

Course Syllabus

SPCH 1315.455.456 (3:3:0)

Public Speaking

Department Division of Arts and Sciences

Levelland

South Plains College

Fall 2025

Lissa Sharp



Department: Communication Department
Discipline: Speech Communication
Available Formats: Conventional, Internet, Hybrid
Campuses: Levelland, Downtown Center, Plainview, Lubbock Center, Dual-Credit
Prerequisite: None
Credit: 3 Lecture: 3 Lab: 0

Instructor: Lissa Sharp, Assistant Professor Communication Studies
Office 140 Communications Building
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Phone – 806-716-2573

Office Hours: M-W 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
T-TH 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Friday 10:00 a.m. – noon
Virtual Office Hours – by appointment

[Print this document for your reference.](#)

Technical and Required Materials:

1. Our textbook is **Exploring Public Speaking, 4.2 Edition** – Published 2023, Tucker et al
Weblink: www.exploringpublicspeaking.com

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This text is part of the OER program. The text is free. It can be found at the link above in many formats, including PDF. There is no physical version of the text, but the student can have it printed at their own expense, if so desired.

2. Access and ability to competently use an appropriate **computer** (+ printer + internet). Competent use includes the ability to send & receive Blackboard messages, attach & open **Word/PDF** documents, and post messages to discussion boards. A high-speed internet connection and the ability to view video content, and record video content. Be *certain* you have the appropriate Computer equipment by visiting the SPC Instructional Technology Department's homepage. Direct technical questions to blackboard@southplainscollege.edu or call 716-2180.
3. Access and ability to competently use your own **video recording equipment**. The web cam on your computer may be used for video blogs, video conferencing, but it cannot be used for recording presentations. To record presentations, you may utilize your cell phone device if the video quality is good.
4. Ability to confidently upload video files to a cloud platform (YouTube, iCloud, Google drive, One Drive, etc.) and provide links in Blackboard assignments.
5. Use of a USB headset with a microphone or headphones for video conferencing (recommended)
6. Updated software on your **computer**.
7. If recording your presentation asynchronously, an audience of at least five students (does not include the speaker but may include the video operator). All must be present for the entire presentation. *More regarding this will be included as presentations draw near.

This course partially satisfies a Core Curriculum Requirement:
Institutional Foundational Component Area (090)

Course Description:

Application of communication theory and practice to the public speaking context, with emphasis on audience analysis, speaker delivery, ethics of communication, cultural diversity, and speech organizational techniques to develop students' speaking abilities, as well as ability to effectively evaluate oral presentations.

Core Curriculum Objectives addressed:

- **Communications skills**—to include effective written, oral and visual communication
- **Critical thinking skills**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- **Teamwork**—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- **Personal Responsibility**—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- **Social Responsibility**—to include the demonstrated knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the foundational models of communication.
2. Apply elements of audience analysis.
3. Demonstrate ethical speaking and listening skills by analyzing presentations for evidence and logic
4. Research, develop and deliver extemporaneous speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal techniques.
5. Demonstrate effective usage of technology when researching and/or presenting speeches.
6. Identify how culture, ethnicity and gender influence communication.
7. Develop proficiency in presenting a variety of speeches as an individual or group (e.g. narrative, informative or persuasive).

Attendance Policy:

Online courses have a fundamentally different vision of student attendance. Students are expected to check Blackboard Messages and engage with Blackboard daily. If you are **not able** to do this, then online courses may not be the best option for you to be successful in the college environment.

Students who enroll in a course but have “Never Attended” by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. “Never attended” in the online environment is determined by the submission of the Start Here Assignment. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of “X”. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of this policy.

It is the student’s responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. ***Students will also be dropped from this class when they fail to submit assignments for two consecutive weeks.***

SPC Blackboard Ultra Portal

The Blackboard Ultra software used to manage this class monitors student logins, tracking when and where the student has been in the course. Accessing this course regularly is extremely important to meet the objectives.

Student Code of Conduct Policy:

The South Plains College Mission Statement reflects the goal of helping students become productive and responsible citizens in a global society. This is achieved through providing learning environments that are innovative, engaging, compassionate, safe, diverse, and supportive. This mission is central to the expectations for student conduct. As members of the South Plains College community, students are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct that is published annually in the South Plains College Student Guide (found online in the General Catalog).

Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Intellectual Exchange Statement:

In this class, I will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Academic Integrity Statement:

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of a student to present as their own any work which they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly academic or disciplinary suspension. Initial offenses of cheating and plagiarism are considered academic discipline and are managed on a case-by-case basis by the faculty and/or academic administration.

