

PSPK-105-01/TPST 121-01
THE ART OF COMMUNICATION AND PRESENTATION
Summer 2020

M/T/W/R 12:00-2:00 PM
Davis Center for Performing Arts 036
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“Your only job is to have something to say and to say it authentically in your own unique way.”

Chris Anderson, Head of TED Talks

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the fundamental practice and theory of public speaking and oral communication using theatrical techniques of both performance and the craft of storytelling. Students will investigate communication through the lens of the performer and apply performance techniques to enhance communication and presentation skills. The class will explore how to speak authentically to a group of people, use body language to express ideas, develop a more dynamic vocal presence, and engage more deeply with an audience. This class focuses particularly on how *presence* can be utilized to awaken powerful, persuasive and connected communication. Some of the performance techniques used in class include skills and exercises for voice, breath, body awareness, listening, relaxation, collaboration and improvisation. Emphasis will also be given to ways in which a performer uses language and text analysis to convey complex thoughts and emotions to an audience. Approaches to communication will be practiced in one-on-one conversations, small group work and speaking to large groups of people. Class topics will increase awareness of artful communication in daily social engagement, individual presentations, business practices, leadership roles and global citizenship.

Course Objectives:

Over the course of the semester students will learn to:

- Use performance skills to increase one’s presence with an audience
- Develop awareness of one’s own communication style
- Express complex ideas in vivid and engaging ways
- Demonstrate an ability to create and collaborate with groups of people
- Employ mindful and ethical communication practices
- Demonstrate an ability to communicate interpersonally and interculturally with others in conversation, interview, and group discussion contexts
- Demonstrate skills in effective planning, preparing, and presenting
- Understand the structure of storytelling and how to apply this to communicate more effectively

DAILY CLASS STRUCTURE:

This will be an active class. Students should come to class wearing clothes they can comfortably move in, as we will often engage in physical, vocal, and ensemble based exercises. It will also be an analytical class, so students should come prepared to take hand-written notes. Students will be expected to participate fully in any number of exercises, games, discussions, writings and explorations every class period. Come prepared to move and ready to play!

REQUIRED TEXTS:

TED TALKS: The Official Guide to Public Speaking by: Chris Anderson

LEADERSHIP PRESENCE: Dramatic Techniques to Reach Out, Motivate, and Inspire by: Belle Linda Halpern and Kathy Lubar

Other assigned weekly readings will be provided throughout the semester.

Course Expectations and Requirements:

PARTICIPATION: Students are expected to attend classes regularly and be on time. Classes will start precisely on time, so students should come early in order to be ready to start. Students are expected to come having read assigned readings and/or having done assigned tasks. Students are expected to fully engage in class conversations: asking questions and sharing thoughts and feelings. Students are expected to participate in all exercises and games with full concentration and intent. Failure to do any of these things on a consistent basis will lower your participation grade. If you arrive late or leave early to class this will lower your participation grade.

DISCUSSION BOARD: Throughout the semester you will be required to maintain a journal on Discussion Board charting your observations on communication topics and responses to readings. You will be required to write a response connected to each class (250 word minimum/2 entries a week) starting with the very first day of class. Each class has a journal entry prompt listed in the course calendar. Students may also include observations from that day's class or outside observations connected to their growth and understanding of the art of communication.

Each journal entry on Discussion Board should include at least 1 quote from that week's reading.

PRESENTATION PROJECTS: Throughout the course, you will have to present a number of presentation projects. Each individual student will create some of the projects whereas groups in collaboration will generate others. Some of the projects will require extensive preparation outside of class whereas other projects will be created in the moment. As each project is different and some are developed in class, they will be further explained as the semester progresses, as will the grading procedures for each. The following are a few brief examples of some of the projects for the course:

Object Presentation Choose one object that has deep personal meaning/significance to you to share with the class. Present why this object has meaning for you and why you choose this particular object. (This should be an actual physical object and not simply an image on your phone.)

Storytelling Presentation *If you could tell only one story what would it be?* Tell a story to the class. This could be a personal narrative of a significant experience or moment in your life, but should be a story you feel is personally meaningful.

Memorized Monologue: You will have to memorize and deliver a Shakespearean monologue for the class. You will not be graded on acting skills *per se*, but rather the memorization skills employed and the physical and vocal choices demonstrated in the delivery.

Class Debate: The class will divide into two groups and will take opposing sides on a complex ethical issue. A formal moderated debate, supported by class lectures and outside research, will ensue.

Written Tribute Speech: Each student will write a speech of tribute praising another person and deliver it for class, as well as hand in a hardcopy to the professor.

Cultural Interview: Each student will arrange an interview outside of class with someone from a culture different from their own and talk to them in person regarding their relationship to language and culture.

Job Interview: Each student will role-play job applicants with the professor in the role of potential employers.

These are only a few examples of the projects students will perform. Other projects and further details will be revealed as the semester progresses. Most presentation projects will be graded separately and have a point total and some in class presentations/exercises that will not be given a point value, but go towards your overall participation grade.

Class presentations will be filmed and videos will be used as a way for each student to evaluate personal growth over the semester.

