sep 26 <sup>th</sup> – Sep 30 <sup>th</sup>	Read Chapter 7	Inventing, Organizing, and Outlining your speech <b>Due Sep 30<sup>th</sup>: Informative Draft outline @ 11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 6 Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup>	Read Chapter 8 and CP “Working Outlines vs. Speaking Outlines” and “Informative Speech Checklist”	Read CP Outside Speaker assignment, “Instructor Feedback”, “Mid-term Feedback” and “Majoring in Communication Studies.” <b>Due Oct 7<sup>th</sup>: Informative final outline @ 11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 7 Oct 10 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup>	Informative Speeches	Informative Speeches
Week 8 Oct 17 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>	Informative Speeches	Read Chapter 9 CP “Phrasing the Central Idea in Your Persuasive Speech <b>Due Oct 21<sup>st</sup>: Self eval and Persuasive Topic proposal @11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 9 Oct 24 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup>	Read Chapter 10	Work Shop Speeches <b>Due Oct 28<sup>th</sup>: Draft Persuasive outline @ 11:59 PM via Moodle</b>

Week 10 Oct 31 <sup>st</sup> -Nov 4 <sup>th</sup>	Work Shop Speeches	Work Shop Speeches <b>Due Nov 4<sup>th</sup>: Final Persuasive outline @ 11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 11 Nov 7 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup>	NO CLASS ELECTION DAY	Persuasive Speeches
Week 12 Nov 14 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup>	Persuasive Speeches	Persuasive Speeches
Week 13 Nov 21 <sup>st</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>	Persuasive Speeches	Thanksgiving break NO CLASS <b>Due Nov 25<sup>th</sup>: Self eval @11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Week 14 Nov 28 <sup>th</sup> -Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Read Chapter, 11 and CP “Using Effective Language in Your Speeches” and “Vivid Language Exercise” <b>Due Nov 30<sup>th</sup>: Ceremonial topic proposal @ 11:59 PM</b>	Looking at Ceremonial speeches; Montes
Week 15 Dec 5 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup>	Ceremonial Speeches	Ceremonial Speeches <b>Due Dec 9<sup>th</sup>: Self eval @11:59 PM via Moodle</b>
Finals Dec 12 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup>	NO CLASS	<b>Outside Speaker Assignments due Dec 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM</b>