

COMM 1 - Public Speaking



Instructor: Kate Brown

Class Time: Monday/Wednesday 2:30-4:20

Room: L48

Email: brohenkate@fhda.edu*

Google Voice (Text Only): (925) 269-9701

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM via Zoom
(link on Canvas homepage)

*Emails will be answered within 48 hours on weekdays. Please note that I do not regularly check email over the weekend.

Course Description:

This course is designed to develop students' skills and confidence in public speaking. Through a combination of theory, practice, and feedback, students will learn effective strategies for researching, organizing, and delivering speeches in various contexts. Emphasis will be placed on audience analysis, message clarity, persuasive techniques, and ethical considerations. Students will also develop critical listening skills and explore the role of communication in various social and professional settings.

Textbook:

The Art of Public Speaking by Stephen Lucas (13th edition)*

Recommended Text: [*This is Water* by David Foster Wallace](#)

**This textbook is not an Open Educational Resource (OER), and although a digital version may be found online, it is not licensed for open educational use. I am exploring accessible and OER-compliant alternatives for future quarters in support of De Anza's equity goals.*

Course Objectives:

These are the broad goals for what you'll explore and practice in this course. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the principles of effective public speaking
- Analyze and adapt to different audiences
- Develop critical listening and thinking skills
- Organize and deliver informative and persuasive speeches
- Use ethical and effective rhetorical strategies
- Evaluate speeches and provide constructive feedback

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

These are specific, measurable skills you'll demonstrate by the end of the course.

- Organize, compose, present, and critically evaluate informative and persuasive presentations appropriate in content and style to the audience and situation
- Display increasing confidence in speaking extemporaneously
- Demonstrate effective listening skills
- Identify, locate, evaluate, and use credible sources

Assignments

Speeches: Each speech is graded on 3 things: the outline, the speech itself, and EITHER a self-reflection paper or a Peer Feedback Form (specified below). At the beginning of all speeches, students must hand in a hard-copy of a detailed speech outline. After speeches are concluded, there will either be a self-reflection paper due the following week, or a Peer Feedback form due at the end of the period.

- *Introductory Speech #1:* A short speech to introduce yourself and practice basic public speaking skills. There will be a one-page self-reflection paper due the following class period where you will give feedback on your own speech.
- *Group Speech #2:* Groups of 2-3 students will give a well-researched and clearly organized speech to inform the audience about a specific topic. There will be a one-page self-reflection paper due the following class period where you will give feedback on your team's speech.
- *Informative Speech #3:* Students will construct and deliver a speech aiming to inform the audience on a particular issue. This speech requires the use of at least one credible, cited source. Students will submit peer feedback for this speech.
- *Persuasive Speech #4:* Students will construct and deliver a speech aiming to persuade the audience on a particular issue, using cited evidence and rhetorical strategies. Students will submit peer feedback for this speech.
- *Final Speech #5:* A comprehensive speech that incorporates all elements learned throughout the course. This will be delivered in the final week.

Note: your speech grade is impacted by your ability to be a good audience member.

Critical Thinking Exercises:

- There will be a total of 3 critical thinking exercises that will be completed from the textbook. These will be assigned in class a week before the due date. These assignments will help you study for the midterm.

Midterm:

- A comprehensive exam covering all materials and skills learned in the first half of the course. This will be a 25-question exam. This will be a multiple choice, short answer exam with one essay question.

Online Discussions (Fridays on Canvas): Each Friday, students will complete a short online discussion or reflection assignment via Canvas. These activities are designed to reinforce weekly lessons, encourage critical thinking, and provide space for student-to-student and student-to-instructor interaction.

Assignments may include:

- Responding to a thought-provoking question from the week's topic
- Reflecting on your own speech preparation process
- Providing peer feedback on speech components or ideas

Discussions are **due by 11:59 PM on Friday** unless otherwise noted. Participation in these activities supports your engagement, critical thinking, and growth as a communicator.

Note: Weekly overviews and key content will be posted on Canvas. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates, assignments, and resources.

Research Component:

- A research skills session with the De Anza Library is scheduled to support source evaluation and citation practices.

Grading:

Discussions/homework: 20%

Speeches (including preparation, outline, delivery, self-reflection, and peer feedback): 50%

Critical Thinking Exercises: 10%

Midterm: 20%

Course grades will be determined based on in-class performance and homework (20%), midterm (20%), critical thinking exercises (10%), and speeches (50% each). All grades will be rendered on a 100-point system.

This course uses the following cut-off points as the minimum for each letter grade:

A 93% **A- 90%** **B+ 87%** **B 83%** **B- 80%** **C+ 77%**
C 73% **C- 70%** **D+ 67%** **D 63%** **D-60%** **F under 60%**

Please note: Late assignments or missed examinations will receive dramatically reduced grades. You should notify me about any problems as soon as they occur

Course Schedule:

Due dates and topics are subject to change. Please be sure to regularly check Canvas for what we are doing, when things are due, and what topics will be covered in class.

Weekly overviews and announcements will be posted on Canvas every Monday to help guide your work for the week.

