Every great story has a clear enemy. In this class the enemy is obvious and boring. The sad fact of presenting is that obvious and boring is easy. Being compelling and charismatic seems hard or only for people who we see as “naturals” at speaking. When you add in the fact that many times we don’t feel in control of the content we are sometimes required to present professionally – becoming a great speaker can seem out of reach.

This class is about inspiring your confidence, helping you find your ideal speaking style, and learning to take control of any situation to craft and deliver a story that moves people no matter if you are doing a TED talk or trying to get an annual budget request approved.

The simple aim of this course is to make you more influential by teaching you how to find and share “non-obvious” ideas, deliver them in your own optimal style, and learn to be always confident in front of an audience.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students can expect to:
- Read the nuances of an audience or situation to present appropriately
- Build confidence to be comfortable in front of an audience
- Understand how to build an effective story structure
- Find a personal style for their presenting and pitching
- Learn “non-obvious” master tips and tricks from top speakers on presenting and pitching

Course Structure:

The world is filled with public speaking advice. How to conquer your fears, own a room, or become a better storyteller. Much of that advice is hard to argue with. Of course you need to learn about your audience, or spend time practicing in order to get better. When it comes to truly influencing an audience to think differently though, simply learning techniques to calm your nerves and improve your delivery is only the first step.

How can you learn the nuances of how to read an audience or situation? What messages will stand out and set you apart to make you memorable? What role should visuals play (or not play) in your
presentation or pitching? And most importantly, how does your own personality and style play into the methods you employ to be influential and present or pitch better?

These are the questions we will answer in this course.

We will start by each student building confidence by understanding their own personal style of presenting and using assessments to understand the best version of themselves. Building from this new understanding of their individual strengths, students will learn how to develop and curate "non-obvious" ideas for any situation - from presenting on a stage in front of large audiences to selling an idea to a boardroom of a handful of executives.

Moving from ideas and self knowledge, we will then cover the basics of how to read a room, audience and situation – including an in depth look at everything from body language to some of the most common business situations we all are likely to be faced with in real life. For each, students will learn a variety of techniques to be flexible, remain positive, and success in any environment they happen to find themselves in.

Next we will shift our focus to the basics of building a powerful story, structuring a presentation of any length, finding and creating compelling visual aids, and some of the most important do’s and don’ts of structuring an elegant and compelling story. This section will pull together some of the most common storyboarding techniques of Hollywood screenwriters, and information design techniques used by top visual designers to not only structure a great story but also make it look amazing and professional too.

After covering story structure and design, we will shift our focus directly to building our techniques of great delivery – including everything from having a presence on stage, using vocal inflection, powerful body language, preparation techniques, and a useful list of do’s and don’ts to improve any presentation. In this section, we will study amazing presentations in video as well, and determine what makes them great and learn how to emulate some of the techniques in our own presentations.

Finally, students will learn how to put the pieces together in order to deliver an amazing solo talk – and also how to collaborate within a team to put these things together and also work well in the team environment where they are likely to be pitching together or presentation together and need a strong collaborative way to pitch as a team rather than several solo talks hastily pieced together.

Course Expectations:

Students in this course are required first and foremost to bring a positive flexible attitude to class and the willingness to learn new techniques no matter how experienced (or inexperienced) they consider themselves to be at speaking and pitching.

A large part of this class is designed around the actual experience of speaking in front of others. You will be presenting in your first class, and can expect to be talking in front of others frequently throughout the course. A key element will be group critique – the entire class will be engaged in giving you feedback, as well as the instructor. Though this feedback will also be constructive and never mean, one of the things we will all need to embrace early is the vulnerability to be critiqued. It will make you better.

In addition, the weekly experience of the class will build your experience and confidence. The schedule involves stories from the instructor, class exercises, workshops and presentations of various lengths. You will learn fundamentals that you can apply in the business world – often an unfriendly, busy or time-limited environment. In this class you will find a comfortable place to find your voice so you will be
better prepared for less inviting situations. An engaged class is critical – students should turn off all cell phones, pagers, or other communication devices while in class.

Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others’ views and opinions.

**A Note About Video:**

We will be using video extensively throughout this course to record student presentations and offer them as resources to each student in order to help him or her to improve style, content and delivery. At first, this can seem intimidating; however the aim of the video is to give each student a valuable method to critique themselves. These videos will be posted online privately for only the class to access, and upon request after the class is concluded, they can all be removed online and destroyed, or video footage can be provided directly to students.

