

# SPCH 101, Public Speaking (Online Accelerated)

Kurtis D. Miller

**Course Description:** Speaking clearly and comfortably in public is an essential skill set. This course prepares students for a variety of professional situations in which formal presentations are expected. Topics will include cultural conventions of speech, verbal and nonverbal messaging, and techniques of oral presentation and persuasion. Students will learn to research, outline, and deliver a variety of speeches (e.g. demonstrative, informative, persuasive, special occasion, etc.) of varying lengths.

*The syllabus for this course is subject to change at any time. This includes, but is not limited to, such elements as required assignments, grading requirements/scales and the course calendar. Updates will be communicated through the Canvas announcement system.*

## Instructor Information

Kurtis D. Miller, PhD.

- Office: Garland Library, Room 126
- Office Phone: 423-636-7300 Ext. 5783
- Email: [kdmiller@tusculum.edu](mailto:kdmiller@tusculum.edu)
- Online: [kurtisdmler.com](http://kurtisdmler.com)

The Question & Answer Forum on Canvas is the preferred method of communication for most student questions. Questions of a confidential or personal nature should be sent by email. I do not accept assignments by email. I typically check email once daily during business hours Monday to Thursday. Additional information is available below in my [email policy](#)

Virtual Office Hours via Zoom at <https://tusculum.zoom.us/j/95312191625>. Contact me by email to set up appointments outside of drop-in hours.

Drop-in	By Appointment
W, 2:30 - 4:30 pm	M, 10:00 - 11:00 am M, 2:30 - 3:30 pm W, 10:00 - 11:00 am

## Required Texts and Materials

The textbook for this course is "A Speaker's Guidebook" (O'Hair, Stewart, & Rubenstein). 6th edition or newer is needed. In addition to the textbook, you will need access to a video recording device (such as a phone). You may find a YouTube account helpful.

## General Education Student Learning Outcomes

This course is a part of the General Education Program. The following learning outcomes will be assessed:

1. Writing: Students will structure evidence to convincingly support their arguments. The **Preparation Outline** of the [Persuasive Presentation](#) will be used to measure this learning outcome.
2. Public Speaking: Students will create messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context. The **Assessment Worksheet** provided in the final weeks of the class will be used to measure this learning outcome.
3. Public Speaking: Students will evaluate personal communication strengths and weaknesses. The **Assessment Worksheet** provided in the final weeks of the class will be used to measure this learning outcome.

## Other Learning Outcomes

1. Students will employ presentation aids which clearly and accurately enhance their presentations. The **Graded PowerPoint** for the [Persuasive Presentation](#) will be used to measure this learning outcome.
2. Students will complete a presentation delivered through communication technology. The [Mediated Presentation](#) will be used to measure this learning outcome.

## Course Assignments and Grade Determination

Prepared Presentations (60%)	Content Knowledge (25%)		Participation/Professionalism (15%)	
	30% Best Presentation	10% Quizzes		4% Phase 1
	20% Middle Presentation	15% Final Exam		4% Phase 2
	10% Worst Presentation			4% Phase 3
			3% Phase 4	

### Prepared Presentations

Prepared presentations contribute a total of 60% of your final grade. You will have the opportunity to give three prepared presentations: a [Support Presentation](#), a [Mediated Presentation](#), and a [Persuasive Presentation](#). The presentation grades will be weighted according to how well you do on each of them. Your highest scoring presentation is worth 30% of your final grade, the middle presentation is worth 20% of your final grade, and the lowest presentation is worth 10% of your final grade. Nearly half (40%) of the score on each of the prepared presentation comes from the preparation work (outline, visual aid, etc.), the rest (60%) comes from the presentation itself. **You must present in front of an audience to pass this class.**

### Participation and Professionalism

Participation and Professionalism contributes 15% of your final grade. Displaying basic [Professionalism](#) is an expectation in this class and one of the most useful skills to have when you graduate. Class

activities (formative assessments) are designed to help you understand the class content and to help you develop your prepared presentations. These class activities include example activities, drafts, and the [Peer Evaluations](#) you write about your peer's presentations. Your participation and professionalism will be evaluated at the end of each phase of the class.<sup>1</sup>

Attendance will be recorded in this class. Attendance records will be maintained and reported to the extent required by law and university policy. Students are *not* graded based on their attendance. Students who require an alternate deadline for any work, including class activities, should see the section on [Alternate Deadlines](#)

## Content Knowledge

Demonstrating content knowledge contributes a total of 25% of your final grade. Your understanding of the course material will be assessed through multiple choice quizzes and a final exam. The lowest two quiz scores will be dropped, and the average of your remaining quiz scores will contribute 10% of your final grade. The final exam will draw heavily from the quizzes given in class and will contribute 15% of your final grade.

## Final Exam Policy

A final exam is a required part of this course. The Final exam is administered only on the date established in the course calendar. Consult the syllabus and the Tusculum website to determine when your exams will take place and do not make travel, family, or any other plans that conflict with any of your final exams. If you see that there will be an unavoidable conflict, drop this course before the Add/Drop period concludes and sign up for a different section or course.

