



De Anza Community College – Spring 2025  
Department of Communication Studies  
COMM 1: Public Speaking, Section 02Y  
Mon / Wed 10:30am – 12:20pm in person  
+ 1 Hour Online Asynchronous

**Instructor:** Laureen Mercer

**Email:** [mercerlaureen@fhda.edu](mailto:mercerlaureen@fhda.edu) (preferred mode of contact)

**Office hour:** Mondays 9:45am – 10:30am

**TBA Hour:** Wednesdays 9:45am – 10:30am

**Office/TBA location:** MLC-105

**Classroom:** MLC - 105

**GE Category:** Core GE Area A1: Oral Communication

**Prerequisites:** Eligibility for 1A or ESL 5

**Transferable:** This course meets the Communication Requirement – 5 units of credit

### **80/20 Hybrid Course**

You have enrolled in an 80/20 hybrid 5-unit course. This means that, as a 5-unit course, we will meet on campus for a total of four hours per week with an additional hour of coursework to be completed online on Canvas. **Note: This does not include work assigned as homework.**

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### **Need to contact me? Ask a question? I'm here!**

**Office Hours:** Please drop in during my office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:45am – 10:30am or by appointment

*(Note: I know there are times when it's best to meet 1:1 but we're both not on campus. No problem! I'm happy to meet with you on Zoom if that works better for you. Just ask :)*

**Canvas Mail:** Canvas Inbox (Click on the "Inbox" icon in the left margin) .

**Communication Policy:** I do my best to reply to course-related questions and Inbox messages within 24 hours on weekdays. While I sometimes reply to emails on weekends, please do not rely on this.

### **What Can You Expect of Me?**

Your experience in my class matters because **you matter!** It's for this reason that I try my best to provide a space in which you feel respected, comfortable, heard, supported, and yes, challenged--but in a good way ;)

### **With this in mind, here's what you can expect from me:**

- **Announcements/Reminders:** I will post an announcement every Sunday night or Monday morning with an update for the week, reminders of upcoming assignments and activities, and/or reflections and observations from the previous week(s).
- **Gentle nudges:** If I notice that you haven't submitted work or logged into our Canvas course that week, I will contact you by the end of the week via a group message or a direct message to you personally. This is my way of "checking in" to help and support you if needed and/or nudge you if you, like me, sometimes need that little nudge to get back on track.
- **Informal Feedback:** On smaller weekly assignments, I will offer comments that are intended to do the following:
  - Individual Assignments:
    - pose a question for you to consider as part of your analysis and/or understanding of the topic
    - reply as a partner in a conversation about something you've highlighted in an assignment
    - highlight your important insights and extend your thinking on course content
    - celebrate your successes
    - offer constructive feedback highlighting what to consider to improve in this class and become an even more effective communicator
  - Online Discussions:
    - I will engage in the course discussion areas regarding academic course content when appropriate.

Note: I may not reply or offer informal comments to every assignment, but you can expect to see a variety of my interactions in person and online throughout the quarter.

- **Formal feedback:** On major assignments and projects, I will offer comments that are intended to do all the above. You should expect feedback within 7 - 14 days in **at least one** of the following ways:
  - completed rubric with comments
  - annotations to your self-reflections
  - 1:1 in-person conferences
  - annotations to submitted coursework/project(s)
  - video feedback

### Course Materials

OPENSTAX/OER. (2024). [The Public Speaking Project](#). Millersville University.

\*This is a free, open-source eBook that is available in PDF form on our course Canvas page or using the link above.

Other readings as specified by the instructor.

### Supplies

One package of 3 x 5 index cards.

