SPCH 1315-9P1 Public Speaking
Spring 2026

CREDIT
3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 hours lab)

MODE OF INSTRUCTION
Online

PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:
None

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.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to
- Demonstrate an understanding of the foundational models of communication.
- Apply elements of audience analysis.
- Demonstrate ethical speaking and listening skills by analyzing presentations for evidence and logic.
- Research, develop and deliver extemporaneous speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal techniques.
- Demonstrate effective usage of technology when researching and/or presenting speeches.
- Identify how culture, ethnicity and gender influence communication.
- Develop proficiency in presenting a variety of speeches as an individual or group (e.g. narrative, informative or persuasive).

CORE OBJECTIVES MEASURED
- Critical Thinking Skills: To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- Communication Skills: To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- Teamwork: To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others.
- Personal Responsibility: To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Dawn Britton
Email: dakatz@lit.edu
Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom or phone

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

Exploring Public Speaking, 4th Edition. This is a free e-book available online at https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/communication-textbooks/1/ in Word, PDF and EPUB (earlier editions) formats.

Students can also view and download the PDF attachment on Blackboard.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

For every hour in class (or unit of credit), students should expect to spend at least two to three hours per week studying and completing assignments. For a 3-credit-hour class, which this one is, students should prepare to allocate approximately six to nine hours per week outside of class in a 16-week session OR approximately twelve to eighteen hours in an 8-week session. Online/Hybrid students should expect to spend at least as much time in this course as in the traditional, face-to-face class.

DROP POLICY

If you wish to drop a course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process by the specified date as listed in the College Calendar on the Student Success web page. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an "F" in the course.

COURSE CALENDAR. Tentative and subject to change. See Blackboard announcements.

Week/Date	Readings/Assignments
Week 1 1/20-1/25	1. Orientation to the course – Read Syllabus & Explore Canvas 2. Read Chapter 1 3. Complete Chapter 1 Discussion 4. Setup YouTube Account
Week 2 1/26-2/1	1. Read Chapters 2, 3, and 4 2. Complete Chapters 2, 3 and 4 Discussions 3. Read Speech #1 – Tribute Speech Directions & begin working on it
Week 3 2/2-2/8	1. Complete Speech #1 – Tribute Speech 2. Complete Self-evaluation of Speech #1 3. Read Chapter 12 4. Complete Chapter 12 Discussion
Week 4 2/9-2/15	1. Read Chapters 5, 6, and 7 2. Complete Chapters 5, 6, and 7 Discussions 3. Read Speech #2 – Informative Speech Directions & begin working on it

Week 5 2/16-2/22	1. Complete Library Assignment (Use Speech #2 topic) 2. Read Chapters 8, 9 and 10 3. Complete Chapters 8, 9, and 10 Discussions 4. *Suggested (not for a grade) – Complete Exam 1 Review*
Week 6 2/23-3/1	1. Complete Speech #2 – Informative Speech 2. Complete Self-evaluation of Speech #2 3. *Suggested (not for a grade) – Study Exam 1 Review*
Week 7 3/2-3/8	1. Complete Exam 1
Week 8	**Happy Spring Break! Have fun and be safe!**
Week 9 3/16-3/22	1. Read Chapters 11, 13, and 14 2. Complete Chapters 11, 13, and 14 Discussions
Week 10 3/23-3/29	1. Read Chapter 15 2. Complete Chapter 15 Discussion 3. Read Speech #3 – Problem/Solution Directions & begin working on it
Week 11 3/30-4/5	1. Complete Listening Report
Week 12 4/6-4/12	1. Complete Speech #3 - Problem-Solution Speech 2. Complete Speech #3 Self- Evaluation
Week 13 4/13-4/19	1. Read directions for Speech #4 – MMS & begin working on it in assigned groups
Week 14 4/20-4/26	1. Continue working with your MMS Speech group. 2. *Optional: Exam 2 opens*
Week 15 4/27-5/3	1. Complete Speech #4 Monroe's Motivated Sequence Speech 2. Complete Speech #4 Evaluations - Group **AND** Self 3. Complete Exam 2

COURSE EVALUATION

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- **Speeches:** 40%
- **MMS Speech (Common Assignment):** 20%
- **Exams:** 20%
- **Homework/Participation:** 20%

GRADE SCALE

- 90-100   A
- 80-89   B
- 70-79   C
- 60-69   D
- 0-59   F

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
For the latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc., review the Minimum Computer and Equipment Requirements on the LIT Online Experience page. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of online technology and resources.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT
The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is located in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email specialpopulations@lit.edu. You may also visit the online resource at Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology (lit.edu).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT
It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENT
Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use of these technologies and incorporate AI into classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI/ChatGPT in their courses.

