Syllabus
Oral Presentations EN.661.250.01/02
Spring, 2015
(3 credits, W)

Description
This course is designed to help students push through any anxieties about public speaking by
immersing them in a practice-intensive environment. They learn how to speak with confidence in a
variety of formats and venues - Including extemporaneous speaking, job interviewing, leading a
discussion, presenting a technical speech, and other relevant scenarios. Students learn how to develop
effective slides that capture the main point with ease and clarity, hone their message, improve their
delivery skills, and write thought-provoking, well-organized speeches that hold an audience's
attention. No audits. Not open to students that have taken EN.661.150.

Instructor
Dr. Kevin Dungey, kdungey49@gmail.com (cell 443-562-2383; home 410-744-1539)
Office: Whitehead 104 (space to be determined)
Office hours: Mondays, 12:45-2:45 PM, and by appointment

Course Assistant
Ed Pagano, epagano1@jhu.edu
Office:
Office hours:

Meetings
Mondays Sect. 1: 3:00-5:45 and Sect. 2: 6:15-9:00 Hodson 303

Textbooks
These two books are very helpful. I expect you to read them because I will not discuss them in class
except maybe in passing. You will be quizzed on them.
• Presentation Zen, 2nd ed., Garr Reynolds; New Riders; Berkeley, CA: 2012
• The Shortcut to Persuasive Presentations, by Larry Tracy, Imprint Books, North

ABET Outcomes
• Ability to communicate effectively

Overview
As you can see from the outcomes statement above, the goal of this class is straight-forward,
although the process may feel grueling. Straightforward? I want each of you to learn how to develop
the ability and the confidence to communicate well orally. Grueling? Being an effective oral
communicator requires constant practice and self-reflection. You must intentionally organize your
presentation so that it is easy to hear and remember, you must train your voice and body, and focus
your mind so that everything works effectively in concert when you communicate orally. Remember:
You are born to speak and you have always spoken effectively. You will also learn how to develop effective supporting graphics using PowerPoint (PPT).

This class is a workshop that will provide safe, constructive opportunities to practice speaking before an audience. That is the best way to learn. What you decide to speak about is usually going to be up to you: All but the first topic will be topics that you choose. My strong advice is to speak about topics that you know well and that matter to you so that the topic gives you the energy to practice strong oral presentation skills, good organization, and effective delivery. You will be videotaped each time so you can actually see what you are doing. The tape never lies (and you can’t take it personally). The Course Assistant (CA) will tape every presentation you make and post it.

**Course Expectations & Grading**

This class develops **objective** criteria for judging oral presentations, criteria based on the techniques (such as good eye contact) we will discuss and practice. I expect you to practice them outside of class. I expect you to rehearse them in front of an audience outside of class (friends are the best). I grade strictly for where you are in the course. For example, for your first major assignment, grades will only be based on the structure of your talk; later, I will add in use of PowerPoint slides and, even later, successful vocal and physical qualities. However, early assignments matter just as much as the later ones. While I don’t grade by comparing any speaker’s work with another, you will learn a lot from watching each other.

I assign the following points to each assignment for 100 points total:

- Two quizzes—5 each (10)
- #1: Initial presentation—no points (benchmark evaluation)
- #2: PowerPoint team demonstration—5
- #3: Annotated script for technical, informative presentation—10
- #4: Technical, informative presentation—10
- #5: Impromptu exercise—5
- #6: Persuasive presentation—10
- #7: Persuasive presentation script—10
- #8: General interview—5
- #9: Pecha-kucha—10
- #10: Rewrite/redesign of #3, annotated script and PowerPoint slides—10 #11: Self-critique—5
- Class Participation—10 (i.e., quality/timeliness of response papers, attendance, general participation)

If you keep track of the number of points you earn for each assignment, you can keep track of your grade for the term because I grade on the basis of 100 points. To earn the lowest A-, you must earn 90 points (I do not round up: 89.9 is a very high B+). An A requires at least 93.50 points. Really, however, your goal should be to practice and get better. The grade should take care of itself. I will not ever change a final grade unless I have made a computational error of some kind.

**Questions**

Please contact me with any questions you have at kdunney49@gmail.com, I will hold office hours in Whitehead 104 (or another space) between 12:45 and 2:45 PM every Monday I am scheduled to be on campus. If that is not convenient, contact me for an appointment and I will work out a time and place to meet you on campus. I encourage you to meet with your CA during the CA’s office hours in Whitehead 104 to practice your talks or to get advice: your CA has taken the class and knows the ropes.
My Roles
I am both coach and evaluator. When I am coach, I can and will assist you with any issue you want help or advice on. You can ask me anything except whether your talk is good. That requires me to evaluate. When I evaluate, I am finished coaching. Then I will use the objective criteria we have developed to score your talk. I will never compare you with anyone else in the class. Each one of you must develop your own special talents, skills, and characteristics. It is a solitary process, but I can help. I like helping.

