

L. Castronova COM 312 Sec. 030 SPRING, 2025 Subject: Oral Presentation

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Office Phone: (973) 596-6484 Office Hours: Regular: Wed. 2:00-3:00 pm & Fri. 12:00-1:00 pm By appointment: Fri. 4:00-5:00 pm

These COM 312 classes will be conducted from 8:30 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. on Wednesdays in FMH 309.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Required Text: Dan O'Hair, Hannah Rubenstein and Rob Stewart. A POCKET GUIDE TO PUBLIC SPEAKING. 6th Edition: New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016. (This is a concise, little handbook. It is available for a reasonable price as an online purchase.) ISBN: 978-1-319-10278-4 FYI....the required readings are also available on our course CANVAS page. Be sure to complete the readings in a timely fashion as instructed.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: COM 312 is a course aimed at enhancing or improving a student's ability to communicate. Students will be asked to present their ideas in various modes of speaking, and these will range from impromptu interview questions to structured, power-point supported presentations.

In COM 312, students will focus on breathing techniques, the power of vocal ability, and the significance of the way they present themselves to others. Interpersonal communication is also a component of the course because beyond who we are, as professionals, we are, first and foremost, human, and the human connection, meaning how we relate to others, is certainly worthy of consideration. Are we able to relate to others with ease, honesty and grace? Are we blocked by uneasiness, shyness or even hostility? Human behavior is a fascinating subject to study. We will share an interchange about our observations of how people communicate so well or fail in these endeavors.

The concept of self image is vital in understanding the speaking experience. Who we are, how we feel about ourselves, how we imagine we come across, and, in accordance with instructor and student feedback, will enable us to understand our strengths and weaknesses. It is imperative that we develop an understanding of who we are in terms of our presentation skills. One way of relating this identity is through a vital grasp of the art of communication. That is the focus of this course. Therefore, ALL STUDENTS who have decided to enroll are being asked to be a PART OF THE CLASS as a vital energy in it. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. We will be stronger because of our support for one another.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: In addition to being PRESENT AND PUNCTUAL, students also need to be active participants in class activities, exercises, debates, etc. Hopefully, confidence will be reinforced for some students and, others, in search of confidence, will see their speaking fears diminish.

Various speech topics or speaking situations will be covered. Students will be informed of projects in advance in order to prepare them. (With the exception of impromptu exercises, students will be expected to plan, practice/prepare each presentation before their in-class delivery. FINAL GRADES will be based on attendance and participation. So if it is the grade breakdown that you are looking for, quite simply, it looks like this:

100% of your grade is based on ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION (Completion of all speeches and class work or activities)

All students are responsible for the helpful textbook readings in the speaking handbook. This handbook is a valuable little guide that should be kept on hand, to be reviewed again and again, beyond the initial reading. The text condenses the essentials of good presentation skills in a very useful format. It will serve as a vital support for the speaker. Of course, a handbook offers suggestions and ideas as we approach any speaking situation. We want to allow for our identity, the personality, the point of view, the method of explanation, to be part of who we are as speakers. The handbook is a guide with suggestions. Readers need to be open to what the writers have to say on the subject.

Being present and a part of the class, preparing and successfully delivering presentations, and reading the handbook for support are all valuable keys to, hopefully, making strides in effective speaking at many levels.

GOAL OF COURSE: To assist every student in being the best oral communicator that he or she can be as a result of time and practice spent discussing the speaking situations and practicing them again and again in our workspace, the classroom!

CONTINUE on....to read over the COURSE CALENDAR.....

COM 312 COURSE CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: This course calendar is a FLEXIBLE one. Just as in real life, changes may be necessary and wise for various reasons. At the instructor's discretion, assignments may be added or deleted. The size of the class is also a factor in terms of time allowed for student presentations. Of course, students will be informed in advance of any changes made. However, once again, it is imperative that all students attend and participate. Then they will be aware of what is going on in our shared COM 312 class! Part of the art of communication is cultivating good listening skills. There may not be a Canvas site in the work place. Good listening skills and note taking are vital!

WEEKS 1 – 5 WELCOME. Introduction to the course. Review of course syllabus. Student introductions. Communicative exercises. Breathing and the importance of the breath. Coping with stress. Yoga for relaxation. Impromptu speaking exercises, ice breakers.

HOMEWORK: READ on Canvas page: PRESENTATION TIPS and CONVENTIONS pdf. New York Times article: We Are All Socially Awkward Now Chapter 1 in the textbook (pages 1-33). WATCH America's Young Poet Laureate, AMANDA GORMAN deliver her presentation at the 2021 Presidential Inauguration.

Also, SPEAKING ASSIGNMENT needed. Students are being asked to SELECT and PREPARE A READING of their choice. The aim is to read with clarity and awareness. Students will need to make a selected passage come to life. FORMAT SUGGESTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) INTRODUCTION. GREET EVERYONE and STATE YOUR NAME
THEN, OFFER A LIVELY and ENGAGING INTRODUCTION. Get your audience interested from the getgo! We will talk about possible ways to do this, but the final decision of drawing in the audience with an intro will be based on each student's own ideas about getting us involved of the passage that is about to be shared through a reading.
- 2) A meaningful reading of the student's chosen passage should then be shared. READ the passage to us. (Be sure you are familiar with it!) Which passage? Student's choice. Everyone needs to give this selection time, thought and practice. (suggestions will be shared in class).
- 3) Offer some vital, concluding comments AFTER the reading. Avoid saying YEAH, OKAY. That's it. OFFER A CONCLUSION that connects to what you have just shared with us in your reading of that chosen passage. Give us a takeaway engineered by you, the speaker/reader of the chosen passage.

