"We do not know the world immediately; rather, we compose our knowledge by composing language. How we can act depends on what we know, hence on the language with which we make sense of the world. Serious experimenting in composing with words is experimenting in knowing in new ways, perhaps better ways."

Kenneth Dowst

This course offers a comprehensive look at speech writing via model speeches and practical application. We will examine and utilize rhetorical theories, which support speech writing. The course is designed so that students will be writing speeches primarily for individuals and organizations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Understand the speech writing process and apply the appropriate speech writing elements, including but not limited to: thorough audience analysis, clear organizational strategy, appropriate language use, strong supporting materials, and comprehensive use of rhetorical proofs.

2. Write and edit a series of speeches toward demonstration of comprehension and mastery of speech writing.

3. Create a portfolio of speeches you can use to market yourself as a communication professional.

4. Have a little fun.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

This is an advanced level writing class. As such, we will spend the early part of the semester exploring the writing process. Students are expected to be prepared for each class and to participate fully in the discussion of the material. We will be evaluating written and videotaped speeches throughout the semester as they are pertinent to the assigned topics. Students will be writing speeches to be read in class (note: this is not a public speaking class, so delivery will not be of great issue). Someone other than the writer will usually read these speeches. This class demands substantial amounts of outside research and high level writing skills. Consequently you should plan on a great amount of research, writing and revising. I have tried to balance this by correspondingly reducing the amount of assigned readings. You should plan to visit the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning prior to turning in any assignment. See the grading matrix for an explanation of assignment expectations.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Since speeches are usually meant to be delivered to an audience, and because we will be editing in class, students are expected to attend class. This is the only way we can foster the learning process. Additionally, I hope to have guest speaker(s) depending upon availability. If you know you are going to miss, please contact me in advance. If an emergency arises and you need to be absent, please contact the Undergraduate Dean and me as well. I reserve the right to lower a student's grade by a full letter grade if more than three absences occur. More than two absences in the first two weeks of class will result in being dropped from the course.

REQUIRED READING:


WEBCT materials as assigned.

Additional materials distributed throughout the semester.
ASSIGNMENTS / EVALUATION POLICY:

- Introduction ---
- Informative Speech: 15%
- Campaign Speech: 15%
- Motivational/Persuasive Speech: 15%
- Policy Speech: 20%
- Epideictic/Ceremonial Speech: 10%
- Peer Editing: 10%
- Speech Evaluation: 5%
- Attendance and Participation: 10%

Grading Scale:

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Speeches are due on the date assigned; late speeches are not acceptable. No extra credit. No make up assignments.

Students are expected to be familiar with College of Charleston Student Handbook policies and procedures. Any speech I suspect of having been plagiarized (in any amount) will be turned over to the College Honors Board. If the Honors Board finds you in violation you will receive a zero for the assignment and an XF for the final grade. If you are unclear, consult me.

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make such accommodations as may be necessary.

Electronics: Please turn off beepers, pagers, cell phones, etc., before entering class. You should only use the lab computers when assigned to do so. Other in class use is distracting. I will ask you once to stop. A second request will be followed with dismissal.

Professor reserves the right to amend the syllabus at any point during the semester.
SPEECH DESCRIPTIONS:

The informative, persuasive and policy speeches will utilize the National Issues Forums guides for topic selection.

The Informative Speech.
- Speaker: Classmate. _________________________________
- Writer: You
- Topic: _________________________________
- Peer Editor: _________________________________
- Time: Five Minutes.
- Audience: Your Class
- Evaluation: clear purpose statement, coherent organizational strategy, thorough audience adaptation, compelling intro and conclusion, and achieving desired goal. I will also evaluate based upon language use and supporting materials. Include all of your research notes and works cited.

Rewrites will be graded for justifiable changes and improvements.

Topics: (topical, process, history) discussion to follow

It cannot be persuasive or evocative. You are not campaigning or advocating. (Understanding that just about all good communication is inherently persuasive and evocative...)

Clear the topic with me.

