SYLLABUS: PRESENTATION SKILLS FOR LAWYERS
Lawg-682-11

Professor: Andrew D. Wolvin, Ph.D.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide background and experience in oral communication skills. Specifically, the course aims to introduce students to various methods of:
1. effectively communicating to a variety of public audiences outside of the courtroom
2. composing and arranging materials in order to effectively achieve adherence to ideas communicated orally to various audiences
3. adapting messages to desired purposes and to target audiences to achieve communication ends
4. managing information before, during, and after public presentations in order to maximize understanding and persuasive appeals.

Textbook

Standard SD Card

Course Assignments

1. Required readings
2. In-class activities and exercises
3. Peer and instructor evaluations
4. Story
5. Informative Presentation
6. Persuasive Speech
7. Lawyer Briefing
8. 2 Self-analyses
8. Final Briefing

For each presentation, please select a topic that has professional relevance to you and to your classmate listeners. Note: This is NOT a course in manuscript speaking. You are asked to prepare and present extemporaneous (prepared speaking from an outline) speeches from minimal notes. **Since manuscript delivery generally is not an effective style, any attempt to present speeches from written script will result in a significantly lower delivery grade.** These are professional presentations. Please do not wear caps or distracting t-shirts/sweatshirts when you
present. On presentation nights, please leave your laptops closed so you can concentrate on the speakers. You will be asked to complete listening critiques for each speaker.

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**Course Schedule**

**Week 1 (January 23):**  
**Topic:** Introduction to the Course. Discovering Yourself As a Communicator.  
**Reading Assignment:** Chapter 1.  
**In-Class Exercise:** Briefing: describe yourself as a communicator.

**Week 2 (January 30):**  
**Topic:** Listening.  
**In-Class Exercise:** Listening/audience inventories.  
**Reading Assignment:** Chapters 2, 4.

**Week 3 (February 7):**  
**Topic:** Audience Analysis; Speaker.  
**In-Class Exercise:** Adaptation to audiences.  
**Reading Assignment:** Chapters 5, 10, 11.

**Week 4 (February 14):**  
**Topic:** Speaker  
**In-Class Exercise:** Using the PEP formula, tell a thoroughly rehearsed story that makes a point for your listeners (to be video recorded and reviewed in class).  
**Due:** Story presentation. (Bring your SD card.)

**Week 5 (Thursday - February 23):**  
**Topic:** Structure, Support, and Style.  
**In-Class Exercise:** Outline your informative presentation.  
**Reading Assignment:** Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 12.  
**Assignment:** Identify your topic (on some aspect of law on which you have expertise) and do your research for your informative presentation in order to prepare, in this class, an outline of the presentation.

**Week 6 (February 28):**  
**Topic:** Informative Presentations Group I.  
**In-Class Exercise:** Informative Presentations, Group I (video recorded).  
**Time Limit:** 7 minutes speaking time; 10 minutes for questions/answers, self-critique and class critique.  
**Assignment:** Prepare a 6-8 minute informative presentation in which you share information about a particular aspect of your legal expertise that will be of interest to your classmate listeners. Utilize the partitioning structure and incorporate some PowerPoint slides in your presentation. Be sure to speak to your credibility on the topic. Rehearse your presentation thoroughly.  
**Due:** Informative presentation. (Bring your SD card.)
Week 7 (March 6):
Topic: Informative Presentations Group II.
In-Class Exercise: Informative Presentations, Group II (video recorded).
Time Limit: 7 minutes speaking time; 10 minutes for questions/answers, self-critique and class critique.
Assignment: Prepare informative presentation (per Week 7 assignment).
Due: Informative presentation. (Bring your SD card.)

Week 8 (March 13):
No Class. Spring Break

Week 9 (March 20):
Topic: Principles of Persuasive Speaking.
Reading Assignment: Chapter 13.
Assignment: Prepare a thorough two-part self-analysis. First, establish criteria–standards of excellence for both content and delivery--for an effective informative presentation. Second, using the ballot results, class critiques and the video, evaluate your informative presentation according to those content and delivery criteria. Also, please report the numerical results of your pre and post knowledge/interest balloting.
Due: Informative presentation analysis. Bring to class your thesis (on a national/international policy issue) for your persuasive presentation. Also bring an example of the persuasive use of a motivational appeal to which you have been assigned.

Week 10 (March 27):
Topic: Persuasive Presentations, Group I.
In-Class Exercise: Persuasive presentations, Group I (video recorded)
Time Limit: 7 minutes speaking time; 10 minutes for questions/answers, self-critique and class critique.
Assignment: Prepare a 6-8 minute persuasive presentation on a national/international policy issue on which you have expertise and a strong viewpoint. Establish your credibility, build a strong argument, and utilize persuasive motivational appeals in this presentation. Use of PowerPoint is optional. Thoroughly rehearse so that your delivery will have a professional, persuasive impact.
Due: Persuasive presentation. (Bring your SD card.)

Week 11 (April 3):
Topic: Persuasive Presentations, Group II.
In-Class Exercise: Persuasive presentations, Group II (video recorded).
Time Limit: 7 minutes speaking time; 10 minutes for questions/answers, self-critique and class critique.
Assignment: Prepare persuasive presentation (per Week 11 assignment).
Due: Persuasive presentation. (Bring your SD card.)
Week 13 (April 10):
Topic: Lawyer Briefing: Rhetorical Analysis of a Lawyer’s Presentation, Group I.
In-Class Exercise: Lawyer Briefings, (video recorded).
Time Limit: 7 minutes speaking time; 10 minutes for questions/answers, self-critique and class critique.
Assignment: Prepare a 6-8 minute briefing on a lawyer’s presentation. Find video footage of an actual (not a tv/movie) lawyer. Present an analysis of the lawyer’s presentation utilizing video clips to illustrate your points. Rehearse thoroughly so that you exemplify a solid, professional presentation style.
Due: Lawyer briefing. (Bring your SD card.)

Week 14 (April 17):
Topic: Lawyer Briefing: Rhetorical Analysis of a Lawyer’s Presentation, Group II.
In-Class Exercise: Lawyer Briefings, (video recorded).
Time Limit: 7 minutes speaking time; 10 minutes for questions/answers, self-critique and class critique.
Assignment: Prepare Lawyer Briefing (per Week 13 assignment).
Due: Lawyer briefing. (Bring your SD card.) Persuasive speaking analysis paper.

Week 15 (April 24):
Topic: Final Briefing
Assignment: Prepare a short final briefing on your work as a communicator this semester:
A section on your accomplishments as a speaker
A section on your accomplishments as a listener
A section on your application of these communication skills to your career plans