



COM 110: Public Speaking (Section I)

Use syllabus in conjunction with course schedule & Sakai site



Instructor:	Dr. Rowena Rowie Kirby-Straker (Dr. Rowie)
Class location & time:	Room 118, Carswell Hall, 12:30 – 1:45 pm (MW)
E-mail:	kirbysrr@wfu.edu (best means of contact)
Office:	Carswell Hall, Room 123
Office Hours:	Fri. 10:30 am – 1:30 pm; and by appointment (check Sakai for more hours)
Speaking Ctr.:	Carswell 129 (Use Sakai's SIGN-UP tab to book an appointment)
Phone:	336-758-5405 (for emergencies only)

COM 110 CAN GIVE YOU AN ADVANTAGE

Surveys continually show that oral communication competence is one of the top skills sought by employers when recruiting college graduates. For example, the [2016 job outlook survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers \(NACE\)](#) ranked oral communication fifth in a list of the top 20 attributes sought by employers, after leadership, team-working ability, written communication skills, and problem-solving skills. Additionally, [a 2015 study by Burning Glass Technologies, which analyzed 25 million job postings](#), revealed that communication skills were the most sought baseline skills in several career fields.

“The most important thing I learned in school was how to communicate....You can have brilliant ideas but if you can't get them across, your brains won't get you anywhere.” – Lee Iacocca

BACKGROUND & COURSE OVERVIEW

The course is designed to help you become a better speaker *and* listener, and to enhance other important skills (e.g., confidence in speaking, being able to make strong arguments) that can support your personal, academic, civic, and professional goals.

In this course, you will learn best practices in planning, structuring, and delivering public presentations by preparing speeches designed for community audiences. The broad topic for the semester is *Sustainability at Wake Forest University*.

In class, you will deliver four speeches on your own: two major speeches (informative and persuasive) and two minor ones ('Walk-up' song speech and narrative speech). The two major speeches will be on a narrowed topic that is based on the broad topic *Sustainability at Wake Forest University*. You will work with a group to determine the narrowed topic. At the end of the semester, you will work with that same group to deliver a joint speech for members of the Wake and Winston-Salem communities. This joint speech will be a compilation of excerpts from the informative, narrative, and persuasive speeches. The final exam will be a reflection paper that compares both types of speaking experiences (classroom versus community audience).

Students who want to excel in this course should prepare for and attend all class sessions, stay on top of readings and assignments, keep an open line of communication with the instructor, and make use of office hours. See the last page of this syllabus for more success tips.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Confidently deliver a speech to a diverse community audience.
2. Explain the central idea and supporting material in a speech using clear, concise, relevant, and culturally sensitive language.
3. Competently conduct research on a topic using academic library resources, and be able to discriminate between credible and non-credible sources, as well as properly cite sources in verbal and written communication.
4. Listen actively and critically to audience members at different stages in the speech-making process (before, during, after), through verbal and non-verbal audience analysis
5. Explain the importance of communication ethics as it relates to speeches given to community audiences
6. Articulate arguments supporting solutions to a community-related problem.
7. Use oral and visual communication skills strategically in public-speaking, interpersonal, group interaction, and interview settings.
8. Explain how audience beliefs, values, perceptions, and attitudes influence response.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Rothwell, J. D. (2017). *Practically Speaking (2nd ed.)* Oxford University Press
- 3-ring binder for course handouts, speech outlines, written assignments, etc.
- 2 packs of index cards (4" x 6" or 5" x 8" recommended) – bring a few index cards to each class

GRADING

A	94-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	F	< 60%
A-	90-93%	B	84-86%	C	74-76%	D	64-66%		
		B-	80-83%	C-	70-73%	D-	60-63%		

NOTE BODLY:

1. The policy in this course is against the rounding of grades for individual assignments. Fractions of .8 and above will be rounded up on the final **course** grade, e.g., a 79.8 will be rounded to 80% but a 79.7 will not. For two or more decimal places, the conventional rounding will hold, e.g., a 79.74 will be considered a 79.7 but a 79.75 will be a considered a 79.8.
2. No assignment can be made up without an **official** excuse (see page 5). **Participation points cannot be made up** except in the case of a prolonged illness requiring more than three class absences, and excused with a signed doctor's note.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Please see the course schedule for due dates; and Sakai (*Assignments or Announcements*) for specific instructions and grading rubrics, which will be posted sequentially at the relevant time. **Total points = 500.**

I. Graded Oral Assignments (speeches):

- A. Walk-Up Song speech (1-2 min.) ----- 1% ---- [5 pts.]
- B. Informative speech (4-5 min.)----- 15% --- [75 pts.]
- C. Narrative speech (1-2 min.) ----- 1 % ---- [5 pts.]
- D. Persuasive speech (5-6 min.)----- 20%---- [100 pts.]
- E. Community speech (2-3 min. individual portion) ----- 10% --- [50 pts.]