Plagiarism Statement:

Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identifiable expression of material taken from books, Internet resources, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of a fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Artificial Intelligence Statement:

- **Purpose of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Applications:** AI applications such as ChatGPT, OpenAI, Bard, Grammarly, WordTune and others are advanced language models designed to aid and engage in meaningful conversations, as well as, generate and revise content. AI is intended to supplement learning, stimulate critical thinking, and enhance academic discourse. However, its use comes with certain responsibilities.
- **Academic Integrity:** Using AI to generate academic work, including essays, reports, or assignments, without proper attribution is a violation of SPC academic integrity policies. Plagiarism undermines the learning process and is strictly prohibited. Students must ensure that their work reflects their own ideas, research, synthesis, and analysis and appropriately cites all sources, including AI.
- **Collaboration and Consultation:** While AI can be a valuable resource, it is essential to strike a balance between seeking assistance and maintaining personal responsibility. Collaboration with peers, consulting instructors, and utilizing other approved learning resources should be prioritized. Overreliance on AI for solutions without actively engaging in the learning process is discouraged and can be grounds for academic integrity violations. Utilizing AI as a tool for brainstorming or research is allowed but the writing should be the student's own work and thoughts.
- **Critical Thinking and Originality:** AI usage can provide suggestions and information, but it is essential to critically evaluate the responses and exercise independent thought. Relying solely on AI for answers deprives students of the opportunity to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills. In assignments where originality, creativity, and independent thinking are valued, AI would be detrimental to the student learning process. Critical thinking and originality emphasize the importance of independent thinking in all academic endeavors as part of the student's learning experience apart from outside influence and offers the student the opportunity to refine their unique, individual voice through academic discourse with other students and faculty.
- **Ethical Use and Bias Awareness:** AI is trained on large amounts of data from the internet, which may include biased or inaccurate information. Be mindful of the potential for bias and critically evaluate the responses provided by AI. Therefore, when using AI, just like with using any other database, students must verify that the information is from reliable sources, question any potential biases, and ensure that the information and sources used in the paper are neutral, peer-reviewed sources.
- **Responsible Engagement:** Students should engage with AI in a respectful and responsible manner and avoid using offensive language, discriminatory remarks, or engaging in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior. Students should also uphold the standards of respectful communication in addressing both AI and fellow classmates.

· **Compliance with South Plains College Policies:** Policies regarding the appropriate use of AI in South Plains College courses are set by instructional departments and individual instructors. Appropriate use of AI may range from strict prohibition to assignments they may require the use of AI. Misusing or violating the guidelines outlined in this syllabus warning may result in disciplinary action, including academic penalties. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the specific course policies regarding the use of AI and adhere to them throughout the semester.

Remember, AI can be a tool to support your learning in certain courses and assignments, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your overall academic growth.

*Access the [Student Handbook](#) for additional information relating to student responsibilities. For information regarding official South Plains College statements about diversity, disabilities, non-discrimination, Title V Pregnancy Accommodations, Campus Concealed Carry, and COVID-19; access the [SPC Syllabus Statements](#).

Class Calendar

The class calendar is posted in Blackboard under the “Start Here” module. This is the ‘official’ calendar for the course, and updates will be made directly on Blackboard. You are encouraged to print the calendar and use it as a checks and balances system to ensure that you are submitting all assignments due each week.

Student Obligations

A. Punctuality

1. Students are required to complete and submit **ALL** assignments (activities, postings, examinations, etc.) **on time**, without exception. (Please see the section below titled ‘Preparedness.’) Generally, assignments, quizzes, etc. close at 11:55 pm (CST) on the due date (typically a Sunday).
2. Absences/failure to submit assignments due to extenuating circumstances, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Official documentation presented to me will be required for any consideration to be granted. If late work is accepted, it must be completed by the agreed upon date or the assignment in question will receive a zero.
3. New material will be released on Mondays, but students should **check** their Blackboard messages and Announcement area **daily** for updates which could include changes in assignments/due dates.

B. Protocol

1. Technological issues are not an excuse for late work. Do your assignments, quizzes, and presentations early to ensure you have time for any issues that may arise.
2. Technical questions should be sent to blackboard@southplainscollege.edu (806) 716-2180.
3. E-mail correspondence with the professor should be limited to Blackboard messages.
4. Students can expect a reply to a Blackboard message within 24 hours Monday through Friday. On the weekends, this timeframe is 48 hours.

C. Professionalism

1. It is my expectation and the institution’s that appropriate citation and documentation be given for materials and information obtained from other sources. Cases of plagiarism will be treated as will any case of academic dishonesty, with at least a failing grade for the assignment/examination. In addition, the student may be dropped from the course with a failing grade. See the [SPC Student Guide](#) for more information.
2. Because online courses are text/video-based, students will ensure that **proper grammar** and **grammatical and spelling errors** are **avoided**. Excessive or distracting errors will result in **grade reductions**. Deliver speeches and written materials in English.
3. Profanity and disrespect are not tolerated. Maturity and professionalism are expected in the preparation of all assignments and in classroom behavior. All comments should be appropriate for the college classroom and its educated participants.

