Organizing Informative Presentations
2019-08-07

Course(s) Used:

- Public Speaking

    Goals and Objectives:

- Students can identify each of the common informative organization schemes.
- Students understand common mistakes for each organization scheme.
- Students understand how considering multiple organization schemes for a topic improves presentations.

    Rationale: Using a recognizable organization pattern through all of the main points in a presentation makes it easier for the audience to follow the presentation. Considering multiple organization patterns for a topic often highlights different and more compelling approaches to the presentation, and often more effective main points.

Materials Needed

Materials:

- A container to draw topics from
- Note cards

    Technology:

- None

Outline of the Lesson

1. Review of previous session's content
2. Lesson opening
3. Open classroom discussion about the need for organization patterns
4. Common Informative Organization Patterns

    1. **Topical** (often overused)
    2. **Chronological** (either direction)

        1. **Causal** is a subtype, also either direction

    3. **Spatial**

    4. **Pro/Con** (easy to accidentally be persuasive)
    5. **Mnemonic Gimmick** (alliteration, rhyme, acronym, etc.)

5. Choosing effective patterns

    1. Try to come up with main points that work for each pattern (brainstorm options, don't just default)
    2. Audience analysis

6. Hands-on group work

    1. Students brainstorm ten broad topics for presentations in groups of 4-5, writing each on an index card
    2. Students fold their topics in half and place them in the container
    3. Students in the next group down draw 3 topics from the container
    4. Students work as groups to create a set of full-sentence main points for a chronological, spatial, pro/con and mnemonic gimmick organizational pattern (4 sets of main points) – 15 minutes
    5. Students create a thesis statement for each pattern that those main points would be evidence to support (4 thesis statements) – 5 minutes
    6. Groups share their thesis and main points, going around the room for each type of organization pattern
    7. Debrief the activity.

7. Lesson closing

Limitations

This lesson requires note cards and student creativity. Students in the class may work at dramatically different paces, which may require strategic grouping or an opportunity to engage in pair work earlier in the process.

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities. Students for whom technology usage will present an unreasonable burden will be accommodated on an individual basis. Students may be placed in groups strategically if needed.