### Technology Requirements

This class will be in a hybrid distance learning format; therefore, reliable access to technology, including audio & video capabilities, as well as reliable internet will be necessary. **Note: You will be recording your speeches in and out of class, so access to one recording device for recording video and audio of your speeches, such as a cell phone, camera, laptop, or tablet is required.**

All students are required to utilize Canvas each week. E-mailed assignments are not acceptable. The following link provides information about logging in and getting assistance: <https://www.deanza.edu/students/tech-support.html>

### Course Description

Effective public speaking skills are essential for members of a democratic society. In this course, you will develop strategies for designing well-organized, researched, extemporaneous speeches on topics of social significance adapted to a diverse audience. The speaking engagements, in-class activities, small group discussions, and speeches allow you to practice and critique your oral communication skills as well as observe and evaluate those of others. Readings, lectures, written assignments, and class discussions serve as resources for you as you develop your public speaking abilities and become more at ease when addressing an audience.

### Course Learning Objectives (CLO's)

1. Examine historical and cultural traditions of oral communication in both domestic and global contexts. and assess their impact on our views, beliefs, and practices relating to speaking in public.
2. Evaluate how making the decision to respect diversity, speak ethically, and think critically influences communication outcomes.
3. Select, locate, evaluate and use information technologies and information sources.
4. Apply research, analyze, organize, compose, present, and evaluate informative and persuasive speeches.
5. Develop confidence in delivering speeches extemporaneously in front of a live audience.
6. Develop listening skills to foster respectful, reflective, and critical listening appropriate in public presentation.

### Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

In addition to the course objectives, there are also specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) associated with COMM 1. Specifically, by the end of this course, students will:

1. Organize, compose, present, and critically evaluate informative and persuasive presentations appropriate in content and style to the audience and situation.
2. Display increasing confidence in speaking extemporaneously.
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills in various public speaking contexts.
4. Identify, locate, evaluate and use information technologies and information sources.

### Class Policies: Attendance, Punctuality, and Etiquette

- Public speaking is an intensive, skills-building activity for most students—a class that involves and evolves from our collective discussions and risk-taking. This means that it is in your best interest to attend and actively participate in every session. **You must arrive on time and stay for the entire class.** However, should an emergency arise, please do

everything in your power to contact me prior to missing class so that we might try to make alternative arrangements. **Contact the instructor as soon as possible to devise a plan.**

- **Non-attendance with more than THREE absences may result in being dropped from the class.** Instances of repeated tardiness or leaving class early without prior notification will each count as an absence.

### **Note about participation**

#### **In Class**

1. Participation is an important part of this course. If you are not in class one day, you will not be able to get credit for participation that day. Participation is more than just attendance. It means coming prepared with the readings and assignments, active listening, discussion, group conversation and contribution to in class activities. Again, each absence and/or a lack of participation results in loss of participation points from your final grade. Instances of repeated tardiness or leaving class early without prior notification will each count as an absence.
2. Please do not disrupt a speech in progress, if you are late. Wait outside till the speaker has finished the speech and then enter the class. The same rule applies to electronic devices. You will lose participation points if you do not adhere to both these rules.

#### **Online**

1. **All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas unless otherwise instructed.** (Note: By submitting this electronic copy to Canvas, you may also be submitting your work to Turnitin.com, an online plagiarism detection service.)
2. Online participation includes but is not limited to timely and meaningful participation in all online discussions; timely submission of all assignments; responsible and active participation in group activities; courteous and responsive communication with all members of the class. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in loss of participation points from your final grade.

**Note about deadlines: I do not accept late speeches.** Late speeches impact the entire class; if you do not deliver and submit your speech on time, then your peers cannot submit their peer reviews on time. Please be prepared to deliver your speeches by the due date.

Having said this, I understand that we all have busy lives and/or personal issues that might distract us from being the best we can be. Important and often unforeseen things come up, preventing us from completing assignments on time. For this reason, all other non-speech assignments **may be accepted up to TWO DAYS late at a 10% penalty for each day late.**

Note: late assignments may impact your participation grade as well, so be sure to weigh the impact of submitting late assignments on your final grade.

**ALL Canvas assignments will lock TWO days after the scheduled due date.**

**Emergencies:** Should an unforeseen personal emergency come up for you, please talk to me **at least 24 hours BEFORE** an assignment is due, as I may consider options to accommodate your concern.