D. Preparedness

1. Time Commitment

- a. Research recommends that students spend two hours of outside study for every one hour of in-class time. For a 3 credit-hour, face-to-face course that means a total time investment of six to nine hours per week, in a 15-week course. This expectation of time investment is still the same for online classes. If you do not feel you can meet this requirement, it might be best to drop the course.

2. Group Work

- a. Students should be prepared to work with others through online learning platforms (i.e. Blackboard Collaborate, Video Chats).

3. Catastrophe Management

- a. Students should be prepared for equipment failures with their primary computer/devices. Locate a “back-up” option NOW and DO NOT procrastinate in completing assignments as no work is accepted late.
- b. If internet problems arise and cause the South Plains College server to go down, adjustments will be made accordingly.

4. Lost/Corrupt/Disappeared Files

- a. You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external disk or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g., Blackboard server crash or virus infection, student’s own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions/problems, I may/will request you to resubmit the files or provide additional documentation. In other words, if you submit a document to me, and I do not receive it (lost in cyberspace) or it is corrupt when I open it, you need to resend it to me, corrected, with little or no “downtime” in regard to the timeline for submission.

Course Evaluation:

Major Presentations	40%
Exams/Major Grades	30%
Daily Work, Class Participation	30%

Course grades are determined utilizing a points system with the above-mentioned percentages. Your final grade will be determined as follows: Course grades are determined utilizing a points system with the above-mentioned percentages. Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Assignments

Major Presentations = 400 points

Introductory Presentation	50
Informative Presentation	100
Persuasive Presentation	100
Special Occasion Presentation	50
Group Presentation	100

Test Grades = 300 points

Quizzes	200
Final Exam	100

Daily Grades = 300 points

Assignments/Final Outlines	180
Peer Evaluations	30
Self-Evaluations	60
Speech Rough Draft Outlines	30

Grade Distribution

Course Grade	Points Required
A	900-1,000
B	800-899
C	700-799
D	600-699
F	599 and below

Brief Course Assignment Descriptions:

Speeches

You will deliver five major speeches. More information about speech purposes and instructions will be included within Blackboard. Below is the basic information about each speech:

- a. *Self-Introduction Speech* will be submitted as a video file or web link and viewed asynchronously. This presentation does not require that you have an audience. You may utilize your web camera to record the presentation.
- b. *Informative Speech* will be delivered to an audience in real-time and recorded for submission and grading purposes. Utilization of Blackboard Collaborate where I, and some of your fellow classmates, will serve as your audience will be the preferred method of presentation. I will handle recording the presentation. However, you may also opt to identify an audience of five individuals and record your presentation for asynchronous grading.
- c. *Special Occasion Speech* will be submitted as a video file or web link and viewed asynchronously. This presentation does not require that you have an audience. You may utilize your web camera to record the presentation.
- d. *Persuasive Speech* will be delivered to an audience in real-time and recorded for submission and grading purposes. Utilization of Blackboard Collaborate where I, and some of your fellow classmates, will serve as your audience will be the preferred method of presentation. I will handle recording the presentation. However, you may also opt to identify an audience of five individuals and record your presentation for asynchronous grading. This speech will require you to use researched information and sources in your speech.
- e. *Group Project Speech* will be submitted as a video file or web link and will use multimedia to create the final product. You will be assigned to a group to work on the project, and it will be viewed asynchronously for grading.

Peer and Self-Evaluations

You will complete self-evaluations and peer evaluations for all speeches. These evaluations will give you the opportunity to evaluate your own speech and the speeches of fellow class members.

Weekly Quizzes

You will take quizzes that will be based on chapter readings and my weekly “takeaway videos”.

Learning Activities

You will complete learning activities designed to help you solidify your understanding of course content.

Assignment Submissions:

Each assignment will have a designated submission link in Blackboard. You will utilize this link. To properly submit assignments, it is imperative that you follow the assignment directions as they may vary slightly for each assignment. For example, one assignment may require that you provide a link to a video blog you posted utilizing a web service and the next assignment may require that you attach a document.

Collaborate/Synchronous Meetings:

A meet and greet utilizing Collaborate will be conducted at the beginning of the semester. **Every student is expected to attend.** This will be a short meeting to test the computer’s audio and video that you will be using to complete your speeches. The time that you select for the “meet and greet” will be your day/time to meet during Speech Week’s (view the Course Calendar to determine when these will happen throughout the semester). If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

*Please note that assignments are subject to change at the professor's discretion.

