



**SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY**  
**CRS 325: Presentational Speaking**  
**Sample Syllabi**

### **Course Description**

The conceptual and practical dimensions of formal presentations in organizational settings: analysis, adaptation, strategic arrangement, development of ideas, verbal and nonverbal skills.

### **Context and Course Objectives**

Through speech we move people to ideas, solve problems, deliberate about common concerns, manage conflict, disrupt paradigms, freely express our beliefs, impart new perspectives, console in times of crisis, and so on. This course teaches the value of public speaking and trains students in the practical skills needed to be an effective participant in public discourse as well as in the professional world. Throughout the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to speak on numerous topics using a variety of speech methods. Through speeches and related assignments, you will learn the foundational concepts necessary for crafting your own speeches for many audiences. It is my hope that through this course, you create your own public voice, thus enhancing your engagement in the social, political, and professional world.

### **General Objectives**

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Conceptualize the dynamics of speaking situations and practices
- Organize a message
- Adapt a message to the audience
- Speak extemporaneously
- Critically analyze and create a cohesive argument
- Understand the importance of rhetoric and public speaking in our society

### **Learning Objectives**

As students move through the course, they will

- Engage in performance-driven, active learning that combines communication theory and practice
- Learn the principles of effective presentational speaking
- Learn the principles of audience and message analysis
- Learn persuasive strategies necessary for effective presentational speaking

## Learning Outcomes

- Be able to assess the rhetorical/speaking situation
- Be able to plan to appropriate public speaking presentation
- Understand the audience at hand and write an appropriate speech
- Plan the appropriate message, main points and supportive material.
- Prepare and rehearse the presentation and secure a smooth delivery
- Deliver an effective presentation
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation

## Attendance

- Absences: Attendance is *mandatory*. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss textbook material and participate in the various activities associated with the readings. The clear exception to this policy is in the case of a **university-sanctioned absence** (athletic participation, religious observance, etc.) or **documented illness**. Upon your return to the class, please provide university-approved documentation for any excused absence. In the event of an emergency, it is up to you to contact me so we can establish how to proceed with missed assignments.
- **Class attendance and Speech Presentation**: Attendance is required in this course and **no more than three unexcused absences are allowed**. The instructor will deduct ten points from the overall course grade for more than three unexcused absences, many more than three may result in failing the class. However, speeches must be given on the day designated and only on rare circumstances and with ample proof, can a speech be rescheduled. Failure to deliver a speech on the designated day will result in failing a particular speech assignment
- Tardiness: is inconsiderate to both your instructor and your peers, so it will not be tolerated. **For every two (2) tardies, you will receive (1) unexcused absence.**
- Participation: In addition to attending each class session, you are responsible for reading the required material, participating in our class discussions, being ethical, and nurturing an environment in which we all feel welcome, safe, productively engaged, and constructively challenged as we learn. **Sleeping or giving the appearance of sleeping is distracting and will count as one absence.**
- Technology: Please silence all cell phones, electronics, etc. If you are observed using technology inappropriately (we will discuss what this means), **you will be marked absent for the day**. Refer to attendance policy to see how your grade will be affected. If you are observed using technology while your classmates are giving their speeches, **you will be counted absent for the day and I will deduct 10% from your speech grade.**
- Grade breakdown (applied to participation grade):  

1 absence: 90%	2 absences: 80%	3 absences: 70%	4 absences: <i>possible course failure</i>
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- If you miss class, find classmates who can update you on course material. I will be sincerely happy to explain concepts after you have consulted with a classmate first and reviewed the syllabus. In the event of an emergency, it is up to you to contact me so we can establish how to proceed with missed assignments.

## Attendance for speeches

- Attendance on speech days is *required*. We are a support system for each other because speaking in public can be scary. **If you miss class on *any* speech day without documentation, your final speech grade will be lowered 10%. If you have an unexcused absence on a day *you are assigned to speak*, you will receive a zero on that speech.** If you feel special circumstances necessitate special consideration from this policy, please see me as soon as such circumstances arise. If you are on Zoom, you must have your face clear, with NO background.
- Note: *If you are late on a speech day, please remain outside the door and wait until you hear applause.*

## Required Materials

Text- [www.publicspeakingproject.org](http://www.publicspeakingproject.org) or <http://www.publicspeakingproject.org/psvirtualtext.html>

## Course Perspective

This course is skill based but it is informed by a rich history of rhetorical theories development over many centuries. These theories are essential for understanding the practice of presentational speaking. The course is structured in such a way that the necessary foundations for public presentations are covered in the first few weeks of the course, allowing for a more focused presentation in the remaining two thirds of the term. Most of the reading is front loaded as most chapters are needed for a comprehensive view of the fundamentals of public presentation.