STARFISH
LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these

emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION

1. Academic Dishonesty (Cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will not be tolerated. On the first offense, you will fail the assignment. On the second offense, you will fail the class.
2. Student assignments are accepted solely on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to learn to use Blackboard appropriately. Work will not be accepted via email or in person. It is the student's responsibility to learn to use Blackboard appropriately.
3. Generative Artificial Intelligence and/or AI enhanced tools may only be used in this course for specific purposes or in specific assignments, per instructor's guidelines because the use of AI could conflict with the course's learning objectives.
   A. AI may be used for brainstorming speech topics and for refining research terms but not as a source itself. AI may not be used to write speech outlines, Works Cited pages, or essays. It's a great tool but must be analyzed for accuracy and should not replace your own, original work. All submitted assignments must be your own, original writing.
4. If you email the instructor during the week, the instructor has 24 hours to respond and, on the weekend, it will be the following Monday.
5. Speech requirements are listed below. Failure to comply with all requirements on a speech assignment will result in a zero grade for that speech. You must include all four items for each speech.
   A. Students must meet all four requirements below to avoid receiving a zero.
       i. Full sentence/preparation outline
       ii. Works Cited page
       iii. Visual aid
       iv. Speech video link
   B. The audience must have a minimum of 3 adult members. Failure to have all 3 audience members will result in a zero. For dual credit students, the audience members may be your peers.
   C. Student speech videos must clearly show the front of the student and the 3 adult audience members throughout the entire speech. Failure to do so will result in a zero.
   D. Videos must be unedited. Edited videos will result in a zero.
   E. Videos must be correctly uploaded to YouTube with an "unlisted" or "public" privacy setting. If you set it to "private" I will not be able to view it and therefore it is as if you didn't turn it in and will receive a zero.
   F. Videos must be focused (not blurry, fuzzy, etc.) and must not have background noise such as babies, children, pets, TVs, cell phones, etc. Please make sure the lights are on in the room. If the room is dark while presenting will result in a letter grade.
   G. Students are expected to dress appropriately for speeches. Please dress BUSINESS CASUAL if not, **will result in a letter grade penalty**. EX. (Polo Shirt and Khakis and **Not JEANS,** joggers etc..).   Sometimes in the online course people get "too comfortable" when speaking in their own homes. Wearing ball caps, inappropriate clothing or chewing gum, not wearing shoes, etc. during a speech will result in a letter grade penalty. Remember this course is a college course and you are giving professional/formal presentations. Think about the impression your dress might make on your audience.

H. You are expected to **WATCH** your videos. Watch them before you post to YouTube. Ask yourself, "Is this my best work?" If not, you may have to record it again. Do not let the first 'take' be the only time you do your speech. *You should practice many times before you ever bring in the audience and the camera.*

I. Speeches that are read will be penalized up to 2 letter grades per speech. The goal of this class is to speak extemporaneously; well-researched, well-rehearsed, effective use **of notecards**, and overall well-prepared speeches are the expectations. Reading is not effective or acceptable.

J. Speeches will receive a penalty if they are not in the assigned time limit. The penalty is 1 point per 5 second increment, over or under time.

6. For each of your speeches and assignments there are instructions and requirements on Blackboard. See "Assignments" under "Course Content." It is very important that you review these instructions before completing your work and that your work fulfills the requirements.

7. After presenting each speech, you will complete a self-evaluation on Blackboard. Find these under "Assignments." This is an opportunity for you to look back at your preparation and delivery. What went well? Where can you make improvements? The evaluation for your final speech, the group project, is different in that you will be evaluating not only yourself but also your group members. There's a form for that attached to the assignment.

8. Your Exams are each 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions coming primarily from your textbook. These two tests will be taken online via Blackboard. Exam reviews are provided on Blackboard on day 1 of the class.

9. Discussion Board Posts are due on Blackboard as noted in the class schedule. There is no minimum length for these posts, but most can be answered in about 100-200 words. Make sure that your response is complete, answers the question, and demonstrates an understanding of your textbook. Do not simply Google the question. Read your textbook and reference it in your discussion posts. Please type your response directly into the "Message" field in Blackboard or copy your response from an external Word document and paste your response into the "Message" field.

10. Late work will only be accepted upon approval of the instructor within a reasonable amount of time. If you disappear during the semester, for whatever reason, you won't get to make up missed assignments when you reappear. It is vital that you communicate with me in a timely manner. Email (dakatz@lit.edu) is your best option.

11. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will not be tolerated. On the first offense, you will fail the assignment. On the second offense, you will fail the class.

12. An Incomplete grade will only be given in this course if ALL of the following conditions are met: 75% of the coursework has been completed; a dire situation documented by evidence makes completion during the regular term impossible; and a student formally requests an incomplete.

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