II. Graded Written Assignments:

- A. Informative speech outline----- 8% ---- [40 pts.]
- B. Persuasive speech outline ----- 10%---- [50 pts.]
- C. Self-assessments----- 4% ---- [4 x 5 pts. = 20 pts.]
- D. Quizzes ----- 9% ---- [3 x 15 pts. = 45 pts.]
- E. Reflection (final exam)¹ ----- 4% ---- [20 pts.]

IV. Graded Participation:

- A. Sakai Blog (hybrid day online assignments) ----- 6% ---- [3 x 10 pts. = 30 pts.]
- B. Lecture participation ----- 7.2%--- [24 x 1.5 pts. = 36 pts.]
- C. Group work ----- 4% ---- [4 x 5 = 20 pts]
- D. Speaking center visit----- 0.8%--- [1 x 4 pts. = 4 pts]

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF ASSIGNMENTSSpeeches²*Walk-Up Song Speech (1-2 min.):*

Think of a song that inspires or motivates you. Share three reasons WHY the song motivates you.

Informative Speech (4-5 min.):

Share your knowledge and expertise about the approved community-related topic. Your goal is to enlighten the audience and raise awareness about an issue related to the broader community topic, *Sustainability at Wake Forest University*. You must work with a group to determine a narrowed topic on which to speak, and each member of the group will speak on a different aspect of that narrowed topic. You need to conduct research in the preparation phase, and you must cite at least five sources orally/verbally in your speech. Your attire factors into your grade for this speech.

Narrative Speech (1-2 min.):

Share a story/experience(s) related to your persuasive speech topic; the story/experience(s) can be yours or that of others. Think of this speech as the backstory behind your persuasive topic, or even as an extended attention-grabber to your persuasive speech. Use the opportunity to give the audience insight into your emotional attachment to the topic. This speech is not the occasion to present arguments supporting your position. Arguments will be presented in the persuasive speech itself.

¹ Reflection paper (final exam) details will be given at the appropriate time, close to the end of the semester.

² **NOTE BOLDLY:** You must present your speech on your assigned day.

Persuasive Speech (5 - 6 min.):

This speech allows you to blend your credibility (ethos) with logical arguments (logos) and emotional appeals (pathos) to convince a target audience to change their attitude and/or behavior about a **controversial** issue. Your topic must be approved by the instructor and must be related to the broader community topic, **Sustainability at Wake Forest University**. **In this speech, you must advocate for a specific solution to a problem related to the broader topic.** You will work with your group³ to determine a problem about which to speak, and each member of the group will advocate for a different solution to the problem⁴. You will need to conduct research in the preparation phase, and you must cite at least six highly credible sources orally/verbally in your speech. Your attire factors into your grade for this speech.

Community Speech (2 -3 min. for individual portion):

You will work with your group to deliver a joint speech (10-15 mins.) at the end of the semester to members of the Wake and Winston-Salem communities. This joint speech will be a compilation of excerpts from the informative, narrative, and persuasive speeches. The grade for this speech will be based on preparation and presentation factors at the group and individual level. You will need to work closely with your group to plan, outline, practice, and deliver a coherent presentation to a community audience, using content from your previous speeches.

Written Assignments*Informative/Persuasive Speech Outline:*

There are two types of outlines: a preparation outline, which is thorough and detailed, and a presentation outline consisting of key points. Before the first delivery day of your informative and persuasive speech, you must submit a **preparation** outline on Sakai. You are expected to get feedback on this outline from the instructor **before** it is due on Sakai. Outlines submitted after you deliver your speech will receive zero points. Your outline **must** include a bibliography. **NOTE BOLDY:** You should also seek feedback on your outlines for the ‘Walk-Up Song’ and Narrative speeches.

Self-Assessments:

After each speech, the instructor will share with you the video-recording of your speech, via google drive. Take note of what you did well and what can be improved, and identify specific strategies you will use to improve. Think also about how your self-assessment compares to the feedback given by your peers. Submit the self-assessment on Sakai in the required format by the deadline (see the course schedule). **Late self-assessments will receive zero points.** Note Boldly: Sakai will **not** allow uploads of late assignments.