Attendance Policy
I award participation points as part of your grade. You can earn up to 10 participation points, 10% of the 100 total points available for a grade—see page 3 below. You can also lose these points and earn less than 10. Whether you earn points or lose them depends on what you do or don’t do. I believe the classroom should be a professional environment. I expect professional attitudes from you. Imagine this class were your job: How would you behave? What would be expected of you? It is up to you to decide when and if to miss a class and what to do. I will take attendance each class meeting.

Computers in Class
You may have your computers in class. You must close them whenever someone is giving a presentation.

Final Exam
We do not have a final exam in this class.

Ethics
The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.

In addition, the specific ethics guidelines for this course are:

(1) You may collaborate with other students in improving your presentations.

Report any violations you witness to the instructor.

You can find more information about university misconduct policies on the web at these sites:

- For undergraduates: http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/
- For graduate students: http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/grad-students/graduate-specific-policies/

Students with Disabilities
Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.
Preparing for and Organizing an Oral Presentation

1/28  Introduction to Oral Presentations
      Lecture: *Becoming an effective presenter*
      - Overcoming personal challenges
      - Organizing your talk: speaking to 1 or 1,000

2/2   Short, in-class presentation: Tell us a little about yourself. Please be sure to address these two questions as part of your talk:

      *What are you proudest of in your life so far and why?*
      *What does this event tell us about you?*

      *Presentation Zen [Zen], Foreword by Guy Kawasaki, 1 and 2
      The Shortcut to Persuasive Presentations [Tracy], 1-3, 26*

2/9   Assignment #1: Initial (3-4 minutes) talk
      *assigned topic—see last page of this syllabus*
      Producing effective graphics/PowerPoint slides
      Assignment #3-#4 handed out in class
      Quiz #1- all previous readings plus Zen, 3-4; Tracy, 17

Producing Effective PowerPoints/Using Notes Effectively

2/16  Assignment #2: PowerPoint demonstration (teams)
      Tracy, 7-10, 21; Zen, chapters 5, 6, 7
      - Response paper #1: 3 challenges you face in becoming a better presenter
      - Sign up for a conference on 9/30 or 10/1: Proposal for Assignment #3 and #4 outline due at conference meeting

2/23  Practice sessions for #3 and #4
      Zen, 8 and 9

3/2   Class led by CAs: Assignment #3 and #4

3/9   Assignment #3 and #4 continued

3/16  NO CLASS - Spring Break

Practicing Vocal Variety and Developing Natural Motion

3/23  How to deal with interview and impromptu situations (PREP and Pro/Con); what type of employee does the world want?

      Quiz #2: readings since 9/23 plus Tracy, 19-20; Zen 10
      Response paper #2: evaluation of progress
3/30  Assignment #5: Impromptus and interviews
       Defining persuasion: What is it and how is it done successfully?

Using Persuasion Appropriately

4/6  Assignment #6: Persuasive Presentations
       Assignment #7: Persuasive Presentation script

4/13 Assignment #6: Persuasive Presentations (continued)
       Assignment #7: Persuasive Presentation script today

4/20  Assignment #9: Pecha-kucha presentations

4/27  Farewells and questions
       Assignment #11: Self-critique of final presentation (due via email)
       Assignment #10 due in class (rewrite of #3—PPT/script)

Assignment #1 (evaluated but not graded)
Pick a short article on the general topic of Oral Presentations. Pick an aspect of that topic that interests you personally, like How to deal with nerves or Using humor, published anywhere. (During your search for a suitable article, please look at the Toastmasters’ website; you need not select your article from it—I want you to see its resources). Cite the title and author of the article during your presentation. In developing a hook for this talk, interview at least two people working in the field you are interested in (Parents are OK) about the importance of oral presentation skills. Do they agree that presentation skills are important? If so, what reasons do they give?

You will deliver a highlight of the information contained in your article in a 4-minute talk for 2/9. Don’t just summarize your article. Instead, select key points that matter most to you that you can comfortably cover in the short time allowed. What is your article’s main point? Don’t worry if another student chooses the same topic or even the same article. Trust me that each person’s talk, even if given on the same article, will be very different.

Please write out your talk word for word. You should not deliver this script word-for-word. Instead, think about what kind of notes will allow you to make consistent eye contact! Practice the organizing principles we will have talked about.