It is our aim to have a videographer available to record our classes and cut videos into individual segments so each student can view his or her videos individually.

**Attendance:**

Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. In the business situation, missing a presentation can mean losing an important business opportunity. If circumstances preclude you from attending a class or making it to class before it begins, it is your responsibility to notify me via phone or email prior to the start of class. Missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be converted to an A-). Absences for classes, beyond the initial two, will result in further reduction of the final grade. If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing this course.

**Dress Code:**

There is no specific dress code for this course at any time. One of the things we will learn in this course is dressing for the occasion – which means students will be treated like adults and expected to make their own decisions about what to wear and what not to wear at any point during classes or when presenting.

**Work submitted and presented:**

Assignments and presentations are expected to be of high quality and submitted in the correct format. There is no excuse for typos – you are better than that.

Assignments will be considered for quality of content, performance and professional appearance. Being unprepared or attempting to “wing it” for presentations will be easily noticed by the instructor and probably your fellow students as well. Expecting to get by without preparation is a sign of disrespect to your fellow students and to me, so always prepare!

As an instructor, I also realize that sometimes things just happen and life gets in the way. I’m not unreasonable – so if you do have a situation like that, call me or email me about it and we’ll see what we can do.

**Georgetown University Honor Pledge:**

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor, and to
conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together. Also, cheating is bad karma – so just don’t do it!

**Academic Resource Center:** If you believe you have a disability, please contact the Academic Resource Center (Leavey Center, Suite 335; 202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm) before the start of classes to allow their office time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) offers an array of academic support services, including study skills workshops, individual consultations and tutoring. If a student is experiencing challenges with their coursework, they are encouraged to consult with an ARC administrator who will be able to address their individual needs and outline a plan of action. The contact information for the SCS ARC is: C129; 202.687.8354; arc@georgetown.edu; http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu. The main campus ARC’s contact information is: Leavey Center, Suite 335; 202---687---8354; arc@georgetown.edu; http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm.

**Georgetown University Writing Center:** If it becomes relevant, contact the Writing Center for support in preparing your written assignments. The SCS Writing Center is located in SCS Student Services Suite C106. Students can make appointments at writingcenter.georgetown.edu. The main campus Writing Center staff is located in Lauinger Library, 217A or at 202-687-4246 or http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/.

**Additional University Resources**

- Counseling and Psychiatric Services
  202-687-6985
  http://caps.georgetown.edu/

- Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA)
  (202) 687-4798
  https://ideaa.georgetown.edu/

**Required reading:**

ISBN: 978-0321811981 I $22.03

ISBN: 978-1940858104 I $18.28

ISBN: 978-1929774449I $17.63

ISBN: 978-0978577629I $7.95
Books used for additional insights (students are not required to purchase these books, however each is highly recommended by the instructor for them to include on their professional book shelf at some point in the future):
- *Slideology* by Nancy Duarte
- *What Every Body Is Saying* by Joe Navarro
- *The Art of Explanation* by Lee Lefever
- *Back of the Napkin* by Dan Roam
- *Talk Like TED* by Carmine Gallo
- *Tell To Win* by Peter Guber
- *Resonate* by Nancy Duarte
- *The Charisma Myth* by Olivia Fox Cabane

**Grading:**
I will grade presentations on four factors: Preparation, Simplicity, Delivery, Persuasiveness

These categories measure the way you organize, explain, perform, and move people with your content. Feedback from peers is an integral part the class participation grade – your involvement in giving *useful* feedback when you are not presenting is important for your classmates. For the presenter, the more engaged the class is in your presentations, the stronger your score will be. In addition, students will be able to earn bonus points on a weekly basis for engagement, best delivery, and other elements to be determined and shared by the instructor throughout the course. Finally, students will receive a score based on their ongoing progression and improvement from the start of the course to the end.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation &amp; Attitude:</th>
<th>60 points (engaged in the discussion, feedback, positive attitude)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five single presentations:</td>
<td>240 points (preparation, simplicity, delivery, persuasiveness)</td>
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<td>One team presentation:</td>
<td>60 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progression &amp; Improvement:</td>
<td>40 points</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>400 points</strong></td>
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Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, and F. **There are no grades of C+, C-, or D.** The numeric breakdown for final grades in the course are as follows:

|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|

**Single presentation grading (48 possible points on each of five presentations):**

- **Simplicity (1-12 points)**
  - Was the class able to walk away with a simple message?
  - Did you wander, or stick with a simple, memorable theme?
  - Were the visuals you used aligned with your message?
  - Did the story flow make sense and offer a logical progression?

