Speech Communication
Department of Communication
Baruch College
COM 1010 - BMWA
Spring 2026: Monday/Wednesday 9:05-10:20 EST
Room: NVC 9-140

Instructor: Casey Berner
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30-12:30 or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course provides training and practice in the preparation and delivery of original speeches, encourages the use of clear language, develops students' awareness of intellectual and ethical aspects of communication, and promotes critical thinking and academic research. This is a required for all undergraduate degrees granted by Baruch College. This course is designed to acquaint students with the theory and practice of basic speech communication skills. The focus of the course is on extemporaneous public speaking, with particular emphasis on the speaking situations and genres that students are likely to encounter. Along with formal speeches, the course incorporates other forms of oral and written communication throughout the semester.

Learning Outcomes

Students in this course learn to:

- Understand and use communication theories related to public speaking
- Appreciate the various ethical concerns involved when one develops and presents a public speech
- Research topics for speeches using traditional and new media methods and sources
- Determine situational and audience needs and constraints when developing and delivering speeches
- Organize and deliver speech presentations on informative and persuasive topics through preparation outlines and speaking outlines
- Understand how to design and use presentation aids
- Understand and produce constructive criticism of public speeches, including their classmates' speeches

Course Requirements, Assessment, and Grading:

The bulk of your grade will come from preparation and delivery of four major speeches. In addition, students will be evaluated on participation and on one written assignment, the analysis of a speech of your choice.

Required Texts

Meade, L. (2021). *Advanced Public Speaking*. University of Arkansas Open Resource, https://uark.pressbooks.pub/speaking/.

You are welcome to print the relevant chapters or to bring in a tablet, e-reader, or laptop. You may not use your cell phone to access readings in class; doing so will result in a lower participation grade.

Please also bring a notebook and pens/pencils to class, and have note cards ready for your major speeches.

Evaluation/Grade Breakdown

Demonstration speech	10%
Informative speech	20%
Persuasive speech	25%
Final speech	10%
[Major speeches total	**55%]**
Participation and warm-up	10%

Speech analysis paper	15%
Peer evaluations	20%

Major Speeches

Over the course of the semester, students will give **four** major speeches in class:

Demonstration speech (3 minutes)
Informative speech (5 minutes)
Persuasive speech (6-7 minutes)
Final speech (3 minutes)

Students are graded on both preparation materials and on delivery in class. To pass this course, you must present all four speeches. **Outlines, visual aids, and other preparatory materials are due on the first day of Speeches for all students, regardless of which day one actually presents**.

Participation and Warm-up

Students are expect to participate actively and respectfully in class discussions, activities, and exercises. As one indicator of active participation, each student will lead **one** warm-up each at the top of class over the course of the semester. You will sign up for your warm-up day during the first week of the semester. **Warm-ups cannot be made up unless under special circumstances.**

Speech Analysis Paper

Students will select one speech (of at least five minutes in length) to analyze in a 2-4 page paper. You may choose the speech that you want to analyze, but it must be approved. While the final paper will be due at the end of the semester, we will revisit these speeches throughout our work together.

Peer Evaluations

Over the course of the semester, you will work together in pairs or small groups to workshop each other's speeches before graded presentations. At these workshops, students will be tasked with evaluating each other's speeches in a clear, helpful, and respectful manner, modelled after the rubrics used for grading. Students will submit evidence of their peer evaluation process after each workshop.

Formatting Assignments

All written work should be typed and double-spaced in 12 pt. Times New Roman font and submitted as a Microsoft Word document with your last name and the assignment in the file name (e.g., Smith, John – COM1010 Speech Outline.docx) on Brightspace on the day listed in the course schedule. If you use an online word processor e.g., Google Docs, please send me a downloaded copy of your assignment (not a shared link).

All sources should be cited in either MLA or Chicago style. Refer to the Purdue Owl Online Writing Lab for guidance on these citation systems: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html.

Email Communication

Please check your email every day. Email will be our primary method of communication for this class.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Per Baruch College's statement on academic honesty, plagiarism is defined as, "… the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writing as your own." This includes, but is not limited to,

- Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes.
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging them.
- Using information that is not considered common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
- Failure to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.
- Purchase and submission of papers from 'paper mills,' internet vendor sites, and other sources.

The complete text of the Baruch Academic Honesty Policy can be found at https://provost.baruch.cuny.edu/academic-affairs/teaching-and-learning/academic_honesty. The first instance of plagiarism on any assignment will result in an F for that assignment. The second instance will result in an F for the course. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Text Generated by Artificial Intelligence

The use of generative AI and LLM tools such as ChatGPT is **strictly prohibited in this class**. Generative AI inhibits critical and creative thinking in ways that are antithetical to the goals of this course. Moreover, generative AI has a massive carbon footprint and water usage, trains by using stolen written and creative materials, and further devalues artists and creatives on the job market. Generative AI **should not be used** to create any materials in this class. Any unsanctioned and/or undisclosed use of AI will be treated as a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Accessibility and Student Aid

Please let me know about disability-related academic accommodations or resources you may require. We can schedule a time to discuss them in one-on-one zoom meeting. See the Baruch Student Affairs website for further information: https://studentaffairs.baruch.cuny.edu/student-disability-services.