FINAL PROJECT: Building on the other project presentations and the skills learned throughout the semester, each student will have to create one final presentation for the class. The final project will essentially be an individually lead presentation, where each student is required to teach a specific subject and topic of their choosing, pending professorial approval. You will develop a topic from another academic discipline, preferably from your major or from another course you have taken or are currently taking. You will be required to use multimedia in this final project. Students will be graded not just on the material presented, but also on *how* it is presented: how you employ the voice and the body, how you prepared for the presentation, the style and media selected for the presentation, etc. Further details of the final project will be discussed as the semester progresses.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

Personal Communication Goals: Identify 3 goals you hope to accomplish by the end of the semester. These goals might be about vocal articulation, developing your presence in front of an audience, word choice, preparation, posture, developing your voice, gesture, speech organization, overcoming fear, communicating authentically, etc. Identify areas of communication that feel important to you. For each goal write a few sentences that detail what achieving your goals look like.

Midterm Analysis: A 2-page self-assessment of your progress with your communication goals set at the beginning of the semester and where you would still like to develop further in the course. Use recorded video of at least 1 presentation as evidence in your assessment.

Annotated Bibliography: Students will identify 5 primary or secondary sources on the selected social issue of the debate and write a paragraph summarizing each source. These summaries must include what the article’s argument is, and what the main evidence used to support it is. One source may be a website or blog, but the remaining 4 must be from academic journals, newspapers, archival materials, essays and books.

Topic Selection for Final Project: Students will identify 3 potential topics they would be interested in developing for the final project. Each student will set up at least one meeting outside of class with the professor to discuss your topic and outline of final project.

Portfolio Review: A 3-4 page self-evaluation on the student’s journey in the course and how well each student achieved the goals they set for themselves throughout the semester. This should include successes, areas for improvement, and plans moving forward. Use recorded videos of at least 3 presentations as evidence in your assessment.

GRADING:

The following is a general guideline for how your grade will be determined. It is not an exact science. Poor attendance will badly hurt your grade, whereas a positive attitude and demonstrated improvement and commitment throughout the course will strengthen your grade.

Presentations	25%
Participation	25%
Journal	10%
Written Assignments	10%
Final Project	15%
Portfolio Review	15%
TOTAL	100%

A Students participate fully and openly in all warm ups and exercises. They make significant and impactful contributions to class discussions and group work making strong connections to course readings. They set strong personal communication goals at the beginning of the semester and diligently pursue them throughout the course. They work to improve personal communication & presentation skills, as well as, support others in the course to contribute to an overall positive classroom environment. They complete all work on time with intellectual rigor and creativity, while taking risks to continually push themselves.

B Students participate fully and openly in all warm ups and exercises. They contribute original ideas to class discussion and group work, but with less frequency and nuance than “A” students. They complete all work carefully but may not offer as deep insight, creative innovation, reference to course readings, or mastery of material as an “A” student.

C Students participate in warm ups and exercises, but are sometimes distracted or not fully committed. They occasionally participate in class discussion and group work, but fail to make connection to course readings. They complete the majority of the assigned work and meet the stated requirements of the assignments.

D Students attend class infrequently and participate minimally in class discussion and group assignments. They meet the bare minimum on assigned work and/or group work.

F Students do not show up to class consistently and do not complete assignments.

Some behaviors that will adversely affect this component of your grade:

- Being unprepared
- Not listening
- Not taking notes
- Text messaging/checking e-mail, etc. in class

Grading Scale: A(93-100); A-(90-92); B+(87-89); B(83-86); B-(80-82); C+(77-79); C(73-76) C-(70-72); D+(67-69); D(63-66); D-(60-62); F(0-59)

Policies:

1. Each presentation and assignment is due on the date and time stated on the syllabus. A presentation may be made up based on professorial approval. If a makeup presentation is granted the grade will be lowered one letter grade for each class day late. Also, it may need to be scheduled outside of class. For each day an assignment is handed in late, beginning the day following the due date, the grade will go down 1/3 of a letter grade. (Original grade: A. Late Day 1: A-, Day 2: B+, Day 3: B, etc.) Days counted towards a late grade include all days of the school week and weekends.

2. After TWO absences, you risk failing the course. Attendance is mandatory. If you miss a class be sure to email your professor BEFORE that class to let me know you will not be in attendance. This course is The Art of Communication and being in communication throughout the semester will be taken into consideration in your final participation grade. Moreover, you are expected to come prepared to participate in the class discussion. Your active participation is essential to the success of this class. Being late three times constitutes one absence. However, if you arrive more than fifteen minutes late you will be automatically considered absent.
3. **Religious Observances:** I realize that some students may wish to take part in religious observances that fall during this academic term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please come speak with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.
4. **Cellular Phones, Food, and Laptops:** Please do not bring food to class, and please remember to turn off cell phones or other electronic devices. As this is a communication course the use of all electronic devices should be kept to a minimum.
5. **Student Disability Resource Center:** Georgetown University complies with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and offers accommodations to students with disabilities. [Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center \(Leavey Center, Suite 335; 202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; 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.](#)
6. **Academic Honor Principle:** All students are bound by the Georgetown University Honor Code (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/resources-current-students/academic-resources/honor-code/>) **Honor policy violation sanctions may range from a student failing the specific assignment to the student failing the entire course. In more severe cases an already conferred degree may be revoked, or a student may be expelled from the program.**