- **Delivery (1-12 points)**
  - Did you have an engaging presence?
  - How well did you command the room?
  - Were people paying attention?
  - How was your posture and body movement?
  - Did you make good eye contact?
  - Did you tell a good story?
  - How well did your initial hook capture attention?
o Preparation (1-12 points)
  ▪ Did you seem to know the material backwards and forwards?
  ▪ How did you handle Q&A from the class?
  ▪ Did your presentation end at or before the time limit?
  ▪ How effectively did you proactively handle barriers or obstacles?
  ▪ Were you informed about the room and environment?
  ▪ Did you understand your audience effectively enough?
  ▪ How effective were you in using pauses and eliminating “verbal graffiti?”

o Persuasiveness (1-12 points)
  ▪ Did the audience buy what you were selling?
  ▪ How passionate did you feel about the points you were making?
  ▪ Did you establish enough rapport or likeability with the audience?
  ▪ Was your argument supported by relevant data/proof?
  ▪ Did you make it personal to the audience?
  ▪ Was there a clear summary or call to action?

Team presentation grading (60 possible points on presentation):
  o Simplicity (1-12 points)
  o Delivery (1-12 points)
  o Preparation (1-12 points)
  o Persuasiveness (1-12 points)
  o Teamwork (1-12 points)
    ▪ Did the team work well together? (handoffs, interactions, interruptions)
    ▪ Did ALL team members seem to know ALL the material?
    ▪ Were each team member's talents and skills applied well to the presentation?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class Activities</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1:</td>
<td><strong>CONFIDENCE &amp; PRESENCE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Survey Results:</strong> What You Want</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Talk:</strong> “The Worst Opening Sentence Ever”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Lesson:</strong> “How To Introduce Yourself”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ “Being Miss Congeniality” (personal)</td>
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<td>✓ 3 things you want others to think</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Workshop:</strong> 3 Post-It Exercise – The Non-Obvious Method To Introduce Yourself</td>
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<td>• <strong>Class Overview:</strong> What are we going to learn?</td>
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<td>✓ Expectations and grading philosophy</td>
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<td>✓ Why you shouldn’t call me</td>
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<td>✓ Techniques and “rules”</td>
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<td>✓ Why “non-obvious?”</td>
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<td>• <strong>Lesson:</strong> “Owning Your Confidence”</td>
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<td>✓ Warm up techniques and power poses</td>
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<td>✓ Breathing and pausing exercises</td>
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<td>✓ Bookending methods</td>
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<td>• <strong>Assignment:</strong> Take the Fascination Advantage Assessment and review your results</td>
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<td>• <strong>Presentation 1 Assignment:</strong> Non-Obvious Knowledge – create a five minute presentation (no visuals) on something unexpected that you know about.</td>
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<td>• <strong>Reading (for Confidence &amp; Presence):</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Presentation Zen, pp 31-73</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ The Exceptional Presenter, pp 54-128</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ The Charisma Myth, HANDOUT</td>
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<td>✓ How The World Sees You, HANDOUT</td>
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<td>Week 2:</td>
<td><strong>CONFIDENCE &amp; PRESENCE WORKSHOP</strong></td>
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<td>• <strong>Presentation 1:</strong> Non-Obvious Knowledge</td>
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<td>• Class reviews and feedback of Presentation 1</td>
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<td>• <strong>Preview of next week</strong></td>
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<td>Week 3:</td>
<td><strong>SIMPLICITY</strong></td>
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<td>• <strong>Grade Feedback on Presentation 1</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Lesson:</strong> How To Simplify Your Message</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ The Art of Simplification</td>
