Oral Presentations

661:250:03

Spring 2015
3.0 credits; W; no pre-reqs
T 1:30-4:15 p.m.
Hodson Hall 211

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Office Hours: TBD

"According to most studies, peoples' number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you're better off in the casket than doing the eulogy.”
—Jerry Seinfeld

Course Philosophy

As Jerry Seinfeld notes, the fear of public speaking can be so intense that many of us would prefer dying rather than giving a speech. Even veteran speakers admit to feeling butterflies, nausea, or panic before some of their most important speaking engagements. While very few people manage to rid themselves completely of their fear, many people do learn how to channel that fear effectively and use it to become compelling, persuasive speakers.

This course is designed to help you push through any anxieties you may have about public speaking by immersing you in a practice-intensive environment. You’ll 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 with slides, and other relevant scenarios. You’ll also learn how to develop effective slides that capture your main point with ease and clarity, hone your message, improve your delivery skills, and craft thought-provoking, well-organized speeches that hold your audience’s attention. During most class sessions, you will be presenting an actual speech and acting as a thoughtful commentator on other students’ speeches. In short, this is a course where you will learn by doing—not by listening to a lecture.
ABET Accreditation Outcomes

- Ability to function on multidisciplinary teams (d).
- Understanding of professional and ethical responsibility (f).
- Ability to communicate effectively (g).
- The broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global and societal context (h).
- Recognition of the need for and an ability to engage in life-long learning (i).
- Knowledge of contemporary issues (j).

Objectives

Upon completing this course, you will . . .

- Be a resilient, confident speaker for a wide variety of audiences and venues.
- Have the capacity to identify, understand, and leverage skillfully the right kind of evidence for each particular audience you address.
- Develop a deeper understanding of speech and oral communication as more than a way of showing what a speaker knows and, instead, having a conversation with a room full of human beings with particular needs, wants, desires, and levels of education.
- Be able to employ narrative as a fundamental content strategy when creating speeches and learn how to edit the message of each speech down to its core components.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the current standards of visual rhetoric and be able to deploy skillful slide design that avoids “Death by PowerPoint” and text-heavy slides by using images to support the message of your speech.
- Have developed an authentic, personal speaking style that puts the audience’s needs first.
- Know how to deploy active, emotionally intelligent listening skills as a speaker and as an audience member.
- Be able to give a persuasive speech outside your area of expertise.
- Be adept at drawing audience-appropriate conclusions from information, data, or trends related to a given topic.
- Be able to handle audience questions, especially challenging questions, with grace and diplomacy.
- Recognize that giving/receiving constructive feedback is an important professional skill and be fluent in doing so.
**Required Texts & Online Resources**


*Confessions of a Public Speaker*, Scott Berkun, ISBN: 978-1-449-30195-8*


*These texts are available electronically through the MSE Library website. Please log in to Blackboard for digital copies of the syllabus, assignment packet, and any other material distributed in class.

**Speech Assignments**

**Self-introduction Speech (NG)**
For this assignment, you will be asked to prepare a short speech in-class and introduce yourself to your fellow students. This speech is not graded.

**Baseline Speech (NG)**
For this assignment, you will be asked to prepare a short speech and a small deck of slides on any topic you would like. This speech is not graded.

**Presentation Zen Speech (5%)**
For this assignment, you will be asked to prepare a short speech and a small deck of slides on a chapter from *Presentation Zen Design*.

**Persuasive Action Speech (5%)**
For this assignment, you will be asked to prepare a short speech and a small deck of slides that work to persuade the class to take a specified course of action on an issue, social enterprise, or concern.

**Leading a Discussion (5%)**
For this assignment, you will select an article of your choice from *The Best American Magazine Writing* anthology and facilitate a class discussion on it.

**Extemporaneous/Impromptu Speeches (10%)**
For this assignment, you will give a speech with no or only minimal preparation time. We will have two practice sessions prior to the final, graded speeches.

**Technical Speech for Non-Experts (10%)**
For this assignment, you will prepare a speech with slides on a technical topic from your field of study. This speech should be accessible to a well-educated audience but non-specialist audience.

**Group Elevator and Extended Pitches (5%)**
For this assignment, you will participate in a collaborative group presentation. As a group, you will propose a solution to a JHU-related problem you have encountered. Your group will do a short, elevator pitch of one-minute and a longer extended pitch of 20 minutes. This presentation will require co-facilitation, slides, and a question-and-answer session with your audience. You will be graded as a group.

**The Interview (10%)**
For this assignment, you will be asked to create a cover letter and résumé tailored for one of several job listings in the assignment packet. Then, you will be asked to “interview” for the job in front of a panel of interviewers (other members of the class). You will be expected to wear professional attire.
Ethical Dilemma/Crisis Speech (15%)
For this assignment, you will receive a short case study detailing an ethical dilemma or a crisis. For this speech, you must propose a solution to the dilemma/crisis and argue for your solution on ethical grounds.

Makeup Speech (Varies)
On the last day of class, we will have one make-up day. Everyone is required to re-do or make up one speech. The interview, discussion, group elevator pitch, and final speeches are excluded from this makeup policy unless those speeches fall on a documented, religious holiday. In that case, exempted students may make up two speeches.

Final: The TED Talk in Plan “B” Speech Mode (20%)
You will be asked to create your own TED Talk based on the popular speaking series archived online at http://www.ted.com. At the beginning of your speech, you will draw a random scenario that will determine a worst-case set of conditions you must endure while giving your speech.