Week #	Monday	Wednesday	Friday Discussion
Week 1 (4/7 + 4/9)	Orientation; What is Comm?	Speech Anxiety/Ethics	Introduction
Week 2 (4/14 + 4/16)	Speech #1	Egos/Logos/Pathos	Political Analysis
Week 3 (4/21 + 4/23)	Listening	Audience/Topic/Purpose	Example of Egos/Logos/Pathos/Kair

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Week 4 (4/28 + 4/30)	Organizing/Outlining a Speech	Speech #2	Pretend Outline for City Council
Week 5 (5/5 + 5/7)	Research (Library)	Conspiracy Theories and Logical Fallacies	Love & Saucers Doc
Week 6 (5/12 + 5/14)	The Power of Storytelling	Types of Informative Speeches	Speech Analysis
Week 7 (5/19 + 5/21)	Speech #3	Speech #3	Most memorable speech; why?
Week 8 (5/26 + 5/28)	No Class	Citing Sources	"MIDTERM" - Online Quiz
Week 9 (6/2 + 6/4)	Special Occasion Speech Types: toasts, eulogies, award acceptances	Speech #4	Submit your own fav/interesting special occasion speech
Week 10 (6/9 + 6/11)	Speech #4	Comm Theories	Applying Comm Theories
Week 11 (6/16 + 6/18)	Impromptu Speeches + Peer Feedback	In-class prep day; ask questions, work	Impromptu Reflection
Week 12 (6/23 + 6/25)	Speech #5	FINALS	Favorite Speech from the Quarter

Course Policies

Academic Integrity:

Students are advised that the Academic Integrity Policy will strictly be enforced in this course. Academic integrity exists when students and faculty seek knowledge honestly, fairly, with mutual respect and trust, and accept responsibility for their actions and the consequences of those actions. Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Plagiarism and/or cheating will not be tolerated. This includes:

- Presenting the ideas of others without crediting the source.
- Using a direct quotation without quotation marks and without credit to the original source.
- Paraphrasing without credit given to the source.
- Participation in a group project which presents plagiarized materials.
- Failure to provide adequate citations for material obtained through electronic research.
- Downloading and submitting work from electronic databases without citations.
- Submitting material created/written by someone else as your own work.
- Copying someone else's exam or paper.
- Allowing someone to copy your own research paper or exam.
- Accepting credit for a group project without doing your share of the work.
- Submitting the same paper in more than one course without the knowledge and approval of the instructors involved.

- Using notes or other materials during a test or exam without approval of the instructor.

AI Guidelines:

AI tools, like ChatGPT, can be allowed **with prior teacher approval**. Should the use of AI be suspected to write an assignment or in a way that was not pre-approved by the instructor, students will be asked to verbally defend and/or explain the assignment.

Disability Services:

De Anza College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities (e.g. mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical issues). Students who have been found to be eligible for accommodations by Disability Support Services (DSS), please follow-up to ensure that your accommodations have been authorized for the current quarter. If you are not registered with DSS and need accommodations, please go to the DSS office in the Registration and Student Services Building (RSS), Room 141 for information on eligibility and on how to receive support services. You can also go online to <http://www.deanza.edu/dsps/dss>

My goal is to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. This information will be kept confidential and used solely to enhance your learning experience. Early communication is crucial, so please schedule a meeting or send an email to discuss your requirements.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is essential for your success in this course. If you know you'll be absent, please notify me ahead of time.

Missed speeches cannot be made up. However, if speeches are scheduled across multiple class sessions, **you may request to switch your scheduled day**—but you must email me **before** your assigned speaking day. For example, if speeches are taking place on both Monday and Wednesday and you're scheduled for Monday, you may ask to move to Wednesday as long as you reach out in advance.

Preparation:

Come to class prepared and on time. Complete all readings and assignments before class.

Lecture Notes:

Take thorough notes during lectures and review them regularly. These will come in handy for in-class discussions, midterms, speech preparation, and group projects. Be sure to ask for notes from your classmates if you miss a class.

Late Assignments:

Late assignments will receive reduced grades. Communicate with the instructor if you face any difficulties meeting deadlines.

Discussing Grades:

If you have concerns about your grades, discuss them with your instructor during office hours or by appointment.

Be Respectful:

Treat your instructor and classmates with respect. Listen when others are speaking and provide constructive feedback.

Equal Treatment:

Equal treatment of all students is a fundamental principle in responding to requests for special consideration. No student will be granted an opportunity to improve a grade that is not offered to the entire class. This policy applies to requests for special treatment both during and after the course.

Unacceptable requests include "extra credit" work like retaking an exam or receiving an extension on an assignment. However, this policy does not exclude reasonable accommodation for verified disabilities. If you have a documented disability or educational need, please inform us, and we will provide appropriate accommodations.

Professionalism

Professionalism is expected of all students in terms of the quality of submitted assignments, the quality of the communicative interaction with classmates and the instructors, and general conduct. Please observe the following:

- Arrive on time, and stay until class is formally dismissed.
- Avoid disruptive behavior during the class such as chatting, snoring, etc.
- Turn off cell phones or set them to silent mode, and do not use them during class.
- Try to limit distractions

Online/Zoom Etiquette:

To ensure a productive and engaging online learning environment, please keep your camera on during Zoom class sessions, if you feel comfortable. This helps foster a sense of community and allows for better communication. Use the "raise hand" button when you wish to speak or ask a question to avoid interruptions. Mute your microphone when not speaking to minimize background noise. Additionally, be mindful of your surroundings to maintain a professional atmosphere. Engaging actively and respectfully with your classmates and the instructor is essential for a positive learning experience.