## Extra Credit

Students can earn up to a maximum of a 4.5% bonus on their final grade. A [Speech Critique](#) is the primary way of earning extra credit, and is worth up to 4.5%. Only one Speech Critique may be submitted. Additional extra credit opportunities may also be announced as they become available. Any additional opportunities will not raise the cap of 4.5%. Extra credit may not be turned in after the last regular class meeting.

## Grading Scale

The total score recorded in the grade book shows what your grade would be if you did nothing else in the class. A projected final grade will be posted in Canvas at the end of each phase of the class based on your scores on assignments up to that point. Final grades are allocated according to the table below. I round up any hundredths to the next tenth of a percentage point (examples: 92.39% would round to 92.4% and remain an A-, but 87.43% would round to 87.5% and become a B+).

Total Points	Grade
92.5-100%	A
89.5-92.4%	A-

<sup>1</sup>Keaton, A. F. (2015). Teaching students the importance of professionalism. *Teaching Professor*, 29(6). <https://www.magnapubs.com/newsletter/the-teaching-professor/114/Teaching-Students-the-Importance-of-Professionalism-13541-1.html>

Total Points	Grade
87.5-89.4%	B+
82.5-87.4%	B
79.5-82.4%	B-
76.5-79.4%	C+
72.5-77.4%	C
69.5-72.4%	C-
67.5-69.4%	D+
62.5-67.4%	D
less than 62.5%	F

## Course Policies

Please review the [Tusculum University Policies and Support Systems](#). These support systems and policies apply to all courses at Tusculum University.

### Appropriate Behavior Policy

We are a community of learners, and your classmates are entitled to the standard professional courtesies. Each student is required to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times. Show respect for every person in the class. Complete your assigned work on time. Be ready for discussion and activities. Ask questions. Be supportive audience members. Racist, sexist, or other offensive or discriminatory language will not be tolerated. Keep all devices (phones, tablets, laptops, headphones, etc.) out of sight, unless their use is required for a classroom activity. Unprofessional behavior in and out of the class, including online, will result in penalties to your [Professionalism](#) grade. Any member of an activity group should be prepared to present the work of the entire group.

### Email Policy

The Question & Answer Forum on Canvas is the preferred method of communication for most student questions. Questions of a confidential or personal nature should be sent by email. I do not accept assignments by email. I check and respond to my email once daily during business hours, however I dedicate my Fridays to research and larger projects. I typically do not see emails sent late on Thursday or during the day Friday until Monday the next week.

Engaging in professional communication with your professors and the university staff is important. I am unlikely to respond to emails that do not contain any questions. Emails asking course-related questions of a non-confidential nature will be answered in the Question & Answer Forum on Canvas. Brief emails asking questions which are already answered in course documents (syllabus, calendar, assignment descriptions, etc.) will typically receive brief replies referring to course documents.

Some students benefit from the below email template, which comes from a post I wrote to help students with [writing professional emails](#). Whether you are in my class or any other class at the university, this template should work well. Just replace the information in brackets as needed:

Subject: [class number and section]: [your issue]

Dear [Title Last Name – if you can't find out, use "Professor" to be safe],

I am in your [time] [class name] class on [days class meets]. I have checked the [syllabus/assignment instructions/rubric/textbook/class resources] for an answer, but it does not adequately answer my question. I need some additional help with [your issue].

[Second paragraph explaining your question. Describe where you looked for answers, what you found, and how that information is not enough for you to have a clear answer to your question. You may also include other relevant aspects of your situation.]

[OPTIONAL third paragraph where you propose answers or next steps.]

Thank you,

[Your First and Last Name]

## **Grade Dispute Policy**

If you believe that you have been graded unfairly, wait 24 hours after receiving the grade, review the rubric, and schedule a meeting to discuss it with me. Come to this meeting prepared to provide *evidence* supporting the need for a grade change. Grades are considered final one week after they are posted in Canvas. The privacy of student educational records is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). I will not respond to any communication about a student which does not come from an official school email address, and I will not discuss your grades publicly.

## **Late Work Policy**

Late work may be turned in up to 1 calendar day after the deadline. Late work will lose 10% of the available points, and will not receive feedback. No late work is accepted after the last class due date. Using technology is a basic expectation of students at this level of study – issues with technology are not an excuse for late or missing work. If you need assistance with technology, contact [Information Services](#).

### *Alternate Deadlines*

In some cases an emergency may require you to turn in work after the assigned due date. These situations are handled on a case-by-case basis and, depending on the situation and documentation, this work may be assigned an alternate deadline. Coursework assigned an alternate deadline is graded for full credit, but will not receive feedback.

Alternate deadlines will not be assigned for events that can be planned for – this includes school-sponsored events, such as athletics. Presentations may always be turned in early using [video submission](#). Follow the [video submission](#) link for more information.