## In Class Recordings

Video will be taken of all speeches for grading and self-evaluation purposes. The videos will not be used for any other reason without written permission from the student.

### ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

## Speeches

You are required to deliver the four following speeches to the class:

1. Informative Speech: 5-7 minutes, no visual aids, 5 sources (at least 3 scholarly).
2. Persuasive Speech: 7-9 minutes, 1-2 visual aids required, 7 sources (at least 3 scholarly).
3. Impromptu Speech: 2:30-3:30 minutes, no visual aid.
4. Mediated Speech: 5-7 minutes, 7 sources (at least 4 scholarly).

You will submit topic proposals for the speeches via Blackboard. I will send an email when all proposals are graded; you can then check Blackboard to see if your topic has been (dis)approved. If disapproved, you have (24) hours to resubmit. No two students may present on the same topic. Topics are granted on a “first-come, first-served” basis. If you do not submit a topic proposal by the deadline, you will not be permitted to deliver your speech.

You may use notecards for all but the Impromptu speech. However, you will be heavily penalized if the notecards have more than keywords/quotations and if it appears you are reading the note cards word-for-word. All notecards will be turned in on your assigned speech day.

## Speech Outlines

Each outline is worth 5% of that total speech grade. All speeches require full-sentence outlines.

## Peer Reviews

You will be assigned a small group and complete peer reviews for your groupmates during their speeches. Peer-Reviews will be conducted in class.

## Self-Evaluations

Watching yourself speak and reflecting on your time in front of your audience is one of the most helpful ways to improve. Write honest, informed evaluations of your speech performances.

## Final Exam

Your final will be a take home exam. No late exams will be accepted.

## Reading

With each chapter that you are assigned to read, you will be prompted to complete various activities (journals, quizzes, questions, etc.). Completion of these activities will account for 10% of your final grade. It is your responsibility to make sure you can access the REVEL online course. Contact me right away if you are experiencing difficulties with this.

## Description of Assignments

- 1. Introduction speech** – This initial speech allows you to get a feel for the publicness of presentation. This is your opportunity to sense what it feels like standing in front of an audience and make necessary adjustments for improved public presentations. Your task is to introduce yourself but you must go beyond basic biographical information. You can present specific information, special characteristics, or unique experience (2-3 minutes in length).
- 2. Elevator Pitch** - also known as an elevator speech – is a quick synopsis of your background and experience. This speech is all about you: who you are, what you do, and what you want to do. (30 seconds in length)
- 3. Informative speech**– With this speech, you inform the audience of a procedure, person, event, act, a development, or a place of interest. **Your task is to inform (but not persuade) your audience, in an organized, coherent structure** (6-7 minutes in length). Get your topic approved by instructor before writing it
- 4. Persuasive speech**– With this speech your task is **to persuade the audience to adopt a point of view, take an action, keep an action or point of view, or inoculate against future and counter persuasion.** Get your topic approved by instructor before writing it. 6-8 minutes in length.  
With this and the next assignment, the instructors should engage the students in a critical analysis of several speeches (either students' speeches or famous ones taken from other sources).
- 6. Impromptu speech** - You will be asked to speak on unexpected topics, in an educated and organized manner. You will have four minutes to prep and organize your thoughts. Your task is to be able to articulate a clear topic and do so without losing composure. The expectation here that you be competent in your presentational skills and that you provide an adequate presentation (5-6 minute in length). You will not be allowed to use notes of any kind.
- 7. Mediated Speech**– The mediated speech is an exercise in digital storytelling and should be a creative and engaging endeavor. **Speeches may be informative or persuasive.** Speeches should be 5 minutes long and in video format with the title "CRS Presents: [Your name]". Speeches will then be uploaded to YouTube (can be public or private) for the whole class to view. Get your topic approved by instructor before writing it

\* **Participation** - to be determined by instructor, based on attentiveness and contributions to various class discussions. Also included under participation is student evaluations of others' presentations (evaluations of classmates' speeches are required from each student throughout the course)

**Quizzes**- covering the material read and discussed.

**Final Exam** – This will be a take home exam, you are to use what you learned from the text in writing a speech.

### Grade Breakdown

<p><u>Unit 1: The Informative Speech (30%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction Speech 5%</li> <li>• Elevator Pitch 10%</li> <li>• Informative Speech Outline 5%</li> <li>• Informative Speech 10%</li> </ul>	<p><u>Unit 2: The Persuasive Speech (15%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persuasive Speech Outline 5%</li> <li>• Persuasive Speech 10%</li> </ul>
<p><u>Unit 4: The Impromptu Speech (10%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impromptu Speech 10%</li> </ul>	<p><u>Unit 3: The Mediated Speech (15%)</u></p>
<p><u>Other Assignments (30%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignments 15%</li> <li>• Quizzes 5%</li> <li>• Final Exam 10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediated Speech 10%</li> <li>• Mediated Speech Outline 5%</li> </ul>

