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COMX 111A.00: Introduction to Public Speaking

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Instructor

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Introduction to Public Speaking COMX 111A

Your Instructor: _____

Office Location: _____ Office Hours: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Course Description – What is this course about?

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 significance 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 life.

Course Objectives – What will I learn and do in this course?

The course is designed to help students meet two sets of learning objectives. The first set is specific to public speaking. If you work hard and take the course seriously...

- *You will understand the elements of the communication process.*
This will be demonstrated through 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: have a clear purpose, state a cogent central idea, are well-organized, and 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.

The second set of objectives is related to General Education. COMX 111 is an approved course for the Expressive Arts or 'A' Perspective. The learning outcomes for the perspective and the means for demonstrating achievement in this course 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 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. See http://www.umt.edu/facultysenate/documents/FSDocs06-07/GenEdReview_1.php for more information.

Both sets of objectives converge in the activities and assignments of the course. If you work hard and take the course seriously, you should see improvement in all these areas.

Course Materials – What do I need for this course? (available at University Bookstore)

1. BOOK: *Speaking in the Public Sphere*, Pearson, 2012; and STUDENT PACKET, containing course assignments, worksheets, feedback forms, and other material. Consider using a three-ring binder for the packet.
2. FOLDER – two pocket, for handing in materials related to your major speeches.

As you will see, the textbook was written by Dr. Steve Schwarze, the COMM department chair. The ideas for this book developed out of the public speaking courses taught here at UM, so it is especially useful for helping you succeed on the assignments

in this course. The adoption of this book has taken place in accordance with the conflict of interest guidelines stated in the University's Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations – How can I succeed in this course?

- *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 arriving in class promptly, behaving ethically toward your instructor and classmates, or contributing to a positive classroom climate, please act respectfully.
- *Follow your instructor's directions.* COMX 111 has a common syllabus, textbook, and assignments, but your instructor has primary responsibility for the day-to-day operations of your class. His/her instructions supersede the packet. Therefore, it is crucial to attend class and follow your instructor's guidance.
- *During class, do not use media that are unrelated to the class.* This includes cellphones, messaging devices, music players, and the *Kaimin*. Any device that can make noise should be turned completely off for the entire class period.
- *Complete your reading assignments in the textbook and packet.* Students who fail to keep up with reading will perform poorly on quizzes and have problems with speeches.
- *Give your speeches and turn in assignments on time.* Late assignments will be penalized at the discretion of your instructor. Specific guidelines for speech performances are provided below. Students who do not complete all four major speaking assignments will not receive a passing grade for the course regardless of other points earned.
- *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 highlighted below and will be discussed in class.
- *Visit the Public Speaking Center!* The Center is staffed by a Public Speaking instructor who is available for consultation as you develop your outlines and speeches. To schedule a visit and learn more about what we offer at the Center, see either <https://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/aboutus/default.php> or <http://libguides.lib.umt.edu/c.php?g=275323&p=4359865>.

Attendance Policy – What if I miss class?

The standard penalty for arriving late, leaving early, or missing class is loss of that day's points. During each session, there will be an opportunity to earn points through quizzes, in-class exercises, feedback on speeches, or other assignments. These points can only be earned by arriving in class on time and attending for the entire session. Exceptions will be allowed only for excused absences.

Attendance on Speech Days – What if I miss my speech?

The above policy is even more significant on the days that you are assigned to give a major speech. Missing your speech disrupts the course schedule, is unfair to other students, and potentially crowds out other learning experiences in the course.

The standard penalty for missing your speech day is a 25% point reduction, or two letter grades. This means a maximum grade of D for a speech that would otherwise earn a B. It also has a significant impact on your final course grade – it could take you from a B to a C+. Since there is limited time for speeches, you may also risk losing the chance to perform your speech at all – which means zero points.

What if I know ahead of time that I will be absent? If you know that you will be absent from class on your assigned speech day, *inform your instructor immediately and negotiate a switch* with a classmate. Students who anticipate absence because of UM-approved activities (e.g., athletics, debate, music) are still responsible for making these arrangements.