Quizzes:

Closed-book, multiple-choice and/or short-answer questions based on textbook and lecture material, given at the beginning of class on designated days, and completed within the first 20 minutes of class. If you arrive late, you will **not** receive extra time. Class activities will continue immediately after the quizzes. Please check the course schedule for quiz dates and relevant textbook chapters. A study guide **may** be posted a few days before the quiz, but this is not a guarantee so stay up-to-date with your reading.

³ You will work with this same group all semester, for informative, persuasive, and community speeches.

⁴ Each solution advocated should be workable, practical, and desirable.

Personal Blog (on Sakai):

On hybrid days (**no** face-to-face class), you will be given an online assignment, which must be submitted through a Sakai blog posting by 5 pm on the hybrid day. **Late blog postings will receive zero points.** The assignment will be posted to Sakai by the start of regular class time on the hybrid day. You will also use your blog to record other activities including group work, speaking center visits, and in-class assignments. Please set your Sakai blog to the private setting, i.e., “Only site administrators and I can see this entry.”

Participation*Lecture Participation:*

You are expected to prepare for (e.g., reading ahead) and take part in all lecture classes, which will be conducted in an engaging workshop-style manner. Participation will be recorded for 24 face-to-face class sessions valued at 1.5 points per session: *0.5 = minimum effort* *1 = fair effort* *1.5 = good effort* Attendance will be taken; **be sure to sign in on your section’s sign-in sheet**, or you will be marked absent.

Participation means being fully engaged in all class activities, including discussion, peer feedback, impromptu speeches, etc. Class activities are designed to build speaking/listening skills, prepare you for oral presentations, and promote understanding of communication best practices. There will be brief reviews of textbook content but you are expected to stay on top of your reading to prepare for discussion and quizzes.

Participation points cannot be made up except in the case of a prolonged illness requiring more than three class absences, and excused with a signed doctor’s note. Participation points can be deducted for actions that impact the quality of teaching/learning, including interruptions and distractions to instructor or peers side-chatter, texting, and working on laptops without permission, walking in on a student’s speech, etc. **NOTE BOLDLY:** Except for a brief restroom break, late arrivals, early departures, and leaving the classroom at any point will result in point deductions, unless you provide an official excuse.

Group Work:

Effective group work is critical to your success in this course. You will need to work with teammates to find a narrowed topic for both the informative and persuasive speech, as well as to plan, deliver, and practice the community speech. Your group will be given limited time to work together during regular class time, but you will also need to find times outside class sessions. **TIP:** Consider using hybrid days in October and November for group work.

Speaking Center:

You are required to use the speaking center in Carswell 129 at least once to get feedback on your informative/persuasive speech outline or on your speech delivery. You are encouraged to use these services beyond this mandatory visit, whenever possible. An email will be sent when **Sign-Up** slots are available. Meetings with the instructor to work on speeches will count for speaking center credit.

Extra Credit:

A maximum of 5 extra credit points can be awarded. Activities that qualify for extra credit will be communicated in class and via Sakai. Remember, extra credit is a privilege, not a right.

ASSIGNMENT POLICY

- Details for major assignments will be posted to Sakai and will include instructions, deadlines, and grading rubrics. Feel free to ask questions about assignments at any time but always check the assignment details posted online because several of your questions may already be answered there.
- Assignments not submitted by the deadline are late. Minor assignments (less than 5% of grade) that are late will receive zero points. Major assignments (except speeches & quizzes) will be penalized 25% of the assignment grade, with another 25% taken off each additional calendar day that they are missing.⁵ **These penalties do not apply to speeches or quizzes.** Students MUST do speeches and quizzes on the assigned day. Make-ups may be allowed with signed official excuses (see page 7).

NOTE BOLDLY: SAKAI will not allow assignment uploads once the deadline has passed!

- **It is the student's responsibility to double-check that the correct assignment has been uploaded.** Incorrect assignments will be subject to the late policy described above from the day the assignment was uploaded, and **not** from the day it was discovered by the instructor.
- Written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, numbered on each page, with one-inch margins and in Times New Roman 12-point font; this is basic APA formatting. You must also title your assignment and use proper writing conventions, including a thesis statement and paragraphing, to avoid point deductions.
- Remember to proofread your assignment before submitting it. Although this is not a writing course, oral and written communication are inextricably linked and you are expected to submit well-written outlines for your speeches. Incorrect formatting will result in deductions.
- You must cite your sources in-text for written work, **verbally cite them in your speeches**, as well as attach to your outline a bibliography that is properly formatted in an official writing style (e.g., APA, MLA, or Chicago). If you neglect to orally cite your sources, you will receive zero in the relevant category on the grading rubric, and may be subject to deductions in other categories.