**Note:** All presentations are based on bringing to the podium only an outline. A verbatim text of a given speech is not allowed. There is a pedagogical explanation that guides this requirement. Most effective speakers are effective because they do not read the speech but are familiar with the outline and thus can speak to the audience (as distinct of speaking at the audience with a manuscript speech).

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PRESENTATIONS

Your grade for the course is determined primarily by your performance. The primary criteria for assessing the quality of your presentations include the **content** of your presentation, your **research** of the topic at hand, your **word choice**, **delivery** and **organization**.

How are speeches graded? The following descriptions will help you understand the prerequisites for each grade.

**“A” Speaker:** An “A” speaker is equipped with virtually all skills needed in affecting the oral transmission of ideas, feeling, beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors. The “A” speaker has packaged information—well selected information, appropriately supported ideas—adapted to the particular audience he or she is facing and to the proposition or central idea being advanced. The “A” speaker is making maximum movements, gestures, and facial expressions. In a sentence, an “A” speaker is illustrating the strengths of oral public communication.

**“B” Speaker:** A “B” speaker is certainly better than average, yet normally has room for improvements in one or two important areas of oral public communication. Transitions may be missing, or, introductions and conclusions may be a bit flat; some ideas may be too general yet; or, an appropriate delivery skill may be present but lacks polish. The “B” speaker, in other words, is showing definite signs of thinking and acting rhetorically, but has not yet achieved complete mastery of oral communication.

**“C” Speaker:** A “C” speaker will get along, in all probability, facing day-to-day public communication situations [lectures, offering short presentations at work, etc.]. Ideas generally are there and well packaged; clarity has been achieved, although maximum impact probably has not. Unimaginative—i.e., non-engaging—introductions and conclusions may be employed; a “C” speaker probably either reads too much or attempts to memorize full sentences or paragraphs; he or she may not move much and possibly speaks with a deadpan face; distracting mannerisms may be present.

**“D” Speaker:** A “D” speaker has one or two major problems in public oral communication, problems which definitely will affect future success. “D” speeches often are developed poorly [either presented merely assertively or with no illustrations, metaphors, etc., to give them enough clarity and impact]. A “D” speaker may almost completely read an address, present an “essay” instead of a comparatively extemporaneous speech, shake so badly that an audience worries about the speaker instead of the speech, refuse to look at an audience steadily, ignore basic techniques of coherent transitions, appropriate introductions and conclusions, and the like, or fail to use the assignment time well by preparing something other than common place material.

**“F” Speaker:** It is almost impossible not to communicate something to an audience; it is almost impossible to earn an “F.” The failing grade is used in case of lying and plagiarizing, when assignment has been completely missed or on those rare occasions when a speaker completely falls on his or her face because of nervousness or ill-preparedness.

**Note:** A grade lower than a “C” will not transfer as college credit.

## Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Performance
A	94-100%	Excellent Work
A-	90-93%	Nearly Excellent Work
B+	87-89%	Very Good Work
B	84-86%	Good Work
B-	80-83%	Mostly Good Work
C+	77-79%	Above Average Work
C	74-76%	Average Work
C-	70-73%	Mostly Average Work
D	60-69%	Below Average Work
F	0-59%	Failing Work

## Syracuse University Policies

### Academic Integrity

Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university policy. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first offense by an undergraduate student is course failure. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>.

You should interpret this statement to also mean that you cannot “lift” words or portions of speeches delivered by others, without attribution.

## Related links

The Academic Integrity Policy:

<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Ten Things All Students Need to Know About AI:

<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/ten-gas-all-students-need-to-know-about-ai/>

What does academic integrity mean?:

<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/what-does-academic-integrity-mean/>

## Helpful Apps

Ummo & LikeSo - Both of these apps help filter out filler words such as umm and like.

SpeakerClock - Helps you master the pacing of public speaking.

Promptster Pro - Turns your iPad into a teleprompter. (for practice only)

## Turnitin

This class can use *Turnitin*, a plagiarism prevention system. The ease of using the Internet has made it very easy for students to “cut and paste” material into papers that they are writing without proper citation. I will submit all/some/ papers that you write in this class to *Turnitin*, a service that identifies “matched text.” Note that all submitted papers will be included as source documents in the [Turnitin.com](http://Turnitin.com)

## Academic Accommodations

Syracuse University welcomes people with disabilities and, in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Students who require special consideration due to a learning or physical disability or other situation should make an appointment with the course instructor as soon as possible.

