PRESENTATION SKILLS:
How to Inspire Your Audience and Change the World

PA 5926, Section 001

Professor Deborah Levison
Humphrey School of Public Affairs – University of Minnesota

Fall 2016
1 credit

What response do you want from an audience???

Class times & meeting places: Every other Monday (starting 9/12), 2:30-3:45 in Blegen 225

Contact information:
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Office hours: Wednesdays 9:45-11 and Thursdays 3:30-5:15
Course description:
Participants will learn techniques for making effective, persuasive presentations to different kinds of audiences. They will record themselves doing some kind of presentation every week; sometimes they will also give this presentation in class. This practice is essential to overcome anxiety about public speaking.

There will be no tests. Students will receive credit for doing the required presentations, readings/videos, reflections and peer reviews, and class participation. Attendance at each class is required. *Past students who have completed all assignments, treated classmates respectfully, and come to class regularly have received As.*

Learning objectives:
By the end of the course, students should:
- have increased confidence in public speaking
- be better at persuasive speaking
- be better at creating effective, high-impact PowerPoint slides
- have a better understanding of what is audience-appropriate
- recognize when they are using culturally-specific references/language or jargon
- be aware of ethical dilemmas that arise in being an effective (i.e., persuasive) speaker

This is a real class. UM policy states that for each credit hour of a class, graduate students are expected to work more than 3 hours – counting class time and outside-class time. If we apply that policy to this 1-credit half-semester class, that means a workload of more than 6 hours per week. You should expect at least 4 hours of work outside class each week. It is unwise to take this class as part of a 16-credit course load, thinking you will only need to attend class. Learning to be a good public speaker requires effort and practice.

Required and recommended equipment:
The most effective method of recording a presentation is to have your video come from a webcam and your audio come from a microphone closer to your mouth (than your computer’s microphone). A headset will hold a microphone close to your mouth.

1. **Recommended:** A headset that will plug into your computer and allow you to both hear and speak through it. This equipment eliminates feedback that would come through your computer speakers and provides an optimal audio environment. Please purchase a headset similar to these: [http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000UXZQ42/ref=oss_product](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000UXZQ42/ref=oss_product)
   They connect via a USB port, and the software installs easily. If you have another headset, please make sure the microphones are noise-canceling. (Search for your headset’s description on the web.)

2. **Required:** You must buy a webcam to go on your laptop, if it is not built into the computer. Here is a model we recommend, for reasons of quality and ease of installation: [http://www.amazon.com/Logitech-QuickCam-Connect-Silver-Black/dp/B0017ICW4G/ref=pd_sim_sbs_e_7](http://www.amazon.com/Logitech-QuickCam-Connect-Silver-Black/dp/B0017ICW4G/ref=pd_sim_sbs_e_7)

3. **Required:** You must buy a flash drive/thumb drive to bring your slides to class.
4. **Required:** You must also buy 4x6 index cards – preferably with no lines.
Course website: There is a Moodle course website at https://ay15.moodle.umn.edu/course/view.php?id=2186


This book will be available at the UM bookstore. It is also available via the web in paperback for about $21, and used copies are available for $5 or more. Be sure you get the second edition. Please get it before the first class.

Required account: Each student will need to get a YouTube account. Instructions for doing this will be provided in class and on our course Moodle site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

WEEKLY TASKS:
- Attend all classes (every other Monday at 2:30). Be on time.
- Prepare, record, and upload your short (2-8 minute) presentation to YouTube. This must be online by the Sunday after class at 6 pm. If not, it will be marked late.
- Watch your previous presentation (again), then post brief reflections on it. Due the Sunday before class at 6 pm.
- Review and give feedback on one other students’ presentations, as assigned. This feedback is due the Sunday before class at 6 pm. (Extra credit if you give good feedback to two.)
- Do/watch required readings/videos. Post brief written reflections on them by the Sunday before class at 6 pm.
- Before coming to class, review feedback on your presentation (if this is available online) and try to read other students’ reflections on required readings/videos. This will allow us to use our class time more productively.
- In class, be prepared to give your presentation again. A few students will be chosen to do this. The instructor might choose, or there may be a random selection.

This course was developed in 2013 at the urging of former Humphrey students, with the support of Associate Dean Laura Bloomberg. Deborah Levison and Kate Conners (Technology Enhanced Learning Coordinator) developed the structure and content, with support from Mary Maronde (Technology Enhanced Learning Associate). Colleagues and experts around campus provided advice.1 Students are warned that this course makes use of technology in an innovative way, and glitches are bound to happen. We request your cooperation and patience.