#### **As a member of this class, you have responsibilities beyond simply showing up:**

- Attendance and Participation: BE PRESENT! This means that you come to class, arrive on time, actively engage in class, and focus on the content of the course with minimal distractions.
- Come to class prepared: Complete assigned readings and be ready to discuss them.
- Ask any and all questions you have regarding the text, lecture material, or assignments. Be proactive, not reactive in your inquiries. For example, do not ask about the requirements for an assignment on the day it is due (or, even worse, afterwards); these must be clarified in advance. If you do not understand something, please ask. Most likely, other people have the same or similar questions or concerns.
- Demonstrate good communication skills on a regular basis. It is important to write with clarity and purpose, to work productively in small groups, to actively listen to the contributions of other members of the class, and to think critically about central issues related to communication and society.
- Work with others to establish a cooperative/respectful climate. This means supporting your peers, giving constructive criticism, being open to new ways of thinking, having an awareness of tone, and being considerate of others when discussing ideas.

- This course will require us to discuss issues that may yield a wide variety of opinions. When engaging in classroom discussion, I ask that each person thoughtfully consider the ideas being presented. Whether we agree with these ideas or not, we can have a fruitful dialogue as long as we treat one another with respect.
- Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording them. You must obtain my permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not received any rights to reproduce or distribute the material. Course material developed by an instructor is the intellectual property of that instructor and cannot be shared publicly without their approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without my consent.

### **Diversity Statement**

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicity, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and non-visible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

### **Preferred Name & Preferred Gender Pronouns**

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Note: In this classroom, we will not tolerate hate speech** (i.e., abusive language or gestures that could incite emotional distress or violent response), violence, harassment, or discriminatory conduct. Students will adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) as described in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

### **Campus Services**

**Undocumented Students:** If you are an undocumented student and seek knowledgeable, honest, and trustworthy assistance with financial aid programs such as AB540 and the California DREAM Act, or have any other concerns about your citizenship or academic pathways, please reach out to [HEFAS](http://www.deanza.edu/vida/hefas.html) (http://www.deanza.edu/vida/hefas.html) for more information.

**LGBTQ+ Students:** If you are an LGBTQ+ student struggling with identity or finding community, please see the Women, Gender, and [Sexuality Center](https://www.deanza.edu/equityoffice/wgs-center/) in MLC-250 (<https://www.deanza.edu/equityoffice/wgs-center/>)

### **Student Accessibility Services:**

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. Our [Disability and Support Resource Services](#) at De Anza College is designed to help students with disabilities to achieve success by providing specialized assessment instructional programs and support services. The office is located in the Student Services Bldg., RSS 141. Contact Information is as follows:  
Phone: (408) 430-7681  
Website: <https://www.deanza.edu/dsps/dss/>  
DSPS Counselors: <https://www.deanza.edu/dsps/our-counselors.html>  
[Disability Information Student Handbook](#)  
If you prefer in-person services, you can stop by the Advanced Technology Center AT 209 Monday-Thursday from 8am-5pm, and Friday from 8am-3pm. I look forward to working with you in this class.

### **ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION and POLICIES**

#### **Academic Integrity and Student Conduct:**

- Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at De Anza College, and the Plagiarism/Cheating Policy, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. You should, therefore, submit your own, original work for this course. Dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the College and its officials is prohibited and may lead to appropriate disciplinary action. It is my obligation as an instructor to inform the College authorities of any type of dishonest activity.
- [https://www.deanza.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity.html](https://www.deanza.edu/policies/academic_integrity.html)

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**A word about AI: Submitting content as your own work using ChatGPT and/or other AI tools is considered cheating and is NOT allowed.** Not only is this academically dishonest, but it is also depriving you of the opportunity to think critically and improve your writing skills. Having said this, Chat GPT and other AI software can have a place in this class, so we'll talk about areas in which its use is appropriate and recommended.

- Note: Instances of its use can be detected by Turnitin.com, other available AI detectors, and my years of teaching experience. Assignments submitted using AI generators like ChatGPT will receive a "0" and may be reported to college officials.