TOTAL TIME: NOT TO EXCEED 5 minutes (includes introduction, reading of the passage and closing comments)

Additional Speaking Exercise: Share a valuable learning experience with us. (Details will be given in class).

Weeks 6 & 7-Next project: STUDENT's CHOICE. Use your laptop OR IPHONE.

THE SELECTION? Every student will give a presentation about someone else's speech. (Easy to refer to as A Speech About a Speech—although the actual focus is on the speaker you have chosen to share with us.)

Students will select their own choice of a good (or terrible!) speaker. How does the presentation work? First introduce the speaker. Point out what we should listen for, and then present that speech (using your laptop) so that we can see and hear the presenter you have chosen to focus on. FIVE MINUTE TIME LIMIT. So you might wish to have us listen to only part of the speech in question in order to meet that time frame. The five minutes include: introducing yourself, introducing the speaker you have chosen, letting us hear the speech/presentation (in whole or in part) and then sharing your closing comments on this speaker. Why have you chosen this particular speaker/speech? What would you like us to listen for? If you insist, we can hear only the AUDIO and can zero in

on the sound without looking at the speaker. Of course, most listeners would prefer a chance to see and hear the speaker you have chosen. Goal in this assignment? To share your opinions in regard to a good OR bad speaker. YOU CHOOSE. YOU DECIDE the reasons why we should celebrate that speaker or should take note of his or her shortcomings.

Most of you probably have a speaker in mind in regard to this assignment. However, if you do not, FINDING SPEECHES ONLINE (page 65 of the handbook for the course) will offer several valuable links for this assignment. Let this presentation (which is actually a response to someone else's presentation) be an interesting choice on your behalf.

FORMAT: INTRODUCE YOURSELF. INTRODUCE YOUR CHOICE. Let us see and hear (or just hear) the speaker/speech or part of his or her presentation. Give closing comments.

What is so EFFECTIVE or INEFFECTIVE about the person you have selected? What should we listen for? Point out what YOU believe to be strengths, weaknesses, oversights, etc. Again, please work within a FIVE MINUTE time frame. NOT LONGER THAN FIVE MINUTES TOTAL.

Discussion of the SPEECH TO INFORM. Possibilities. Individual student mini-conferences. READ handbook pages 158-171.

Week 8- Impromptu work on Informative Speeches. Technique suggestions, formatting ideas. Approaches to the assignment, organization.

Week 9 - SEMESTER BREAK! No classes will be held. Prepare the Speech to Inform!

Weeks 10 and 11 - Delivery of the SPEECH TO INFORM and Listener's Questionnaire

Moving on....Discussion of Persuasive Speaking. Pages 171-178 The art of persuasion. In class debates and/or discussions. Persuasive Speaking. The art of persuasion. In class debates/discussions Expressing opinions. Student exercises. Discussion on ways to deliver a persuasive speech. Instructor will offer suggestions for topics and will be available to assist students in finding their voices in regard to this presentation. Group discussion/debate. Volunteers to deliver their SPEECH TO PERSUADE.

Weeks 12 &13 SPEECH TO PERSUADE student presentations continue. PLEASE NOTE:

Up next? Weeks 14 and 15 Planning the special event speech OR a speech to entertain. Textbook reference pages: Speaking on Special Occasions – pages 195-205

Delivery of Special Occasion Speech OR the Presentation to Entertain will be on Wed.

April 30th. our LAST SESSION. (Wed. MAY 7th follows a FRIDAY schedule)

Please Note: This assignment can venture beyond the textbook. It can also extend into student's personal skills and/or talents. (I will discuss this in class with all of you BEFORE you design this SPEECH FOR A SPECIAL OCCASION or SPEECH TO ENTERTAIN.

Delivery of this SPECIAL OCCASION SPEECH or SPEECH TO ENTERTAIN will take place during our final session.

IMPORTANT NOTE: LAST DAY OF THE SPRING SEMESTER CLASSES is WED. MAY 7th, BUT....

THAT WEDNESDAY will follow a FRIDAY SCHEDULE. Therefore, our last session in COM 312 will be on WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30th.

FYI--- WE DO NOT HAVE A FINAL EXAM in COM 312.

HAVE AN ENJOYABLE SEMESTER!

Please be sure to review information on the NJIT Academic Integrity Code below:

The New Jersey Institute of Technology is an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through teaching and research. We expect our graduates to assume positions of leadership with their professions and communities. Honesty in your academic work will develop into professional integrity.

The NJIT Code of Academic Integrity embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty that is central to the very nature of the university and represents the highest possible expression of shared values among the members of the university community.

All assignments submitted shall be considered "graded work" and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code on Academic Integrity. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified.

The full text of the NJIT university Code on Academic Integrity can be found at www.njit.edu/education/pdf/academic-integrity-code-pdf.