What if something comes up at the last minute? It's got to be serious. Extreme extenuating circumstances (significant illness requiring bed rest, family emergency) can mitigate the standard penalty. Instructors will consider the following conditions when determining the application of any penalty:

- ✓ You notify your instructor prior to missing the speech.
- ✓ You provide documentation verifying your excuse.
- ✓ You turn in your outline within 24 hours of missing the speech.
- ✓ You are in good standing in the course (passing grades on other assignments, no late assignments, consistent attendance)

This list is intended to separate unforeseen emergencies from the common cold or a lack of preparation. A good rule of thumb might be: what would you do if this was your first job out of college and you had a big presentation to give? Bottom line: don't miss your speech day.

Drop/Adds, Withdrawals, Incompletes, and Grading Options

It is your responsibility to know the rules governing your own education. If you haven't already, you should immediately read the UM Catalog section titled "Academic Policies and Procedures," and be sure to read the section about dropping courses. Read the policies at <https://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/dropadd.php>.

What if I miss the first week or don't pay my bill? *Students who do not attend the first two sessions of the course, or who do not finalize their bill by the first week deadline, will have their seat reassigned to another student.* Students who are registered and then told to drop must do so on Cyberbear by the 15th day of the semester to avoid a W grade for the course.

What if I want to drop after mid-term? After the drop/add deadline near the middle of the semester, *you must petition to withdraw* from the course and will need to provide documented evidence of the circumstances supporting the need to withdraw (again, see the online Catalog for details.) You must show this evidence to your instructor before they will consider your petition. If accepted, your grade will be designated as WP or WF depending on whether you are passing the course at the time of the withdrawal.

What if it looks like I will get a low grade in the class – can I drop at the end of the semester? No.

Can I change my grading option to CR/NCR instead? No.

Why not? Because the purpose of the CR/NCR grade option is to encourage you to venture into new areas, not to provide an escape hatch for poor performance.

Can anyone ever take the class CR/NCR? Yes, but you must declare that grading options by the 15th day of the semester. Students who are not seeking a UM degree, or for whom English is a second language, may wish to take the course under the CR/NCR grading option. After the 15th day, petitions to change the grading option must be approved by the Course Director. Petition approval is rare, and those seeking to salvage one's GPA will *not* be approved.

Can I take an Incomplete? A grade of Incomplete is a solution only for unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from completing a small amount of work at the end of the semester (usually, the final speech or a written assignment). Students must be in good standing and have a legitimate justification; like the Withdrawal and CR/NCR grading, it is not a means for avoiding the consequences of poor performance. Incompletes are at the discretion of the instructor within certain guidelines, and must be negotiated between the student, the instructor, and the course director.

Students with Disabilities – What if my disability affects my performance?

If you have a disability that may require modification of the course, please obtain the appropriate documentation from the DSS Office and then see your instructor to discuss what, if any, special arrangements need to be made.

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism – What are my ethical obligations?

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. At the University of Montana, the Student Conduct Code governs this and other aspects of your conduct. It is available to download at:

<http://www.umt.edu/vpesa/documents/Student%20Conduct%20Code%20PDF-%20FINAL%208-27-13.pdf>

The standard penalty for this crime is an academic penalty determined by the instructor (typically, zero points on the assignment or F for the course). In egregious or repeat cases, a disciplinary sanction by the University will be recommended.

Many students have questions about plagiarism. Here are some common ones:

What if I use a “canned” speech or paper that was written by someone else?

That’s plagiarism.

What if I give a speech that was a paper or speech for another course?

That’s plagiarism.

What if I cut and paste from websites and make minor word changes?

That’s plagiarism.

What if I don’t cite sources on my outline or bibliography?

That’s plagiarism.

What if I don’t cite sources orally during my speech?

That’s plagiarism.

What if I work with someone else on a speech that both of us present?