1 Thanks to Mark Gruen, Romilda Justilien, Steve Kelley, Jennifer Kuzma, Emma Naughton, Jane O’Brien, Diane Odash, Todd Reubold, and Sarah Watson.
**PRESENTATIONS you may prepare and improve during this course:**

- **Your ELEVATOR SPEECH**

  Every professional has been told that she/he needs to be able to quickly describe – even during the course of an elevator ride – why a possible employer should hire her/him. This is your opportunity to perfect your “elevator speech.” We will do versions of it with and without slides, just to give you practice producing really great slides.

- **A PITCH to a funder**

  Whatever your specialization within public affairs, during your career you will almost certainly need to prepare presentations with the goal of persuading someone to fund a project or an organization. This “pitch” needs to be brief yet extremely persuasive.

- **Your STUMP SPEECH**

  Every politician has a stump speech: a rousing campaign speech delivered in one town or locale after another, with small variations to make it fit the occasion. You should find a topic about which you are passionate, because this should be a talk that you might really want to give sometime. This topic does not need to be related to your educational goals, as long as your aim is to persuade your audience about something.

- **Practice for a presentation in another class**

  You will have the opportunity to get feedback on a presentation that you are preparing for another class. Ideally, your presentation should aim to persuade your audience about something – if only that your analysis was appropriate.
**GRADING of presentations:**

To reduce stress related to giving public presentations, they will be graded as follows:

- zero – assignment not done
- check-minus – if it seems that very little effort was made, or if something else went very wrong
- check – if the presentation was satisfactory: okay, good, or very good

Lateness will be noted separately.

**DETAILS on weekly tasks, and OTHER INFORMATION:**

**Class attendance.** Normally, in a graduate level class, instructors know that students will come to class when they can. In this class, it is **required that you attend every class.** We don’t have many – only one per week – and missing even one will affect your learning. Therefore, unexcused absences and/or being late will lower your class participation grade, regardless of whether your presentations are good. Please contact the instructor – before class – if you are ill and cannot attend. Leave a phone message (612-624-3540) or email to dlevison@umn.edu.

**Preparation time limits.** We will need to have a class agreement about how much time students will spend preparing and practicing for each presentation. In general, I do not want you to spend more than 2 hours preparing for a short talk. (Students whose mother tongue is not English may take an extra 30 minutes.) If you all agree to abide by the time limit, then you will not feel as bad knowing your presentation is not perfect.

**Presentations.** Presentations assigned for this class will be brief: some 2-3 minutes, others 5 minutes, perhaps one that is 10 minutes long. You will record your presentation and upload it to YouTube. There will be instructions provided about how to do these things.

Everyone in the class will be able to access each student’s presentation. The instructor will give feedback on some but not all of your presentations. (Some will be simply checked off.) Grading of presentations is discussed above.

Be prepared – always – to do your latest presentation again, in class. Some students may be chosen by the instructor, and some may be chosen randomly. After each presentation we will speak, gently but honestly, to the following questions: “What did (this person) do well?” and “What could (this person) do better next time?”

**Giving feedback to other students on their presentations.** The instructor will provide a rubric to help you give feedback to one other student (a different one each week) on her/his presentation. (For extra credit, give useful feedback to a second student.) The rubric will have some boxes to check off and places to write comments. We will also give some feedback in class.

There is one basic rule for giving feedback: **Speak honestly but always kindly.** There are many
different ways to be honest; always choose the kindest way you know. We have to face uncomfortable truths about our weaknesses in order to become better speakers.

Feedback will not receive letter grades: they will be checked off as check-minus (unsatisfactory to weak), or check (satisfactory to excellent). Lateness will be penalized separately.

**Reviewing your own presentation.** After class, students are expected to watch their last presentations again, making notes. Very brief written reflections on the presentation must be posted. Students should discuss their own strengths, weaknesses, what they want to improve, and how they plan to implement this. A few sentences is adequate.

Reflections will not receive letter grades: they will be checked off as check-minus (unsatisfactory to weak), or check (satisfactory to excellent). Lateness will be penalized.

