

Chapter 1: Welcome to Public Speaking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Identify the principal things you will learn in this course and how they will benefit you outside the classroom.
- 1.2 Describe public speaking as a communication process in which the speaker and listeners jointly create meaning and understanding.
- 1.3 Examine the elements of a rhetorical situation and explain the steps by which a speech affects the situation.
- 1.4 Define the public forum and how studying public speaking will prepare you to participate effectively in it.
- 1.5 Identify the principal ethical obligations of listeners and speakers.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Why Study Public Speaking?

Learning Objective 1.1: Identify the principal things you will learn in this course and how they will benefit you outside the classroom.

- A. Develop Specific Communication Skills
 1. This class will help you develop or improve these skills:
 - a. Listen carefully and critically.
 - b. Decide on a topic and determine what you will say about it.
 - c. Find materials for a speech through experience and research.
 - d. Think critically about information so you can reason more soundly with an audience.
 - e. Organize a presentation for clarity and coherency.
 - f. Use language to convey meaning and mood.
 - g. Use both verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to present yourself and to make your message compelling.
 - h. Overcome speech anxiety and to use nervousness to your advantage.
 - i. Create visual aids that enhance, not detract from your message.
 - j. Adapt general principles to specific communication situations when informing, persuading, or entertaining an audience
 - k. Recognize and incorporate audience reactions to improve your performance skills.
 2. This class is part of a very old and valuable academic tradition.
- B. Focus on Critical Thinking and Strategic Planning
 1. Critical Thinking
 - a. **Critical thinking** is the ability to form and defend judgments.
 - b. It enables an individual to analyze points of view and evaluate facts and **opinions**.
 - i. **Facts:** statements that can be verified by someone else
 - ii. **Opinions:** subjective statements presumably based on experience or expertise
 - c. Critical thinking enables us to recognize unstated assumption, formulate precise statements, and place ideas in a broader context.

2. Strategic Planning
 - a. A speaker's choices include whether to speak, when and why to speak, what to say and how to do so through organization, tone and exact expression.
 - b. **Strategic planning** makes message choices conscious and tactical.
 - c. Planning enables an individual to identify and determine how best to make choices and achieve goals
- C. Apply What You Learn
 1. In this class you will learn public speaking skills that will
 - a. you critically evaluate messages and appeals
 - b. Make you more sensitive to people and situations
 - c. Help you recognize and adapt to diverse audiences and occasions
 - d. Increase your self-confidence and willingness to communicate
 2. The skills gained from public speaking will benefit you in the workforce and make you a more competent and active citizen.

II. Public Speaking and Communication

Learning Objective 1.2: Describe public speaking as a communication process in which the speaker and listeners jointly create meaning and understanding.

- A. Public speaking is **communication**, interaction that builds connections between people and helps them to gain mutual understanding.
- B. The Audience's View
 1. Each listener comes to the speech with a framework of prior knowledge, beliefs, and values from which to decode a speaker's message.
 2. Each listener's framework will shape how he or she interprets and understands the speech.
- C. The Speaker's View
 1. Knowing the audience affects how a speech is developed.
 2. The speaker analyzes the audience to try to match listener expectations.
 3. The speaker modifies what he or she says even while speaking in response to audience cues.
- D. The Interplay
 1. Speakers can expect individual listeners to respond in different ways.
 2. By monitoring audience **feedback**, whether verbal or nonverbal, speakers can take these variant responses into account.
 3. In this way both speaker and listeners simultaneously participate in creating messages.

III. The Rhetorical Situation

Learning Objective 1.3: Name the elements of a rhetorical situation and explain the steps by which a speech affects the situation.

- A. Public speaking occurs in a specific situation.
 1. The **situation** is the specific context in which a speech is given.
 2. The study of how messages affect people has been called **rhetoric**.
 3. A **rhetorical situation** is a situation in which people's understanding can be changed through messages.

B. The Audience

1. Those listeners on which the success of a message depends.
2. Messages succeed when speakers create **identification**, common bonds between themselves and their audiences.
3. Identification is occasionally avoided when a speaker's goal requires separation from listeners.
4. Audience receptiveness and feedback contribute to the formation of speeches.

C. The Occasion

1. An occasion is the place and event where a speech is given. There are three types:
 - a. **Ceremonial** or epideictic speeches, such as award speeches, eulogies, and commemorative addresses, focus on the present and are usually concerned with praise.
 - b. **Deliberative** speeches, such as policy speeches, sales pitches, and campaign messages, focus on the future and are usually concerned with what should be done.
 - c. **Forensic** speeches, such as courtroom appeals, ask for judgment about past events.
2. Appropriate responses to occasions are determined by previous audience expectations as well as by simultaneous events.
3. The occasion presents the speaker with an **exigence**—a problem that cannot be avoided but that can be solved, or at least managed, through the development of an effective message.