Papers & Other Assignments

Participation and Attitude (5%)
This will be a dynamic, highly interactive course where you will be expected to be an active audience member who gives helpful, thoughtful feedback to your peers to aid them in improving their work. Thus, you should consider any peer review, Q & A, audience feedback, or group work session as a graded “speech” that counts toward your overall grade. Your timely attendance at each class period and in doing your video footage assessments will factor heavily into this grade.

Video Footage Assessments (0%; Pass/Fail; Mandatory to Pass)
For this assignment, you will be asked to make a weekly assessment about your video footage. In a bullet point format, you will analyze the positive and negative aspects of your performance as well as set goals for the next week. You will upload each assessment to your Dropbox folder before the next class period. Please see assignment packet for more specific instructions. This will be factored into your participation.

Speaker Critique (5%)
For this assignment, you will attend one “live” public speaking event and write an analysis of the speaker’s performance using the feedback method we develop in class. Please see assignment packet for specific instructions.

Reflective Essay (5%)
For this assignment, you will write a final, reflective essay in the style of Scott Berkun’s Confessions of a Public Speaker. You will create a narrative about your public speaking journey using your video footage and experiences speaking in class. Please see assignment packet for specific instructions.

Course Schedule
Please read through the relevant pages in your assignment packet in preparation for each week’s speech. The packet contains specific instructions, helpful hints, and other material related to each week’s assigned speech. Each speech assignment will be introduced one week prior to the graded performance. Thus, you should do this reading one week in advance so that you are prepared with any questions regarding the upcoming speech. For simplicity’s sake, I have listed the packet pages next to the actual speech date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speech Assignment</th>
<th>Packet</th>
<th>Other Prep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 1/27</td>
<td>Course Intro</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Start reading <em>Presentation Zen</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-introduction Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 2/3</td>
<td>Baseline Speech</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Keeping reading <em>Presentation Zen</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 2/10</td>
<td><em>Presentation Zen</em> Speech</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Finish reading <em>Presentation Zen</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 2/17</td>
<td>Persuasive Action Speech</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sign up for and attend your mandatory conference session in 106C Whitehead.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mandatory Conferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>T 2/24</td>
<td>Discussions I</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Read assigned essays from <em>BAMW</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practice Extemporaneous I</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sign up for and attend your mandatory conference session in 106C Whitehead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mandatory Conferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 3/3</td>
<td>Technical Speech</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sign up for and attend your mandatory conference session in 106C Whitehead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mandatory Conferences</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>T 3/10</td>
<td>Discussions II</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Read assigned essays from <em>BAMW</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practice Extemporaneous II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F 3/13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DUE: Speaker Critique in my mailbox in 105 Whitehead by 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 3/17</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 3/24</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Create your cover letter/resume and bring copies to class to distribute to the hiring committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 3/31</td>
<td>NO CLASS—CONFERENCES</td>
<td></td>
<td>The conference week that would normally be held during this week has been re-scheduled to co-occur with our other classes during February. Use this class period to practice with your group for the upcoming Group Pitches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4/7</td>
<td>Group Pitches</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Begin reading <em>Confessions of a Public Speaker</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4/14</td>
<td>Discussions III</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Read assigned essays from <em>BAMW</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final, Graded Extemporaneous III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/21</td>
<td>Ethical Dilemma Speech</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4/28</td>
<td>TED Talk in Plan B Mode</td>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>Watch 3-5 TED Talks at <a href="http://www.ted.com">http://www.ted.com</a> to prepare for this speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Revised/Makeup Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pick one speech to re-do. See list of eligible speeches in assignment packet. DUE: Reflective Essay at the beginning of your final exam.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Course Policies and Expectations**

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Attendance and Tardiness: Because most of our graded work will happen during the actual class period, it is imperative that you come to each class period well prepared and on time. Chronic tardiness and absenteeism will severely jeopardize your ability to pass this class. If you know you will have to miss more than two classes, I would recommend taking this course during a different semester. If you miss three or more classes, you will fail the class. If you know you will be missing class due to a religious holiday, please contact me in advance to make special arrangements.

Participation: This class depends heavily upon your active and vocal participation throughout the entire course. This means you need to be prepared to give frequent verbal feedback to your peers and to be a thoughtful, engaged listener to your colleagues’ presentations. It also means that you need to be current with any assigned reading for the discussion speeches. If you are caught texting, emailing, or Facebooking during class, you will be marked absent for the day. Please turn off all electronica and focus on the class.

Dropbox: You will be required to submit your slides by midnight on the day prior to the class. The class will use a Dropbox folder to do this, and our course assistant will assist you with this.

Missed Speeches: We have one “make up” day scheduled at the end of the semester for missed speeches. Everyone is required to re-do or make up one speech. The interview, discussion, and group elevator pitch speeches are excluded from this makeup policy.

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.

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.

Email and Listserv
Email is a great way to contact me, and I am happy to answer any course-related questions you might have. My email address is julie.reiser@gmail.com. I can usually respond to most emails within 24-48 hours. You can also email the course assistant for help as well. I use a Google listserv for course announcements: jhuspeakerstuesday@googlegroups.com. You are required to use the listserv for the 15-week period of our course. Our course assistant will add you directly to the listserv and/or email you instructions for joining. Also, please remember that the listserv will send an email to everyone in the group—including me. Do not send any jokes, personal information, or grade-related concerns to this list.