The Persuasive Speech:
- Speaker: Classmate _________________________________
- Audience: To Be Determined
- Writer: You
- Topic: _________________________________
- Peer Editor: _________________________________
- Time: Five To Seven Minutes
- Evaluation: all of the above, plus: how effectively you accomplish your motivational or persuasive objectives as well as comprehensive application of rhetorical proofs. Specifically isolate these objectives in your message strategy column. Include all of your research notes and works cited.

Topics: (to be determined) These speeches are NOT going to try to persuade your audience to do anything. You want us to believe that something is good or bad, right or wrong, etc. Stop short of convincing us to do anything about this problem. (Yes, there is a reason why we do this!)

Clear topic and purpose statement with me first.

The Campaign Speech:
- Speaker: A Real Politician You Select.
- Writers: You And A Classmate. _________________________________
- Time: Five To Seven Minutes.
- Audience: Your Class
- Evaluation: as above and: ability to persuade your audience, good use of elements of language and style. Include all of your research notes and works cited.

Topics: There are a plethora of political candidates out there waiting for your eloquent turn of phrase to catapult them into their sought after career. Find someone, interview him or her, or if that is impossible do a lot of research, and write a short campaign speech. The goal is to get us to vote for your candidate. Disregard voting boundaries, etc.

Note: this is a team speech. So you will need to cooperate, research, and write together. We will talk more about team writing later. I don't advocate both parties doing the actual writing. Your speech must have one voice - that of the speaker. Turn in all research as well as a brief paragraph about "team" writing. You may use candidate web sites - but be certain you are not using their speeches. You will assist in evaluating your partner for his/her grade.

Clear political candidate with me first.

The Policy Speech:
Topic: You will be writing a speech of advocacy, which will be persuasive in intent about a contemporary legislative or policy issue based upon topics.

The Epideictic/Ceremonial Speech:
- Speaker: You
- Audience: To Be Determined
- Peer Editor: _________________________________
- Time: Ten Minutes
- Writer: You
- Evaluation: all of above and: fluency of message, style, supporting materials, structure, and overall "effect." Include all of your research notes and works cited.

Topics: there are a number of epideictic speeches from which you can choose: commencement, eulogy, farewell, memorial, keynote, sermon, dedication, etc. (you are not limited to these.)

Type of speech and topic to be approved with me prior to writing.

General Speech Assignment Notes:

All topics are to be approved by the instructor prior to writing

Your written speeches will include the following:

- A typed analysis of the speaker and the speaker's goals
- A typed audience analysis
- Text of the speech: typed and double-spaced
- Works cited
- Message strategy notes for Persuasive, Policy, and Epideictic speeches only: these are notes on the right hand column of the speech text in which you provide a running commentary about your strategies in the speech; why you chose certain organizational strategies; where and how you related to the audience; identification of thesis statement, connectives, intro and conclusion; explanation of word choice; supporting materials; and when appropriate, noting persuasive devices, and appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos.

Speech Evaluation:
You are to attend, listen to via audiotape or view via videotape, DVD, YouTube (I prefer you view a live event) one speech during the semester. Your typed evaluation of the speech will include the following:

I. General details, time, place, date, speaker bio, audience, etc.,
II. An outline of the speech,
III. Use of language, style, proofs, etc.,
IV. Whether or not you believe the speaker appealed to his/her audience appropriately and thoroughly (why or why not),
V. Your determination of the speaker's goals and strategies,
VI. An overall assessment of the success or failure of the speech,
VII. Finally, you are to provide brief suggestions as to how the speaker might have improved upon the speech.

This assignment requires you to make critical observations based upon lecture material as well as outside research. This is NOT simply your opinion. You must support your remarks with research citations. So this means that you'll have to include a bibliography Write this as if you were a professional speechwriter or a paid speech commentator.

Peer Editing:
Revising is one the most important tasks for any writer or speechwriter. Hence, we will be working with each other to revise all speeches. You will be assigned a partner for each speech. You and your partner will utilize our WIKI to edit each other's work so as to produce the best product. Your classmates and I will determine your peer editing grade.