**Tips.** There will be a place on Moodle to post techniques and advice that might be useful for other class members. Links to videos that could be useful are also helpful, but only if the person posting explains what to watch for, and where it is in the video. Posting tips is optional but considered a positive aspect of class participation.

**Assigned readings.** The assigned readings, podcasts, and videos are meant to take no more than one hour (occasionally 1.5 hours) per week for a typical reader having English as a first language. It is expected that all students will complete the week’s required readings and or videos before the class meetings for which they are assigned. Students are expected to read/watch carefully, rather than skimming; if skimming is acceptable, then that will be noted in the syllabus.

*Please bring the week’s readings to class with you, if you have printed them. No need to carry Presentation Zen.*

**Reflections on readings.** To inspire timely reading of the articles and to ensure that students think about what they are reading, a very short commentary on readings will be required most weeks. This applies to podcasts or online videos as well. (If the “reading” is marked with the dagger symbol †, students do not need to comment on it.) They should consist of one substantive thought/comment/reaction to each “reading.” Reflections should not exceed one-half page per week.

On the web, post your reflections in the appropriate forum under the week number corresponding to the syllabus!! It is recommended that you write your commentary in a word processor and cut and paste it into the web window. Keep it short! If for any technical reason you are unable to post, you may instead email your reflections to the instructor.

Reflections will not receive letter grades. They will be checked off as check-minus (unsatisfactory to weak), or check (satisfactory to excellent). Grading criterion: thoughtfulness of the comments. Lateness will be penalized.
**Class participation.** Class participation is an important part of each final grade. Elements of class preparation include attendance, lateness, speaking in class, preparation to speak in class as indicated by the content of your comments, timely reading and professional comments on other students' presentations, and respect for your classmates. In particular, I expect everyone to listen attentively when someone is giving a presentation. It is possible to lose all your class participation points with just one instance of rudeness.

**Zip evaluations.** At the end of each class, students may be asked to complete a short (1-2 minute) “zip” evaluation. These are anonymous. They allow you to tell me what is working for you and what is not working for you, so problems can be addressed before they reach the crisis level. They also give feedback about assignments so that I can modify the assignments in future classes. Zip evaluations do not replace emails from you or time spent in office hours, which I welcome. *Note: I will not do zip evaluations if the class size is small.*

**Final grades.** These weights in percentages are approximate, and they are tentative:

- 50%  Presentations
- 25%  Feedback to other students
- 10%  Completion of assigned readings/videos and reflections on them
- 5%   Reviewing and reflecting on your own presentations
- 10%  Class participation, including attendance, collegiality, being an audience, posting to TIPS, etc.

**Incompletes.** This course follows the Humphrey School policy regarding incompletes. An incomplete will only be granted after the instructor and the student have mutually agreed upon a timetable (written contract) for completion of coursework. An incomplete must be requested in advance, and the Humphrey School incompletes form must be filled out. The form is on-line at: [http://www.hhh.umn.edu/img/assets/11160/Incomplete%20form.pdf](http://www.hhh.umn.edu/img/assets/11160/Incomplete%20form.pdf)

**Instructor limitations.** I have irreparable nerve damage in my arms/shoulders, apparently due to “overuse”: many years of long hours in ergonomically bad computer workstations, or writing by hand. I welcome assistance in lifting, carrying, and door-opening. I avoid writing on whiteboards, which hurts me. Sometimes my chronic pain means that I am unable to give feedback on assignments quickly (or at all), but know that I am doing my best. I am one of many people with invisible limitations and disabilities; if you are another, please feel free to let me know.
**Disabilities.** It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact their instructor early in the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. Accommodations must be arranged in advance. Further information is available from Disabilities Services (230 McNamara Hall).

**Academic Integrity.** Academic integrity is essential for a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in this course are expected to complete course-related responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others, by misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own, or by another kind of scholastic dishonesty can result in disciplinary action, including receiving an F or an N for the course.

**Conduct.** This university is committed to creating a positive, supportive environment that welcomes a diversity of opinions and ideas for students. There will be no tolerance of racial discrimination or harassment, sexual discrimination or harassment, or discrimination/harassment based on age, gender, disability, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or membership in a local commission. Please refer to the University’s student handbook for the complete list of student rights, responsibilities, and procedures.

**Scholastic misconduct** is broadly defined as any act that violates the right of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, (but is not necessarily limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student's work. Any violation of these guidelines will have serious consequences for a student’s grade, and I will file a “Report on Student Scholastic Misconduct” with the University.