### **Student Disclosures of Sexual Violence**

De Anza College is committed to fostering a campus free of sexual and gender-based violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as a De Anza College student, the course instructor is required to notify the Vice President of Student Services. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact: Campus Police 408.924.8000; Health Services 408.864.8732; Psychological Services 408.864.8732; or Dean of Student Development 408.864.8828.

### **Sexual Harassment/Discrimination:**

- All students, staff, and faculty should be aware both that the district is concerned and prepared to take action to prevent and correct such behavior. Individuals who engage in such behavior are subject to discipline. The district is committed to following the provisions of federal and state laws prohibiting sexual harassment or discrimination in employment and educational programs and services, without regard to race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, political beliefs, organizational affiliation, sexual orientation, gender, or age.
- [https://www.deanza.edu/policies/title\\_ix.html](https://www.deanza.edu/policies/title_ix.html)
- <https://www.deanza.edu/policies/antidiscrimination.html>

### **Withdrawal/Drop Policy:**

- It is the responsibility of the student to drop the class. Students should not rely on the instructor to drop them from a class for non-attendance. You may drop classes online by logging in to [MyPortal](#): Open the "Apps" page and click on the "Student Registration" tile, then click on the "Add or Drop Classes" link. (For detailed instructions, see the [MyPortal Registration Guide](#).)

### **Brief Description of Assignments and Speeches**

All quarter we will progressively work to reduce your public speaking anxiety and build your public speaking skills through class work and textbook lessons, as well as practice in the classroom. Over this quarter, you will complete *at least FIVE* speeches of varying lengths.

- **"What's Your Why?" Speech:** In this short ice-breaker introductory speech, you will share what motivates you, what gives you purpose in your life.
- **Values/Adage:** In this short 2-4 minute speech, you will present an important adage or your core values as related to your life and community.
- **Impromptu Speech:** You will be given two topics from which to choose and deliver a short, yet organized and effective speech with limited preparation time.
- **Informative/Idea/Concept/ Demonstration Speech:** A 4–5-minute informative speech on an important social/cultural issue or concern facing today's society.
- **Persuasive/Policy Speech:** A 5–6-minute persuasive speech designed to convince and motivate your audience to advocate a public policy change that will effectively address the problem/issue.

**NOTE:** Since we only meet 2 x per week, you may need to record at least one of your speaking assignments, both formal and informal. For the major speeches (Informative and Persuasive), you are required to present before a public audience that you find on your own. The minimum number of audience members you must have in attendance of **at least 6** people. You will record (audio and video) and upload each speech to Canvas (either via Discussion Board or Assignment) for peer

and instructor feedback. Finding or building a “real” audience (rather than speaking to a captive room of college students) is an opportunity for you to have a genuine and meaningful public speaking experience. You will need to use your camera to “pan” (show) the audience before and after each speech. This speech must be uploaded to Canvas to earn credit.

**Topic proposals:** After some preliminary research and other considerations (e.g., audience analysis), you will submit a plan including appropriate supporting materials, general and specific purposes, a potential thesis statement, and the organizational structure for your speech.

**Complete sentence outlines:** You will submit full-sentence, 500 – 1000 word outlines for each major speech. Incomplete and/or improperly formatted outlines will not receive full credit, and outlines that do not demonstrate college-level academic writing and professionalism will not merit a passing grade. **Outlines must be submitted before giving your speech presentation.**

### Quizzes

Throughout the quarter you will be required to complete at least six short quizzes that will test your knowledge of course content, including information from required readings, lectures, assigned videos, and in-class lessons. Each quiz may consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. All quizzes will be delivered via Canvas and will be open-book and timed. **Note: you are responsible for information gained from assigned textbook readings, whether or not the content was discussed in class.**

### Peer Responses

For 2 -3 of the assigned speeches, you will compose constructive peer responses (formal and informal) for your classmates to support their growth as speakers. Critical and focused listening of others' presentations will help you reflect on effective public speaking, further assisting you in delivering an effective speech.