OFFICIAL/EXCUSED ABSENCES

An excused absence/official excuse is one that comes with official documentation signed by an appropriate professional (e.g., doctor, university representative, member of the clergy, etc.), clearly stating the dates for which you are being excused, and containing working contact information for the professional who signed the excuse. Other excused absences include religious holidays, and circumstances beyond a student's control for which professional third-party documentation is available. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate any absence with the instructor, even if it is not excused.

⁵ The specific requirements of the assignment must be fully met if the late policy is to be applied. If the requirements of the assignment are not fully met, then the assignment will receive zero points. For example, a late outline submitted after your speech will receive zero because it does not qualify for the late policy.

CLASSROOM CLIMATE

You will be exposed to lecture material, speeches and discussions that may make you uncomfortable. Opposing views on trivial as well as controversial topics are welcome, and students are encouraged to back up their claims with strong arguments. In every discussion and interaction however, the golden rule applies, that is, treat others (instructor and classmates) the way you want to be treated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (Borrowed from the COM 110 syllabus of Dr. Dee Oseroff-Varnell, Spring 2016):

Adhering to the Wake Forest honor code means demonstrating academic and personal integrity. Below are some course-specific guidelines:

- I. Fabricating excuses to avoid giving speeches or meeting deadlines for other graded assignments is in violation of the honor code.
- II. Plagiarism involves using other people's ideas or words without acknowledging the source. Thus, a student must not deliver another person's speech (or any parts of the speech) as her/his own. Also, a student must give proper credit *orally/verbally* for any information utilized from another source. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism.
- III. Wrongfully obtaining or attempting to obtain prior information about exams is a violation of the honor code; giving information to other students concerning upcoming exams is also a violation of the honor code.
- IV. Students must practice ethical speechmaking. Unethical topics—such as those that condone engaging in illegal/immoral practices, evangelize, or insult others' cultural beliefs or practices—may not be used.

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE

According to the 2015 – 2016 WFU Student Code of Conduct:

“Violations of the Code undermine both personal integrity and community standards and are treated with the utmost seriousness. Specific offenses against the Honor Code include cheating, plagiarism, deception, and stealing, in both academic and social settings. In all academic cases with a plea or finding of responsible, a grade of F for the course will be assigned. This will normally be an irreplaceable F.”

NOTE BOLDLY: This class has a NO TOLERANCE policy regarding plagiarism! For more on plagiarism, visit <http://livex.poynter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/IsitPlagiarism.pdf>. For more information on the Honor Code, please see <http://rlh.wfu.edu/downloads/pdfs/student-code-of-conduct.pdf>.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

All course materials, including speeches of other students, lectures, power point slides, assignments, activities, and discussions require written permission from the instructor for anything other than personal use in this course.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event the university closes due to inclement weather, I will announce changes to the course and/or assignment schedule via e-mail and the announcements section of the course site.

COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTOR

Students are strongly encouraged to keep an open line of communication with the instructor. Email is the best way to communicate, and meetings during office hours and appointments are highly recommended, even for students who are excelling in the course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Wake Forest University supports students with disabilities through its Learning Assistance Center and Disability Services Office (117 Reynolda Hall, 336-758-5929, lac.wfu.edu). If you have a learning disability and need special accommodations, please meet with me privately no later than Sept. 15. Please also contact the Learning Assistance Center to obtain the requisite documentation prior to our meeting.

HELPFUL ACADEMIC CENTERS

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the wide range of student support services on campus, incl.:

- [University Counseling Center](#)
- [LGBTQ Center](#)
- [Learning Assistance Center](#)
- [Office of Career & Professional Development](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Women's Center](#)
- [ZSR Library](#)

MORE TIPS FOR DOING WELL IN THIS COURSE

1. Read the chapters BEFORE coming to class; come early and be eager to participate
2. Attend all classes (lab **and** lecture) [use unexcused absences only if absolutely necessary]
3. Stay on top of your deadlines and manage multiple assignments at once
4. Read assignments instructions (**RUBRICS TOO**) and submit them on-time in the format required
5. Ask questions when you are unsure
6. Practice critical thinking
7. Communicate with your instructor in a time-efficient manner
8. Make use of office hours, appointments, and speaking center sessions (Initiate these!)
9. Speak passionately, listen actively, respect everyone
10. Think beyond the grade, and about how this course can help you achieve your life goals

NB: Choosing to remain in this course will count as agreement to the terms outlined in this syllabus.

By entering your name and initials below, you confirm that you have read and understood this syllabus. After you have entered the following information, please show it to the instructor, upon request.

Student Initials/Date _____ *Student Name* _____