Withdrawal Policy:

Please review the last day to withdraw listed below. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from this course. Otherwise, students will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Course points will be updated frequently, and students can seek guidance from me throughout the semester to help decide whether they need to drop the class or not.

<i>Last Day to Withdraw/Drop with a grade of "W"</i>	<i>Student Initiated Drop</i>
<i>Thursday, December 4</i>	<i>Student Initiated Drop Request Form</i>

Public Speaking Course Calendar

Please note that our class week **begins** each Monday and **ends** each Sunday at 11:55 p.m. CST. I will send out weekly Blackboard announcements highlighting assignments for the week.

Week Starts – Week Ends

August 25 – August 31

Assignments/Assignments Due

Week 1 - Getting Started Unit Opens - Assigned Reading – Chapter 3 Ethics in Public Speaking, Syllabus, Course Calendar

Assignments

Assignment – Ethical Perspectives
Sign Up for Live Meetings!

Module I: Understanding Communication Principles

September 1 – September 7

Week 2 – Chapter 1 The Basics of Public Speaking & Chapter 2 Audience Analysis & Listening – Assigned Reading Chapters 1 & 2

Assignments

Chapters 1 & 2 Quiz
Assignment – Discussion Board – Listening
Assignment – Personal Report on Communication Apprehension
Live Meetings

September 8 – September 14

Week 3 – Chapter 4 Outlining and Organizing Your Speech & Chapter 6 Developing Topics for Your Speech – Self-Introduction Speech Assigned
Assigned Reading Chapters 4 & 6

Assignments

Chapters 4 & 6 Quiz
Assignment – Self-Introduction Rough Draft Outline

September 15 – September 21

Week 4 – Chapters 7 Supporting Your Speech & Chapter 9 Presentation Aids
Assigned Reading Chapters 7 & 9

Assignments

Chapters 7 & 9 Quiz
Speech – Self-Introduction Speech

Module II: Creating an Informative Speak

September 22 – September 28

Week 5 – Informative Speaking – Informative Speech Assigned
Assigned Reading Chapter 12

Assignments

Chapter 12 Quiz
Assignment – Self-Introduction Speech Peer & Self Evaluations
Assignment – Informative Speech Topic

September 29 – October 5

Week 6 – Chapter 5 Researching Your Speeches
Assigned Reading Chapter 5

Assignments

Chapter 5 Quiz
Assignment – Informative Speech Rough Draft Outline (*provide early in the week so I have time to provide feedback*)

Week Starts – Week Ends

October 6 – October 12

Assignments/Assignments Due

Week 7 – Informative Speech Week –

Assignment

Speech – Informative Speech – Live Meeting at your scheduled time

Assignment – Final Informative Speech Outline

Unit III: Developing a Persuasive Speech

October 13 – October 19

Week 8 – Chapter 8 Introductions and Conclusions & Chapter 13 Persuasive Speaking –

Persuasive Speech Assigned

Assigned Reading Chapters 8 & 13

Assignment

Chapters 8 & 13 Quiz

Assignment – Informative Speech Peer & Self Evaluation

Assignment – Persuasive Speech Topic

October 20 – October 26

Week 9 – Chapter 10 Language & Chapter 14 Logical Reasoning

Assigned Reading Chapter 10 & 14

Assignments

Chapters 10 & 14 Quiz

Assignment – Persuasive Speech Rough Draft Outline

Module IV: Final Showcase Speeches

October 27 – November 2

Week 10 – Chapter 11 Delivery & Chapter 15 Special Occasion Speaking

Assigned Reading Chapters 11 & 15 – Special Occasion Speech Assigned

Assignments

Chapters 11 & 15 Quiz

November 3 – November 9

Week 11 – Persuasive Speech Week – Group Financial Literacy Speech/Project Assigned –

Assignment

Speech – Persuasive Speech - Live Meeting at your scheduled time

Assignment – Final Persuasive Speech Outline

November 10 – November 16

Week 12 – Video Information Regarding Collaboration & Working in Teams –

Assignments

Speech - Special Occasion Speech

Assignment – Persuasive Peer & Self Evaluations

November 17 – November 23

Week 13 – Group Project Speech Work-week

Assignment

Assignment – Conflict Management Styles Inventory

November 24 – November 30

Week 14 – Group Speech/Project Submission Week submission **by Tuesday, November 25 is recommended**

***This is Thanksgiving Week – plan accordingly**

Assignment – Group Project Video

Thursday, December 4

Last Day to Drop

Week Starts – Week Ends

December 1 – December 7

December 8 – December 11

Assignments/Assignments Due

Week 15 – Review for Final –
Journal – Group Project Reflection

Week 16 - Final Exam due by **Tuesday, December 9** @ 11:55 p.m.

****Course Calendar is subject to change.***