



Speech 1315 Public Speaking

Course Syllabus: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: John Murray

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COURSE DESCRIPTION / INSTRUCTOR PHILOSOPHY

An academic course and, specifically, a college-level (Dual Credit) course, that is focused on Public Speaking should be primarily focused on precisely what its name entails: PUBLIC SPEAKING. This means all students will be required to actively engage in class discussions and make high quality, well-rehearsed oral presentations to the class. These presentations will be of varying length and will suit specific purposes—informational, persuasive, informal, community awareness, research findings, etc.

This is an interdisciplinary course in speech and public address. I encourage students to research and present topics that are of high interest to themselves. When we explore topics of interest, we are more inclined to demonstrate the confidence, passion, and preparedness that are all hallmarks of effective communication. Students will find that these skills will help them in other academic courses, as well!

Grades for this course will be based on a variety of targeted outcomes. These include written arguments, presentation outlines, peer review and feedback, and (most importantly) the students' presentations, themselves. In most cases, events will be graded using a scoring rubric which we will discuss prior to each event.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All students must have access to and use either Microsoft Word or Google Docs for all written assignments. Students must also have access to and use PowerPoint, Google Slides, or Canva for their slides to support their presentations. ***There are no exceptions to these requirements.***

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

STUDENT COMPETENCIES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

By its design, Speech 1315 is a very dynamic, participative course. Academic success, which includes discernible growth in both speaking and writing, will be evident when students:

- a. will be able to research, organize, write and deliver speeches of varying lengths.
- b. will be able to demonstrate effective uses of non-verbal communication such as eye contact, hand gestures, and purposeful pacing.
- c. will be able to modify their oral delivery such as volume, inflection, and pause points in order to accentuate important information in their speeches.
- d. will be able to design and create visually appealing presentation slides that address key design elements such as graphics, non-excessive word use, and font/text size.
- e. will be able to analyze and evaluate others' speeches in order to provide accurate and meaningful feedback.

The overarching student outcomes are as follows:

- a. Critical Thinking – Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art.
- b. Communication – In written, oral, and/or visual communication, students will communicate in a manner appropriate to the audience and occasion.
- c. Personal Responsibility – Students will practice academic honesty and be both reliable and supportive of any team/small group projects/assignments.
- d. Social Responsibility – Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or social issue and will engage with all topics in an ethical, respectful manner.

This is a college-level course and expectations are those which are generally associated with those of any higher academic courses. While the Course Instructor is available to provide day-to-day instruction and to assist students through their academic journeys, students, themselves, are specifically responsible for their commitment to being successful.

Students need to be familiar with the East Texas A&M University learning management system (myLeo Online), know how to use a personal computer/laptop, navigate the internet, and use basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs, PowerPoint, Google Slides, and Canva. ***This course does not provide instruction in these areas.***

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This course is fully credentialed for Dual Credit by East Texas A&M University. Similarly, the Course Instructor is a credentialed Adjunct Professor with the university and has demonstrated significant expertise in the field. The design of this course and all of the associated student deliverables and learning outcomes are consistent with university expectations and are within the Course Instructor's recognized areas of expertise.

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STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES (NON-NEGOTIABLES)