For a few points, send the instructor an email saying, “I read the syllabus” in the subject line by 6 pm on Sunday, September 18th. Do not mention this to others in the class; it is their job to find it by themselves.

**Electronics in class.** You may use your laptop computer, iPad, or other device in class for note-taking or (rarely) looking up answers to questions that come up in class. You may not use it for checking email or Facebook or anything else. It's very tempting – and also very rude, not to mention detrimental to your education. University policy prohibits the use of computers and the internet for non-class related activities during class time. Offenders are required to keep devices put away for the rest of the semester. Anyone unable to answer a question from the instructor – or at minimum to repeat the question – will be assumed to have been multi-tasking. Please consider this your one and only warning.

Similarly, cell phones and smart phones and the like may kept on and visible by people with
small children or similar responsibilities (but tell the instructor); everyone else is expected to keep their electronics out of sight and out of hearing.

**Maintaining good mental health.** As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website at [http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu).

**Tentative Weekly Schedule & Assignments**

*Try to read/watch the selections in the order listed.*

**Important note:**

inin **PLATO assignments** are for students taking this class for the first time.
inin **SOCRATES assignments** are for students in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} half of this class. You know who you are!

Some assignments are for everyone: 

Socrates and Plato lived in ancient Greece. Plato was Socrates' student. Both men have been extremely influential in the teaching of rhetoric for centuries.
Week 2 of the semester (September 12)

cono Plato Readings/Videos: (no need to post reflections)
- Read the entire syllabus. Really.
- PresentationZen, pp. x-xi, and pp. 95-101, and pp. 236-245.
- Video by UM’s Todd Reubold at link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yis6mAmMjTc

cono Plato Classroom activities:
- In-class presentation: relate/describe one thing you are proud of yourself for (1-3 minutes). No preparation or practice expected.
- Explanation of the technology that will be used.
- Preview topic for students’ “stump speeches.”

cono Socrates Presentation: Stump speech (3rd time), 4-7 minutes, 6+ slides, Q&A. It is your responsibility to find an audience of 1-2 people above the age of 10 (or so) to ask questions. They do not need to be class members. Record their questions and your responses on YouTube (thereby going over 7 minutes).

cono Socrates Readings/Videos:
- Mikael Cho, “The Science of Stage Fright (and How to Overcome It) (4:07)
  http://blog.ted.com/2013/10/16/required-watching-for-any-ted-speaker-the-science-of-stage-fright/

cono Socrates Classroom activities:
- In-class presentation with Q&A – another room has been reserved for your group to work independently.
- Meet in a group to discuss presentation assignments for the rest of the semester. Tentative assignments are in this syllabus. Send a group email to the instructor if you have an alternative proposal.
Week 4 (September 26)

Plato Presentation: Pitch to a funder (1st time), in a phone message. 2-4 minutes. Video only (upload to YouTube). Time preparation limit: 1 hour. See Moodle for details. While you are in YouTube, give everyone in the class access to your recording. (Check for an emailed list.)

Plato Readings/Videos:
- PresentationZen, Chapter 1, pp 5-25 [20 pages]
- TED talk by Amy Cuddy, “Your Body Language Shapes Who You are” (20 minutes) http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are.html
- Optional: listen to a minute or two of “Whistle a Happy Tune” from the musical The King and I. E.g., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGS029Peq7k

Socrates Presentation: Group presentation (1st time), 8-10 minutes, slides.

Socrates Readings/Videos:
  Even though this reading focuses on teaching, you can adapt its basic messages for any kind of presentation.
  - Chip Heath: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bs9NbxJHV-w (6:10)
  - Dan Heath: http://www.shopify.com/blog/8437521-12-must-watch-non-ted-talks-for-entrepreneurs (9:24)

Classroom activities:
- Body language practice, discussion
- Presentations and feedback.
- Examples of good feedback.
Week 6 (October 10)

🌡️🌡️🌡️ Plato Presentation: Condemned building, video only, 4-5 minutes.

🌡️🌡️🌡️ Plato Readings/Videos:
  - PresentationZen, Chapter 2, pp. 31-42, and Chapter 3, pp. 45-75 [42 pages]

🌡️🌡️🌡️ Socrates Presentation: Group presentation, 2nd time, 8-10 minutes, Q&A.