D. The Speaker

1. The individual making the speech becomes a part of the message itself.
2. If different speakers were to present the same speech, each would produce different reactions and effects in an audience.
3. Positive *ethos*, loosely defined as the speaker's character, can contribute to the success of a presentation.
4. Speakers typically have one of three purposes in mind when presenting a speech but also combine them:
 - a. **Informing** provides listeners with new information or ideas.
 - b. **Persuading** influences listeners' attitudes and behaviors (either to strengthen existing beliefs or support new ones).
 - c. **Entertaining** stimulates a sense of community by celebrating common bonds among speaker and listeners.
5. Any speech has both a general purpose and one or more specific purposes.
6. The specific purpose is the standard to use in deciding whether the speech achieved its goal.

E. The Speech

1. What we say may also shape the situation.
2. The audience may better understand the situation after hearing a message.
3. Effective organization, interesting examples, and enthusiasm contribute to better audience understanding of the situation.

F. Constraints and Opportunities

1. Your speech responds to the situation and also modifies it; you face opportunities and constraints during that process.
2. A **strategy** is a plan of action to achieve stated goals.
3. Your audience's values serve as constraints within which you must work.
4. You can take advantage of the opportunity to modify your audience's beliefs and values.
5. Speaker opportunities are traditionally grouped under the following five headings:
 - a. **Invention:** the generation or discovery of effective materials
 - b. **Arrangement:** the structuring of ideas and materials to maximize meaning and clarity
 - c. **Style:** the power of language to make ideas clear and powerful
 - d. **Delivery:** the way you choose to present your speech
 - e. **Memory:** the ability to maintain a command of your ideas when speaking; speakers use either **extemporaneous presentation** (using an outline) or **manuscript presentation** (reading a written script)

In-Text Opportunity for Classroom Discussion

Choose a Strategy: Understanding the Rhetorical Situation

In this exercise students prepare a speech to deliver before a campus intermural committee considering a new intramural activity to support. Students will describe the rhetorical situation for a five-minute speech promoting lacrosse that includes consideration of the benefits, drawbacks, and costs of such a proposal for your campus. The exercise also includes "What If" scenarios to expand the exercise and complicate the speaking situation.

IV. The Public Forum

Learning Objective 1.4: Define the public forum and how studying public speaking will prepare you to participate effectively in it.

- A. **Public** is an important word in "public speaking."
 1. It designates speaking that is open and accessible to others.
 2. Speaking is public when it affects people beyond the immediate audience.
 3. For a speaker, giving a speech means entering into the **public forum**.
 - a. In classical times, the public forum was a physical space where citizens gathered to discuss issues.
 - b. Now it is an imagined "space" for the exchange of ideas.
- B. Characteristics of the Public Forum
 1. Some problems affect people collectively as well as individually.
 2. Cooperative action is needed.
 3. The decision requires subjective judgment.
 4. A decision is required.

In-Text Opportunity for Classroom Discussion

Strategies for Speaking to Diverse Audiences: Recognizing Diversity

This exercise asks students to be more aware of their frameworks and assumptions that are often "taken for granted." Important guidelines are provided to help students avoid making too many assumptions about their audience.

C. The Health of the Public Forum

1. Effective speech makes community life possible.
2. Exercising your skills as a speaker allows you to become a more effective participant in the public forum.
3. Discussion of public issues is best advanced when the public forum is active and vibrant.

In-Text Opportunity for Classroom Discussion

Rhetorical Workout: Find the Public Forum in Your Neighborhood

This exercise demonstrates the utility of public speaking among neighbors planning a rummage sale. All of the issues and problems that should be considered in terms of speaking in a group context are listed for students to think about. The exercise is a common speaking scenario that students might easily confront.

D. Public Speaking and the Public Forum

1. Democracy depends on an active public forum.
2. The public forum extends beyond traditional politics into local communities.
3. Civic engagement is now encouraged in higher education because students who are mindful of the impact of ideas are more likely to sustain an active public forum.
4. Activity in public speaking will not only make you a better communicator but also a better decision maker.

V. Ethics: Respect for Audience, Topic, and Occasion

Learning Objective 1.5: Identify the principal ethical obligations of listeners and speakers.

A. Respect for Your Listeners

1. Successful communication evokes common bonds between speaker and listeners.
2. Effective speakers adapt to their audiences, using the following guidelines:
 - a. Meet listeners where they are.
 - b. Don't insult listeners' intelligence or judgment.
 - c. Make sure your message merits the audience's time.
 - d. Respect listeners' ability to assess your message.
 - e. Respect the cultural diversity of your audience.

B. Respect for Your Topic

1. Care about your topic and have something important to say.
2. Your words outlast the speaking situation.
3. Know what you are talking about in order to present your topic clearly and fairly.

