

**Public Speaking**  
**WEC Third Trimester**  
**Fridays 6:00-10:00**  
**Professor: Anna Kudak, M.A.**  
**e-mail: [adkudak@stthomas.edu](mailto:adkudak@stthomas.edu)**

**Required Text:** Beebe, S., & Beebe, S. (2006). *Public Speaking: An Audience-Centered Approach* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Allyn and Bacon.

**Course Overview and Objectives:**

This course is designed to provide both a practical introduction to public speaking and a forum for practicing public speaking. It is also designed to introduce you to contemporary issues in our local community through viewing a speech in the city. In this class, you will learn how to develop, prepare, and deliver an effective public speech. You will also learn about your own speaking skills and become a critical observer of other public speakers. Specifically, the following objectives guide this course:

1. to increase your confidence as a public speaker
2. to learn principles of effective public speaking
3. to reinforce existing public speaking skills and identify areas for improvement
4. to learn about the role of culture in the public speaking context
5. to learn about your community and better understand the role of speech and public speaking in multiple contexts
6. to demonstrate effective aspects of speech preparation and delivery
7. to apply public speaking skills in a variety of speaking contexts

**Assignments:**

Speech #1: Impromptu	non-
graded	
Speech #2: "Peak Experience" speech	
10%	
Speech #3: Informative speech	
25%	
Speech #4: Persuasive speech	25%

Speech #5: Special Occasion Speech  
10%  
Paper: Public Speaker Critique  
10%  
Chapter Eye-Openers and Discussion Questions  
10%  
Participation/Contributions  
10%

### **GRADED ACTIVITIES**

1. **Speech: "Peak Experience ... "** (10% of final grade)

Your first opportunity to practice the basic principles of public speaking will be in an introductory speech about yourself. You should create a 3-minute speech in which you describe a significant or pivotal life experience.

2. **Informative Speech: (25% of final grade)**

You will choose a social issue to focus on for this speech (specific issues about education, health, the environment, etc.). Your purpose is to *inform* the audience, therefore, I encourage you to pick a topic other people may not know much about. I also encourage you to choose a topic very interesting to you.

Time Limit: 4-6 minutes

Presentational Aids: Minimum of 2

Sources Required: 1 per main point (only 1 internet source)

Note Cards: Required; 3X5

3. **Persuasive Speech: (25% of final grade)**

You will develop an actual persuasive speech related to a social issue (the one you spoke about for the informative speech, or something new). Your presentation should advance a policy with an audience call to action by establishing the problem, cause, and your solution, and the practicality of putting the proposed solution in place. In essence, you will attempt to change the behavior of your audience and "solve" an actual problem.

Time Limit: 8-10 minutes  
Presentational Aids: Minimum of two  
Use of Lectern: Required  
Sources: 8-10 (only 1 internet)  
Note Cards: Required; 3X5

4. **Special Occasion (Ceremonial) Speech (10% of final grade)**

At times in your life you may need to deliver a tribute, a toast, and many other types of special occasion speeches. You choose the occasion your speech will be set in as well as the type of speech you'll deliver: Introduction, toast, nomination, acceptance, etc.

Time Limit: 2-3 minutes  
Note Card: Only 1  
Use of Lectern: Optional

5. **Speaker Critique Paper (10% of final grade)**

Great speakers are able to evaluate other speakers' techniques and effectiveness. You will write a 3-4 page paper about the speaker we saw as a class. You may critique the speaker's gestures, ethos, pathos, and logos, organization, persuasiveness, clarity, and the list goes on. Essentially, this is your opportunity to show me what you've learned, cumulatively, in this class.

6. **Chapter Eye-Openers & Discussion Questions (10% of final grade)**

Instead of chapter quizzes or tests, for every assigned chapter you are required to prepare an "eye-opener" and at least one question for discussion. An eye-opener is at least one paragraph in which you identify what, in the particular chapter, was thought-provoking, confusing, baffling, fascinating, educational, or just plain wildly interesting! After writing your one-paragraph eye-opener, you should develop one QUESTION that you'd like to discuss with the class. Often, I will ask you to pose your question and lead the class discussion. We will almost always use eye-openers to guide our discussion of chapter content.

All eye-openers/discussion questions should be typed and be brought to class the day the chapter is assigned. If you have 3 chapters assigned for one day, then you should have 3 eye-openers and 3 DQs (one for each chapter). Put your name and the chapter numbers at the top of each page. Staple multiple pages together. **You may put multiple chapter EOs/DQs on the same page.**

I will collect eye-openers randomly. You will automatically lose all credit for eye-openers not completed on the day I collect them.

7. **Participation and Contributions (10% of final grade)**

There are a number of ways you can not only participate in this class, but also contribute to its success. In fact, the success of this course is based largely on your willingness to contribute to the discussions, atmosphere, and climate of this class. In all activities, I will be assessing your willingness to offer thought-provoking comments and observations, show a positive attitude (it's contagious!) and participate fully. Absences, tardiness, general drowsiness (communicating to me and your peers a lack of interest and/or motivation), disinterest in or lack of encouragement to other speakers, lack of participation in activities, discussions, exercises, and general lack of willingness to be an active and thoughtful participant will be reflected in your final grade.

8. **Speaking Event: (non-graded, experiential, essential)**

During one of our class sessions we will be meeting to listen to/observe/critique a local speaker. You will be assigned to one of three "speech groups" on the first night of class. Your "speech group" is assigned the task of researching, planning, and organizing our attendance at a local speaker one night during the term. Your speech group will be assigned the task of critically reflecting on particular aspects of the speech and speaker related to the chapters we are currently reading. Speaking groups will then have 20 minutes to prepare a brief an informal presentation to/discussion with the class about what they observed from the speaker. This event will also be the basis of your "public speaker critique" paper. More to come...