- Students are expected to complete all assigned activities, irrespective of whether they are written, oral, or class participative in nature. Coursework will be submitted to D2L. ***Because of state and university archive requirements, emails are not acceptable submissions for coursework.***
- All students enrolled at the university shall follow tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.
- Students are expected to regularly check the course website and their school emails for announcements and updates. ***Failure to do so is not a suitable excuse for not meeting assignment responsibilities.***
- Students are expected to complete all assignments and readings ***on time***. ***NOTE: In accordance with Royse City High School Dual Credit Program policy, late work will not be accepted.*** Situations such as family emergencies and other extenuating circumstances will be grounds for exception.
- Students are expected to review any supplementary materials that the instructor provides, such as web links, news stories, etc.
- Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be on time to class.
- Students are expected to exhibit respect toward their fellow classmates and the instructor. This includes treating everyone with courtesy and esteem in all correspondence for the course. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.
- The university does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Instances of inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence, Plagiarism, or any form of cheating will receive corrective actions up to and including expulsion from the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:
 - plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own)
 - cheating on exams or other course assignments
 - collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments or taking exams)
 - abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.
 - For this course, academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic work. In particular, any student who passes off work as their own that was actually written by someone else, without proper citation or attribution, will be considered to have committed plagiarism. This holds true whether material comes from the textbook, another publication, an Internet source, or another student.
 - Any act of academic dishonesty on a Classwork Activity will result in a score of 0 for that event. There will be no opportunity for make-up or remediation. The Course instructor MAY advocate for student removal from the course.
 - Any act of academic dishonesty on a Major Activity (Speech Outline, formal presentation) will result in a 0 for the entire semester's exam grade. There will be no opportunity for make-up or remediation. The Course instructor WILL advocate for student removal from the course.
 - Instances of academic dishonesty may also be referred to the appropriate offices on campus and may result in significant administrative penalties.

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GRADING

Semester grades will be the cumulative result of individual assignment grades. There are 1,000 points available for the semester. The maximum point value for each assignment will be listed in the assignment.

Final grades for this course will be as follows:

- A = 900 – 1,000
- B = 800 – 899
- C = 700 – 799
- D = 600 – 699
- F = 599 and Below

Final grades will be earned as a result of tabulating scores earned on individual events.

To put these scores into context, failure to submit a single 100-point event will result in the decrease of a full letter grade in the course.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS).

LMS:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Students will need their campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If students do not know their CWID or have forgotten their password, they must contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903-468-6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu. ***The Course Instructor does not have access to student log-in information and, as such, resolving these issues is not the Course Instructor's responsibility.***

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the

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availability of a backup PC at home or school, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If students have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, they must attempt to resolve those issues themselves by contacting RCHS technology personnel and/or counselors. If students have tech challenges with MyLeo, they must quickly resolve that by contacting ETAMU. It is the student's responsibility to work these issues until they are resolved. In most cases, this will require the student to participate in a live Zoom call.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Any student who encounters technical difficulty with any part of MyLeo (D2L) must contact Technical Support at 1-903-468-6000.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

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Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
East Texas A&M University
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement Texas Senate

Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule The syllabus/schedule are subject to change. 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer. Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&MCommerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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AI Use Policy

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. The syllabus/schedule are subject to change. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Course Assignment Explanations

Classwork Activities:

- a. Documentation of work completed or research conducted
- b. Classroom Facilitator verification of speech rehearsal
- c. Classroom Facilitator verification of group interaction and small group planning

Narrative Performance: A story from your life (Topic will be assigned)

Informative Speech: A traditionally organized and evidenced public speech on an important topic of public significance.

Persuasive (Argumentative) Speech: A problem-solution speech that illustrates how your solution uphold two important values.

Student Reflections: You will provide thoughtful analysis of your strengths and areas of improvement as well as offer questions/commentary related to scores earned.

Visuals: Slide presentations constructed through PowerPoint, Google Slides or Canva that are used to support a speech.

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Class Schedule

Ideally, we will follow a research/planning/slide creation segment of an assignment followed by an oral presentation segment of the assignment. All activities will incorporate a variety of written and oral deliverables along with student reflection and grade acknowledgement/discussion.

Assignments are considered complete once they are uploaded into MyLeo. Because they cannot be downloaded as single presentations in MyLeo, NO .ZIP FILES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Examples of assignments we will complete include:

“I Can’t Imagine Life Without” – 1-Page illustration with oral presentation

“This is Me” – slide creation with oral presentation

“16 Personalities” – on-line assessment with analysis, slide creation and oral presentation

“My Dream Vacation” – slide creation and oral presentation

“My Super Hero” – slide creation and oral presentation

“Mid-Term Reflection” – personal assessment of growth and areas for improvement

“Hero, Icon or Inspiration” – research, slide creation and oral presentation

“My Future Career” -- research, slide creation and oral presentation