### Self-Reflections

You will reflect on three of your performances as a means of appraising your growth and setting future goals as a speaker. *Each self-evaluation should be 300 - 500 words.*

### Discussion Posts & Responses, In-class Activities and Participation

Throughout the quarter, you will be required to engage in online discussions with your peers to enhance your skills in communication. These discussions will take place via Canvas and/or in class.

Additionally, each in-class session will include engaging, practical, hands-on activities. Because these activities will only be held during class meetings, **you must be in attendance to complete this work and earn credit.** These in-class activities not only play a role in taking attendance, they also are a tool to foster community and support.

**Note:** In-class activities will be assessed on a C/NC basis. If you come to class prepared and on time, and you engage with your peers and me, you should expect full credit. **If you don't come and/or are often tardy, there will be no credit given.**

Assignment Categories	Assignments	Total Point Values
Speeches	What's My Why	20
	Values/Adage	50
	Informative/Demonstration	125
	Persuasive/Policy	175
Proposals	2 proposals @ 20pts. each	40
Outlines	Drafts x 3 @ 10pts. each	30
	Values/Adage	20
	Informative/Idea/Concept	50
	Persuasive/Policy	70
Quizzes	5 - 6 Reading Quizzes @ approx. 20pts. each	100-120
Formal Peer Responses	2 - 3 Peer Responses @ 15pts. each	20-30
Self-Reflections	3 Self-Reflections @ 15/15/20 points each)	50
In-Class Participation: Discussions and Activities	5 points per in-person class  <i>No points earned for non-attendance no matter the reason</i>	100 - 110



Various online assignments - Throughout quarter	5 – 10 points per assignment	75-150
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### Grading Scale

Your final grade is based on the following point scale:

100% = A	89% - 87% = B+	79% - 77% = C+	69% - 67% = D+	59% or below = F
99% - 94% = A	86% - 84% = B	76% - 70% = C	66% - 64% = D	
93% - 90% = A-	83% - 80% = B-		63% - 60% = D-	

### Grading Standards:

"A" work is largely flawless. It contains no major mistakes or weaknesses. It is extremely clear, thoughtful, and thorough. It not only addresses the required components of the assignment, but it goes above and beyond to do so.

"B" work is very strong but has a few minor weaknesses. These weaknesses are not distracting. There may be a few minor details that need improvement, but the work is impressive, overall. It not only addresses the required components of the assignment but also goes slightly above.

"C" work is average. It mostly contains strengths, but its weaknesses are slightly distracting. There may be some fairly major details that need improvement, but the work is still of decent quality. It addresses the required components of the assignment but does not go beyond that.

"D" work is below average. It contains more weaknesses than strengths. Its weaknesses are distracting. Most of the details and ideas are underdeveloped. It addresses some, but not all the required components of the assignment.

"F" work shows no strengths and contains several errors. The details are extremely underdeveloped if they are present at all. Very little to none of the assignment's required components are addressed.

### Formatting Instructions

Unless instructed otherwise, all written work should be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins all around, in standard 12-point Times New Roman, Cambria, Calibri, or Arial font, and submitted to Canvas. Citations should be formatted in accordance with MLA or APA guidelines.

### Note about written assignments:

All assignments will be graded in Canvas. In addition to the specific criteria described in the grading rubrics, your work will be graded on how well it demonstrates the following qualities:

- ⇒ **Complete:** Does the work sufficiently address the prompt and/or the assignment requirements? Is it sufficiently developed?
- ⇒ **Clear:** Is the work clear? Do you present an argument that logically progresses from one point to the next? Are your claims well supported with good/strong evidence from proper sources?
- ⇒ **Correct:** Is the work accurate? Is it free of errors, whether in reasoning, grammar, typography, APA/MLA citation style, etc.?
- ⇒ **Compelling:** Finally, but perhaps most importantly, to what degree does the work go beyond simply "checking off the boxes" to present arguments, insights, and/or reflections that are thought provoking and interesting? To what degree does the work demonstrate a deep and/or novel understanding of the material?

**Note:** Assignments not meeting the above requirements may be returned for revision and resubmission.