## Tips, Rules, & Guidelines for Success in this Class:

1. **All assignments** must be completed for a passing grade in this course.
2. **SEE ME:** As a general rule, PLEASE let me know how things are going. I tend to be highly understanding and flexible if you talk with me about problems, concerns, issues, etc *before* they reach crisis stage. I tend to be less so *after* the fact.
3. **SYLLABUS:** Please read this syllabus cover-to-cover the first day and then use it regularly over the term. I will assume that you have and are. I designed this syllabus with much care and detail to provide you with helpful and useful information for succeeding in this class. I have purposefully provided hints, tips, and guidelines for succeeding on each individual assignment, and in the course generally. I encourage you to take advantage of all of the information provided here.
4. **EXTRA-CREDIT:** My policy is simple on extra credit -- There is none. On rare occasion, an all-class extra-credit opportunity for data collection. NEVER will individual extra-credit assignments be given.
5. **SCHEDULE/CHANGES:** I will try my best to maintain the course schedule, although sometimes it will be necessary to make changes. **You will be responsible for all changes announced in class. If you miss class, please ask one of your classmates to explain what you have missed.**
6. **RESPECT:** While I believe in freedom of speech, I do not believe in language that demeans or is otherwise is harmful to individuals or groups. In this class we will respect diverse ideas, experiences, values, and communication styles. All comments deserve and will receive respectful hearings. You are not pressured to agree with everything others say; you just need to *respect* their right to say it. Though engaging and challenging the ideas of the text, me, and each other is encouraged, it is assumed that such interactions will be characterized by mutual respect and civility. **PLEASE PRACTICE UNCONDITIONAL COURTESY.**
7. **READINGS:** We will not always "cover" or address everything in class that was in the reading, rather in-class time will generally be spent applying, experiencing, or extending - through discussion or experiential learning -- what you read. I will respect your initiatives in discussion; please let me know if you'd like to discuss a particular concept/issue in a reading and I will do my best to see that we do. Readings should be done prior to our class meeting because in-class work is designed to supplement and support the readings, not substitute for them.
8. **BRING YOUR BOOK TO EVERY CLASS.** We will often refer to the book, read from it, work out of it, or have activities that require that you prepare, in class, something from the book.
9. **ATTENDANCE:** In a WEC communication course such as this your attendance is essential and expected at every class meeting.

Your absences jeopardize not only your learning, but the opportunity of others' learning as well. Here is how attendance works in this class: Consistently being tardy will also result in reduction of your final grade. Tardy means coming to class after class has begun. We will begin at the scheduled time. **Excused Absence:** The only excused absences are ones which are the result of the following: Funeral/Death or significant illness (yours or family member). That's about it. Please schedule meetings, appointments, and your work other than during our scheduled class time.

10. **LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Late papers and assignments will not be accepted. You will earn no points for work that is late unless arrangements are made with me prior to the due date.
11. **COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES:** If you are dissatisfied with any evaluation of an assignment or speech, you may petition your grade. To do so, you need to submit to me a typed explanation of why the grade is not warranted, what evaluation you believe you deserve with rationale to support your request, a refutation of my comments on your work, and a copy of the original paper/assignment/activity.
12. **CREATIVITY:** Creativity is encouraged and rewarded (which includes the creative application of the concepts discussed in your speeches). If you have an idea for an activity, assignment, or experience, discuss it with me. We'll try to work it into the scheduled material. . **DISABILITY:** To request accommodations due to a disability, let me as possible so that I can facilitate this process. I look forward to working with you in any way I can.
13. **MISSED SPEECHES:** If you do not show up on your assigned speech day, you will automatically lose all possible points for that speech (which means you will fail the speech, even after you do a make-up speech).
14. **FUN:** Life is short. Have fun while in (and out of) class. Do high quality work with low stress. I pledge to make learning in this course a worthwhile and even enjoyable experience; I welcome your suggestions for doing so.
15. **CHEATING:** Plagiarism, cheating, and other acts of academic misconduct will result in, at minimum, a failing grade for the assignment, and at my discretion, a failing grade for this course.
16. **GRADING:** Only outstanding performance on the assignments in this course will earn you an "A"; grading in this course is based on the following definition of grades:
17. A = represents work which is outstanding, far above the minimum requirements necessary for completing this course/assignment.  
B = represents work which is significantly above the minimum requirements necessary for completing this course/assignment.  
C = represents work which meets the basic minimum course/assignment requirements.  
D = represents work which is worthy of credit even though it does not fully meet all the basic course/assignment requirements

## Course Schedule

### **Friday, April 11**

Introduction to class and syllabus

Impromptu Speeches

Assign Peak Experience Speech

Assign Speaking Support Groups

Discuss May 9 speaking event

Reading due: Chapters 1, 2, 6; eye-openers and discussion questions

### **Friday, April 25**

Peak Experience Speeches

Solidify plans for May 9 speaking event

Assign Informative Speech

Reading due: Chapters 5, 7, 8, 9; eye openers and discussion questions

### **Friday, May 9**

Attending a Public Speech (details to be determined)

Reading due: Chapter 3, 4, 10, 15; eye openers and discussion questions

Bring rough outline of Informative Speech

**Friday, May 23**

Informative Speeches

Assign Persuasive Speech

Reading due: Chapters 13, 14, 16, 17; eye openers and discussion questions

**Friday, June 6**

Persuasive Speeches

Assign Special Occasion Speech

Reading due: Chapter 11 & 12; eye openers and discussion questions

**Friday, June 20**

Special Occasion Speeches

Wrapping up

Course evaluation

Reading due: Chapter 18; eye openers and discussion questions