## Student Work

It is understood that registration for and continued enrollment in this course constitutes permission by the student for the instructor to use for educational purposes any student work produced in the course, in compliance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## Course Calendar (TENATIVE)

All assignments are due on the date listed unless specified otherwise.

On days where chapter readings are assigned, you are required to complete all assigned activities (journal activities, quizzes, etc.) in addition to completing the readings themselves unless specified otherwise.

Date (Days A & C)	Topic(s)	Readings + Activities due	Assignments due
<b>Week 1</b>			
Jan. 21	Welcome to CRS 325! <i>Course Introduction</i> <i>Foundations:</i> Providing an overview of the fundamentals of public speaking (speaker, speech topic, audience, setting and their interdependence).		
<b>Week 2</b>			
Jan. 25	<i>Course Introduction</i> Ethics + Listening and Speaking Informative Speech	Ch. 1	Ch. 3 – Questions #2, 4, 5, 6, 7
Jan. 28	Informative Speech & Topic Selection Research Unit	Skim Ch.2	Introductions DUE- Thursday
<b>Week 3</b>			
Feb. 1, 3	Research Unit/AnBib: Supporting the Speech + Citations	Read Ch. 3	Chapter 3 due
Feb 4	Organizing and Outlining Add Elevator	Ch. 15	Informative Speech Topic Proposal due on Monday. Ch. 15 – Question # 5
<b>Week 4</b>			
Feb 8	Style and Delivery + Audience Analysis	Ch. 5	Inform Speech Topic Pro. due Ch. 5 - Questions # 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
Feb. 11	Workshopping ♥	Ch. 6	Ch. 6 Questions # 2, 5, 7
<b>Week 5</b>			
Feb. 17 (Wed)	<b>Informative Speeches</b>	Keep video of Inform. Speech for end of sem.	Informative Speeches DUE Informative Speech Annotated Bibliography due
Feb. 18	<b>Informative Speeches</b>	Ch. 7	Ch. 7 Activities # 4 ( watch & summarize) 6
<b>Week 6</b>			

Feb. 22	Intro to Persuasion	Ch. 8	Ch. 8 Questions # 1, 3, 5,
Feb. 25	Informative Speech Review + Persuasion cont'd		DUE -Inform Speech Peer Reviews <b>AND</b> Self-Evaluation
<b>Week 7</b>			
Mar 1, 3	Language + Visual aids	Ch. 9	Ch. 9 Questions # 1, 5, 6, 7 Persuasive Speech Topic Proposal due
Mar 4	Persuasion cont'd + workshopping		Work on Persuasive Speech Outline (with bib)
<b>Week 8</b>			
Mar. 15	Persuasion Intro	Ch. 4	Ch. 4 Questions # 4, 6, 7, 8
Mar. 18	Persuasion cont'd + workshopping		Persuasive Speech Outline (with bib) <b>AND</b> visuals due
<b>Week 9</b>			
March 8	<b>Persuasive Speeches</b>	Ch. 16	Ch. 16 –Glossary (familiarize yourself with terms)
March 11	<b>Persuasive Speeches</b>		
<b>Week 10</b>			
March 23	Unit Wrap Up	Ch. 14	Ch. 14 Questions - # 1, 2, 4, 6, 7
March 26			Persuasive Speech Peer Reviews <b>AND</b> Self-Evaluation due
<b>Week 11</b>			
Mar. 30		Ch. 10	Ch. 10 Questions # 1, 8, 11, 12
Mar. 31 Wed.		-----	
<b>Week 12</b>			
April 5		Ch. 12	Ch. 12 Questions # 2, 4, 6, 7
April 8		-----	

Week 13			
April 19,22		Ch. 13	Ch. 13 – Questions # 1, 2, 6
April 22		-----	-----
Week 14			
April 26	Intro to Impromptu Speeches	Ch. 11	Ch. 11 – Questions # 2, 6, 7
April 29	Workshopping	-----	
Week 15			
May 3, 5	Impromptu Speeches	-----	-----
May 6	Impromptu Speeches	-----	Due: compare /Contrast your 1 <sup>st</sup> speech & impromptu
Week 16			
May 10	Impromptu Speeches		
May 13			Final Exam Due May 20 <sup>th</sup>
Week 17			
May 17, 19			
May 20			

*This syllabus and calendar are subject to change at any time for any reason. All students will be properly notified of changes made.*

\*Ask me about Extra Credit \*