

Course Overview: Speech

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Course Description:

In this semester elective students learn the proper techniques of public speaking, including methods of dealing with performance anxiety and stage fright. Students will write and present original speeches and poetry, present oral interpretations of existing works, conduct group and individual debates, and participate in classroom discussions. Students will demonstrate their understanding of various types of speeches, including informational, persuasive, motivational, and demonstration. Informal presentations include discussing current events and preparing for career and college interviews.

Major Texts:

The major texts for this course: Model speeches by great speakers & by your peers.
These will take various forms: Written/transcript, audio, video, live.

A Little Sumpin' About a Speech Class:

The operative word is "SPEECH," which means we'll be SPEAKING most of the time. However, we'll also attend to the sometimes silent, sometimes solitary, craft of public speaking (the process, product, and presentation) as well as the crafting of our peers. We will be a community of Speaker-Explorers who can give and gain, help or hinder. So, if you are to share your work on any given day but fail to come prepared, our community suffers. You were to be our firestarter, but you failed to bring the spark to ignite us. We cannot begin without your spark. We will not survive without that fire.

EVERYBODY in the room is responsible to EVERYBODY in the room. On any given day, if you are not sharing or preparing your speech, you will be offering feedback for someone else's. And that's what puts the "U" in COMM-U-NITY! (YOU DO!)

*You'll note talk of FAILURE above. Of course there is. Speakers, like baseball players & engineers and, uh, nearly every other performer or highly successful person on the planet, fail early & fail often. Hall-of-Famers strike out. Space rockets crash. Broadway shows flop. If you're willing to flop early & flop often, we'll all succeed in the end. (You may flop as a speaker, but NOT as a classmate!)

Homework & Assessment:

At Our Lady of Mercy, we believe that homework is an essential part of the learning process. Purposeful homework tasks help students to build independence, develop and refine skills, and build their confidence as learners. At Mercy, homework is assigned to students in an effort to:

- Help students be READY for the learning that will occur in class
- Engage students in PRACTICE needed to develop fluency in important skills
- Guide students in PROCESSING and reviewing new learning
- Provide students with opportunities to REVISE their thinking
- Help students to BUILD their background knowledge

Assessments will be a collection of individual & team work, written work, oral presentations, discussions, and the evaluation of, and feedback for, peers' presentations. Most reading/writing/listening/viewing will be done outside of class, so the essential live & real-time sharing, and the resulting essential feedback, can happen in class.

NOTE: As stated earlier, if our in-class interactions are to be successful, each student must take personal responsibility to complete assigned work on time. This is a matter of respect for our fellow Speaker-Explorers in our thriving learning community.

Late Work - Deadlines:

You must submit all written work on time or risk losing credit. Deadlines matter outside our classroom walls, so they should matter inside our walls, as well. To be an active citizen in a democracy, you must meet the very important DEADLINE of getting to the polls on election day, or your voice will not be heard. If you have your act together, however, there is an exception called an Absentee Ballot, a concept we will discuss in class & incorporate into this policy to assist you.

You must submit all major written work to pass the course.

The new (2021-22) OLM Late Work Policy is as follows:

- Students are expected to submit all assignments by the date established by the teacher.
- Grades on assignments will reflect student understanding of content, however, 20% will be deducted for all assignments submitted late, with the exception of an excused absence.
- No credit will be given for assignments turned in one week past the due date, unless by prior arrangement with the teacher.
- Teachers will work with students to establish deadlines when late work is the result of an excused absence. If work is not completed by the established deadline, the late assignment guidelines will go into effect.
- It is the expectation that the students and parents/guardians will monitor their grades in the online gradebook.

- Teachers will conference with students and parents when there are multiple occurrences of assignments being turned in late.

Grading:

Emphasis will be on the public speaking process vs. the final product; however, a pure and vigorous pursuit & an intense desire for personal growth is expected throughout.

Quarter grades are calculated as a percentage of total points available for the term, with larger assignments garnering more points (e.g. tests & larger written projects typically = 100 points; lighter written work such as daily homework & quizzes typically = 10 to 50 points). So, if there are 1,000 points available and you receive 900, then you have 90%.

FINAL GRADE FORMULA: Quarter 1= 47.5%, Quarter 2=47.5%, Final Project=15%

Final percentages will be converted to Mercy's LETTER grade system each term.

End of Course Learning Goals & Classroom Expectations:

Upon course completion, students should be equipped with an enriched curiosity about public speaking in its many forms and a renewed pride in the power of their voices.

Let's enjoy this journey together!

The Classroom 3 R's:

Responsibility.....Have it

Respect.....Exhibit it & Earn it

Rip-Roarin' Fun.....Enjoy it

(Student signature)

(Parent/Guardian signature)