That’s plagiarism.

In this course, the primary problem is plagiarism on speeches and the Outside Speaker Assignment. You will discuss plagiarism further in your sections and you will learn how to avoid it.

If questions about plagiarism arise, course instructors will compare your work to a database of other work to determine where there may be overlapping content.

The bottom line is, don’t do it.

Grievances – What if I have a complaint or concern about the course?

According to the University’s student complaint procedures, students and instructors “must make every effort to resolve problems” prior to making a formal claim to the Student Complaint Committee. For this course, please follow these steps.

1. First, set up a meeting with your instructor. Nearly all issues can and should be resolved informally at this level. The Course Director will happily see you after you have completed an initial meeting with your instructor.
2. If you are unable to resolve the issue, please arrange an appointment with Dr. Betsy Bach, the Course Director in LA 359 – betsy.bach@umontana.edu.

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:

SPEECH 1 Local Issue Speech 100 points

Performance	75
Speaking Notes	25

SPEECH 2 Informative Speech 200 points

Draft working outline	25
Performance	125
Final working outline	25
Speaking Notes, Bibliog., Sources	25

SPEECH 3 Persuasive Speech 200 points

Performance	150
Final working outline	25
Speaking Notes, Bibliog., Sources	25

SPEECH 4 Ceremonial Speech 150 points

Performance	125
Manuscript	25

OTHER Various Assignments 350 points

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 Assignment	40

TOTAL POINTS 1000 points

Course Points/Final Grade

>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 may discuss more detailed grading rubrics in your class.

Like other arts, 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 reduced to technique. 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 “subjective” process. There are 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, state these criteria for COMX 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 effective 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; literally, it should “stand 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.

The starting assumption for grading is that with moderate effort, everyone is capable of giving an average (or C) speech. The movement of your grade from that midpoint is largely in your hands.

COMX 111 – Fall, 2018

COMX 111 Course Schedule (based on TR classes; may be revised by individual instructors)

Class	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
8/28 8/30	Course Introduction In-Class Speaking Exercise	The Public Sphere; Developing Your First Speech Read Chapters 1 (all) and 2 (pp. 30-42) Read packet pp. 1-16
9/04 9/06	Delivering Your First Speech Read rest of Chapter 2 Read packet pp. 17-18	Listening and Feedback Read Chapter 3 Read packet pp. 19-26
9/11 9/13	SPEECH 1	SPEECH 1
9/18 9/20	Developing Topics, Understanding Audiences Read Chapters 4 and 5; packet pp. 27-33 Library Week I	Researching Public Issues Read Chapter 6 Read packet pp. 34-37
9/25 9/27	Inventing and Organizing Your Speech Read Chapters 8 and 9 Library Week II	Inventing, Organizing and Outlining Your Speech Read packet pp. 38-40
10/02 10/04	Outlining Your Speech Read Chapters 10 and 11	Presenting Your Speech Read Chapter 12 Read packet pp. 41-47; 75-78
10/09 10/11	SPEECH 2	SPEECH 2
10/16 10/18	SPEECH 2 Read packet pp. 48-49	SPEECH 2
10/23 10/25	Inventing/Organizing Your Persuasive Speech Read Chapter 13 Read packet 50-56	Supporting Your Persuasive Speech Read Chapter 14
10/30 11/01	Analyzing Persuasive Speeches Read packet page 57-64	SPEECH 3
11/06 11/08	11/06 - No CLASS	SPEECH 3
11/13 11/15	SPEECH 3	SPEECH 3
11/20 11/22	Ceremonial Speaking Read Chapter 15 Read packet pp. 65-74	11/22 - No CLASS Read Chapter 9 and Appendix pp. 411-422
11/27 11/29	Effective Language Read Chapter 9 Read Appendix pp. 411-422	SPEECH 4
12/04 12/06	SPEECH 4	SPEECH 4

FINALS WEEK 12/10-12/14

FINAL CLASS: _____