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<td>✓ The Pixar Method</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Visualizing Ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ John Maeda Simplicity</td>
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<td>✓ Reducing Book Simplicity</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Presentation 1</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Reading (for Simplicity):</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Presentation Zen, pp 103-117</td>
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<td>✓ Non-Obvious, pp 1-33</td>
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<td>✓ Likeonomics, HANDOUT</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Keys To Pixar Story</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Week 4: | **SIMPULCITY WORKSHOP** | • **Post-It Method For Simplification**  
  - Presentation 2 Assignment: Choose a single word and a story to illustrate why that word matters that you will tell to the class in five minutes or less | **HANDOUT**  
  - The Exceptional Presenter, pp 1-29 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 5: | **STORYTELLING STRUCTURE** | • **Presentation 2: The One Word Talk**  
  - Class reviews and feedback of Presentation 2  
  - **Preview of next week** | **Presentation 2** |
| Week 6: | **STORYTELLING STRUCTURE WORKSHOP** | • **Grade Feedback on Presentation 2**  
  - **Lesson:** The Art of Preparation - How To Craft A Non-Obvious Story  
  - Openings & The Hook  
  - Using Resonance For Contrast  
  - Post-It Notes & Storyboarding  
  - 5 Non-Obvious Curation Habits  
  - The Seven Minute Presentation Method  
  - **Presentation 3 Assignment:** Create a 7 minute presentation on solving a big problem to share with the class (pick one of four problem options – can be delivered with or without visuals) | **Reading (for Storytelling Structure):**  
  - Presentation Zen, pp 118-163  
  - 15 Minutes Including Q&A, pp 1-39  
  - Resonance, **HANDOUT**  
  - Tell To Win, **HANDOUT**  
  - The Exceptional Presenter, pp 31-52 |
| Week 7: | **VISUALS, DESIGN & THEATER** | • **Presentation 3: Solving A Problem**  
  - Class reviews and feedback of Presentation 3  
  - **Preview of next week** | **Presentation 3** |
| | | • **Grade Feedback on Presentation 3**  
  - **Lesson:** Visual Design  
  - Slide design principles  
  - 10/20/30 Rule of Powerpoint  
  - How to find great images  
  - Implementing storyflow into slides  
  - Creating amazing visuals  
  - Brand and slide consistency  
  - Non-powerpoint visual aids  
  - Gear and tools  
  - Room setup and logistics  
  - Working with event planners + speaking bureaus  
  - **Presentation 4 Assignment:** Create a five minute keynote TEDTalk style visual presentation on a topic of your choice with a clear message and compelling argument for someone to believe in | **Reading (for Visuals, Design & Theater):**  
  - Presentation Zen, pp 118-163  
  - 15 Minutes Including Q&A, pp 78-104  
  - Slideology, **HANDOUT**  
  - Back of the Napkin, **HANDOUT**  
  - Talk Like TED, **HANDOUT**  
  - Michael Port, **HANDOUT** |
| Week 8: | • **Presentation 4: Visual Presentation** | **Presentation 4** |
| VISUALS, DESIGN & THEATER WORKSHOP | • Class reviews and feedback of Presentation 4  
  • *Preview of next week* |  |
|---|---|---|
| **Week 9:** PERSUASION & INFLUENCE | • **Grade Feedback on Presentation 4**  
  • **Lesson:** How To Create A Presentation That Persuades and Influences  
    ✓ Reading a brief and getting to what really matters  
    ✓ How to think different about ideas and come up with new solutions  
  • **Presentation 5 Assignment:** All students will get the same brief for content from which they will create a compelling pitch and argument for themselves to stand out from others. | Reading (for Persuasion & Influence):  
  ✓ 15 Minutes Including Q&A, pp 60-75  
  ✓ The Exceptional Presenter, pp 54-128  
  ✓ The Exceptional Presenter, pp 135-147  
  ✓ To Sell Is Human, HANDOUT  
  ✓ Tina Fey Stand Up Principles HANDOUT |
| **Week 10:** PERSUASION & INFLUENCE WORKSHOP | • **Presentation 5:** Influence & Standing Out  
  • Class reviews and feedback of Presentation 5  
  • *Preview of next week* | Presentation 5 |
| **Week 11:** COLLABORATION | • **Grade Feedback on Presentation 5**  
  • **Lesson:** Presenting In Teams  
    ✓ List of materials TBD  
  • **Final Team Presentation Assignment:** Class will be put into teams for a final presentation. Teams choose the subject. Team assignments given out (random) – class meets for 30m to brainstorm subjects for final presentation | Reading (for Collaboration & Presenting In Teams):  
  ✓ TBD  
  ✓ TBD |
| **Week 12:** COLLABORATION WORKSHOP | • **Team Presentations**  
  • Class reviews and feedback of Team Presentations  
  • **Final Class Recap Thoughts** | Team Presentation |