C. Responsibility for Your Statements

1. Speakers make claims on their audiences and thus you must hold to a high level of accuracy and integrity following these rules:
 - a. Fairly differentiate facts and opinions.
 - b. Identify your sources.
 - c. Paraphrase statements rather than quoting them unless exact wording is crucial.
 - i. **Plagiarism** is theft whether from carelessness or malice.
 - ii. Never present someone else's work as your own.
 - d. Use a variety of sources.

D. Concern for the Consequences of Your Speech

1. Listeners repeat messages or behave in response to them.
2. Speeches contribute to building the communities we live in.

KEY TERMS

critical thinking, LO 1.1	deliberative, LO 1.3	delivery, LO 1.3
opinions, LO 1.1	forensic, LO 1.3	memory, LO 1.3
strategic planning, LO 1.1	exigence, LO 1.3	extemporaneous
communication, LO 1.2	informing, LO 1.3	presentation, LO 1.3
feedback, LO 1.2	persuading, LO 1.3	manuscript presentation,
situation, LO 1.3	entertaining, LO 1.3	LO 1.3
rhetoric, LO 1.3	strategy, LO 1.3	public, LO 1.4
rhetorical situation, LO 1.3	invention, LO 1.3	public forum, LO 1.4
identification, LO 1.3	arrangement, LO 1.3	plagiarism, LO 1.5
ceremonial, LO 1.3	style, LO 1.3	

LECTURE TOPICS

1. Discuss how the communication and learning skills students develop in a public speaking course will help them in other classes and in their professional lives.
2. Explain why persons with effective speaking skills often enjoy a higher degree of confidence and self-esteem.
3. Discuss why students who are willing and able to speak in class may often achieve higher grades.
4. Discuss why employees who communicate effectively are often more successful at achieving promotions and are generally seen as more effective and competent.
5. Use PowerPoint™ to diagram and explain the communication process and explain how greater attention to the details of this process may enhance a person's communication skills.

GROUP IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

1. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a position on one side of a public controversy. (In a class of twenty-five or more students, this may require three or more topics.) Ask students to discuss the opportunities and constraints that a speaker would likely face in advancing a group's position. During discussion, they should construct a list of possible topics and strategies that would be reflected in a speech advancing their position. After the groups have completed their work, ask them to outline their strategies for the class. Because both the pro and con positions on the various topics will be represented by these groups, this discussion will give students an opportunity to see how basic rhetorical thinking contributes to invention.
2. Distribute copies of a newspaper editorial column and a news article, and ask students to compare the two by having them pick out statements of fact and statements of opinion. What unstated assumptions are at work? What kinds of value assumptions shape these opinions?
3. Have students spend a few minutes writing down features (beliefs, experiences, values, learning, etc.) they are likely to share in common with their classmates. Ask them to move

from more general commonalities to more specific (the latter requiring more effort and thought). Share lists with the whole class. Can these lists be merged, or are there some things that do not apply to everyone? Encourage students to use this information as the beginning of audience analysis. (Depending on the list, consider making copies for students.)

4. Break the class into groups of four or five. Have students recall some of their own experiences as listeners in which a speaker seemed to adapt well or poorly to his or her audience. Ask the groups to generate from their recollections a list of the various strengths and weaknesses of judgment that seemed to distinguish effective and ineffective speakers. Once all the groups have completed their work, have a representative from each group list these features on the board. Offer comments on how students have reflected the guidance in the text on examining rhetorical situations.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

1. Many of the communication skills listed on pages 2 and 3 are not directly involved with performing a speech (e.g., research, language, and organizational skills). How do these nonperformance skills support a speech? Have students discuss how these skills can be applied to areas other than public speaking.
2. Public speaking assumes that “matters of opinion” are a serious concern and that these matters of judgment cannot be settled by facts alone. Ask students to identify some of the differences of support or argument that might enable us to determine which are stronger and which are weaker opinions.
3. Have students consider the types of nonverbal feedback an audience can convey to a speaker. Are these nonverbal cues the same in every speaking context? Would a successful stand-up comic receive the same feedback as a speaker who gives an effective funeral eulogy?
4. Have students brainstorm topics that might be relevant in the public forum. Ask students to identify the features of these topics that make them matters of public as well as private concern.

REVEL WRITING EXERCISES

Journal Writing

1.1 Journal: The Benefits of Studying Public Speaking. What benefits will you get from studying public speaking? What specific skills do you hope to improve by taking this course?

1.2 Journal: Public Speaking and Communication. Why is public speaking a continuous communication process?

1.3 Journal: Rhetoric. What benefits will you get from studying public speaking? What specific skills do you hope to improve by taking this course?

1.4 Journal: The Public Forum. What is the public forum and what conditions need to be met for one to exist?

1.5 Journal: Ethics in Public Speaking. As a speaker, you should demonstrate high ethical standards in four areas. What are those four areas? Describe.

Shared Writing

How will the skills and concepts you learn in this course benefit you outside the classroom?