🌡️🌡️🌡️ Socrates Readings/Videos:
  - Jean-Luc Doumont (n.d.) “Traditions, Templates, and Group Leaders”
    Download at http://www.treesmapsandtheorems.com/barriers/
  - Video: Nancy Duarte, “Common Structure of Greatest Communicators” (18:11)
    http://www.ted.com/talks/nancy_duarte_the_secret_structure_of_great_talks

🌡️🌡️🌡️ Classroom activities:
  - Discuss readings/videos
  - Presentations and feedback
  - Discuss proposed topics for stump speeches.
Week 8 (October 24)

Plato Presentation: Stump speech (1st time), 3-5 minutes, 2-3 slides (at least 2, no more than 3!). OR, you may do a presentation for another class (1st time), same limits.

Upload your PowerPoint slides to Moodle. When you give feedback to others, open both their YouTube video and their slides at the same time. Do your best to figure out when to change slides as the video progresses.

Plato Readings/Videos:
- PresentationZen, Chapter 4, pp. 77-109 [32 pages]

Socrates Presentation: Drones, 3-5 minutes, 3-6 slides.
See information on drones in 2 short essays on Moodle.

Socrates Readings/Videos:
- Review Gihan Perera’s advice regarding webinars in Presentation Zen, pp. 262-263.
- Video: “A Conference Call in Real Life” (4:04) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYu_bGhZiiQ

Classroom activities:
- Discuss readings/videos
- Presentations and feedback
Week 10 (November 7)

⚠️ ⚠️ Plato Presentation: Stump speech (2\textsuperscript{nd} time), 4-6 minutes, 4+ slides. OR, a presentation for another class (2\textsuperscript{nd} time), same limits.

Don’t forget: Upload your PowerPoint slides to Moodle.

⚠️ ⚠️ Plato Readings/Videos:
- PresentationZen, Chapter 5, pp. 115-129, and Chapter 6, pp. 131-185 [68 pages]

⚠️ Socrates Presentation: Stump speech (3\textsuperscript{rd} time), 5-7 minutes, 6+ slides, Q&A. It is your responsibility to find an audience of at least two people who will observe your presentation and ask questions. They do not need to be class members.

⚠️ Socrates Readings/Videos: The topic is audience analysis.
- One-pager by Lenny Laskowski: http://www.ljlseminars.com/audience.htm

iß Classroom activities:
- Presentations and feedback

- Possible Guest: Jane O’Brien, Associate Director, Center for Teaching and Learning, on Q&A (Questions-and-Answers) and interruptions
Week 12 (November 21)

 культура Plato Presentation: Elevator speech (1st time), 1-2 minutes, no slides.

 культура Plato Readings/Videos:
• PresentationZen, Chapter 7, pp. 187-209, and Chapter 8, pp. 215-229 [36 pages]
• Watch a Steve Jobs video – but be sure it is one where he uses slides. One suggestion is on Moodle.

 культура Socrates Presentation: Elevator speech (2nd time), 1-2 minutes, no slides. (Make it irresistible!)

 культура Socrates Readings/Videos:
• Video: Melissa Marshall, “Talk Nerdy to Me” (4:34) http://www.newsweek.com/career/5-ted-talks-watch-your-next-interview
• Video: Pamela Meyer, “How to Spot a Liar” (18:50) http://www.newsweek.com/career/5-ted-talks-watch-your-next-interview

 культура Classroom activities:
• Presentations and feedback

• Possible Guest: Ann Fandrey, Instructional Designer, CLA. She is finishing a book called Academic Slide Design.
Week 14 (December 5) – LAST CLASS!

🌟🌟🌟 Plato Presentation: Pitch to a funder #2, 3-5 minutes, 3-5 slides (at least 3, no more than 5!)

🌟🌟🌟 Plato Readings/Videos:
- PresentationZen, Chapters 9, pp. 231-251, and Chapter 10, pp. 253-279, and Chapter 11, pp. 285-289. [50 pages]
- Watch Dr. Sam Myers’ video on how to dress when making a public presentation (7:30)

🌟🌟 Socrates Presentation: Impromptu topic, no slides, Q&A. To be videotaped.

🌟🌟 Socrates Readings/Videos:
- Kelly McGonigal: “How to Make Stress Your Friend” (14:28)
  [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU)

漈漈漈 Classroom activities:
- Presentations and feedback
- Course evaluations