Other Campus Resources

If you would like writing assistance, the Writing Center is a great resource on campus. Further information can be found here: https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/writingcenter.

Oral comprehensibility is essential for college and workplace success. If you are an English language learner and would like to improve your spoken English, please visit https://weissman.baruch.cuny.edu/weissman-academic-departments/communication-studies/resources/
for information about free services, including one-on-one tutorials, workshops, small-group conversations, video assessment, the Conversation Partners Program, and accent reduction/FAQs. To make an appointment with one of the professional speech tutors at Tools for Clear Speech, please visit https://tfcs.baruch.cuny.edu/what-is-tfcs/

COURSE SCHEDULE

All assignments due before class starts on date; syllabus subject to change

Week 1

Monday, Jan. 26

- Introductions and syllabus review

Wednesday, Jan. 28

- Introduction, "Making the World a Better Place One Speech at a Time"
- Chapter 5, "Public Speaking – So What, Who Cares?"

Week 2

Monday, Feb. 2

- Chapter 2, "Rhetorical History: Interview with Two Old Dead Greek Guys"
- Chapter 6, "Engage Your Audience: Don't Spit Random Words at Generic People"

Wednesday, Feb. 4

- Chapter 12, "Organizing a Speech and Harnessing the Power of Three"
- Chapter 8, "Opening a Speech: Get Their Attention from the Start!"
- **Due by midnight: Submit speech analysis options to Brightspace**

Week 3

Monday, Feb. 9

- Demonstration Speech rehearsal and workshopping
- Chapter 11, "Giving and Receiving Feedback: It is Harder Than You Think"

Wednesday, Feb. 11

- Chapter 29, "Overcome Communication Apprehension by Hacking Your Brain"
- Chapter 30, "Overcome Communication Apprehension by Hacking Your Body"

Week 4

Monday, Feb. 16

- **No class**

Wednesday, Feb. 18

- **Demonstration Speeches Day 1**

Week 5

Monday, Feb. 23

SNOW DAY

Wednesday, Feb. 25

- **Demonstration Speeches Day 2**

Week 6:

Monday, Mar. 2

- Chapter 7, "Brainstorming: Moving the Cheese Out of the Way So You Can Find Your Best Ideas"
- Chapter 19, "Informative Speech"

Wednesday, Mar. 4

- Chapter 14, "Research: Finding and Citing Your Research"
- Bring in 2-3 **printed** research sources (academic articles, chapters from books, newspaper articles)

Week 7

Monday, Mar. 9

- Chapter 9, "Closing a Speech: End with Power and Let Them Know It is Time to Clap"
- Chapter 33, "Why Your Voice Is the Most Important Part of Your Speech"

Wednesday, Mar. 11

- Chapter 1, "Things That Do Not Belong In Your Speech: Curse Words, ISTS, Slang, and Bafflegab"

Week 8

Monday, Mar. 16

- Informative Speech workshop

Wednesday, Mar. 18

- **Informative Speeches day #1**

Week 9

Monday, Mar. 23

- **Informative Speeches day #2**

Wednesday, Mar. 25

- Chapter 4, "The Science of Persuasion: A Little Theory Goes a Long Way"

Week 10

Monday, Mar. 30

- Chapter 19, "Persuasive Speechmaking: Pitching Your Idea and Making it Stick"

Wednesday, Apr. 1

- **No class – Spring Break!**

Week 11

- **No class – Spring Break!**

Week 12

Monday, Apr. 13

- Chapter 38, "Don't Ruin a Great Presentation with Terrible Slides"
- Chapter 39, "Data Visualization: Using Statistics, Numbers, and Charts without Boring Your Audience"

Wednesday, Apr. 15

- Chapter 10, "The Power of Story: The Secret Ingredient to Making Any Speech Memorable"
- Chapter 16, "Professional Speechwriting: Using Colorful Language in Your Speech"

Week 13

Monday, Apr. 20

- Chapter 17, "Professional Speechwriting: Metaphor, Simile, and Theme"
- Professional Speechwriting: Vivid and Sensory Words Make Your Speech Come Alive"

Wednesday, Apr. 22

- Persuasive Speeches workshop

Week 13

Monday, Apr. 27

- **Persuasive Speeches day #1**

Wednesday, Apr. 29

- **Persuasive Speeches day #2**

Week 14

Monday, May 4

- Choose **one** of the following chapters to read:
    - Chapter 22
    - Chapter 23
    - Chapter 24
    - Chapter 25
    - Chapter 27
- Chapter 35, "Delivery Methods- Which One Should I Use?"

Wednesday, May 6

- **Final Speech Analysis Paper Due**

Week 15

Monday, May 11

- Workshop Final Speech in class

Wednesday, May 13

- **Final speeches due**