The brain is a wonderful thing. It never stops functioning from the time you’re born until the moment you stand up to make a speech. - Herbert V Prochnow

Course Description:

In this participatory course, assignments will emphasize our development as public speakers and listeners though the creation, preparation, and delivery of three major speeches, in-class speaking exercises and class discussion leading, as well as the analysis of speeches; our own, our classmates’, and other viewed speeches.

One of the most important aspects of this class includes the expectation that class members will get to know each other in order to create an atmosphere of support as we learn to become better speakers, listeners and questioners. It makes class time that much more enjoyable, and helps to increase our confidence as we prepare and give our speeches.

Assignments:

As mentioned previously, assignments include three 4-5 minute speeches: an informative speech, a persuasive speech, and then a modification of the persuasive speech for a wider audience. In order to prepare for these speeches, we will be reading and discussing the chapters from our textbook, participating in class practice exercises, and viewing speech examples. You will be also provided with written assignment prompts, including grading criteria, to help you understand what is being evaluated in order to present the best speeches possible. Production of written work, which must be completed in order to pass this course, will also be required. Specific guidelines and instructions will be given to you as we work towards the presentation of each speech.

Besides the speeches mentioned previously, students will divide into groups of 3 (one group will have 4 members) in order to present one of the textbook chapters to the rest of the class. Each group will have the freedom to present the material in any way they choose, using any means they see fit. (This is, of course, within reason.) For example, there may be in-class exercises that can be done in order for the rest of the class to understand and practice the chapter material. Perhaps there are clips from movies, TV shows, or even audio clips that can be presented which will also help illustrate chapter material. It is up to each group to present the material in a fun, productive manner. Each group will also be responsible to come up with 3 midterm exam questions from the chapter they cover. (This guarantees at least 3 correct answers on the midterm for each of you!) Chapters to be covered by groups: 2-7, 11-12, and 14.

One of the main purposes for this group chapter presentation is for you to become more comfortable in front of the class. It will also make the classes more interesting, as each of you bring your own perspective and knowledge to the class material. Supplementing the class material with exercises and/or popular culture material will also lead to increased learning and a broader perspective.
Grading:

In order to pass this course, all assignments must be completed and turned in.

Informative speech: 20%
Persuasive speech: 20%
Persuasive speech for a wider audience: 20%
Midterm exam: 20%
In-class exercises and class discussion leading: 20%


Attendance:

Due to the participatory nature of this class, attendance is mandatory. After 2 absences, 3% for each subsequent absence without a dean’s excuse will be deducted from your final grade. If you find that you are having health or life difficulties that are keeping you from attending class or completing the assignments, please come talk to me as soon as the problem arises.

Required Materials:

“The Art of Public Speaking,” Ninth Edition, by Stephen E. Lucas. (It is possible to use the Eighth Edition as well, if you have one available. The Campus Store has the Ninth Edition—25 used and the rest new.)

Note: We will be videotaping your speeches in order for you to analyze them. At this moment, we are in the process of getting a camera that automatically compresses the files and uploads them to a laptop during recording. The speeches will then be accessible from WebCT. If this doesn’t work out, you will be required to purchase a VHS tape that we will use for recording your speech. We will talk more about this as soon as I find out more information.

WebCT:

We will be taking advantage of WebCT. The syllabus, all assignments, handouts, and other material will be available on WebCT. The calendar will be updated regularly. (Please use my tech email account if you need to get in touch with me, as I check that daily.) You can get to WebCT via the “Current Students” page off the main MTU url.

Academic Integrity:

MTU’s Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation.” You can get expelled for doing this. If you have questions about this, contact the Writing Center at 7-2007.

Disabilities and Discrimination:

If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services, please ask, and/or call Dr. Gloria Melton. If you have discrimination concerns, call your advisor, your department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office at 7-3310.