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Department of Communication Studies

Requirements for COMM 120

Oral Communication

Sample Speech Assignments

Submitted 2019

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

Purpose: This speech provides the opportunity to introduce oneself to the entire class. Doing so, allows each speaker the ability to use their own voice and to experience being in front of an audience. Speakers can use this speech to practice maintaining composure, reduce anxiety, and learn how much information can be shared in just a couple of minutes.

Requirements: The speaker should develop a speech to introduce themselves to the audience. Self-introductory speeches include information about the speaker that helps the audience get to know them a little better, so disclosing demographic information is common. Additionally, the speaker may wish to disclose information regarding hobbies, occupation, likes or dislikes and descriptions of their family. This type of speech is commonly used in business and academic settings. Variations of this speech are listed below.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Optional

Time: 2 – 3 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. This speech is the least weighted speech of the four speeches that will be delivered in this course. Each instructor will determine the point value for their speeches and should make sure the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

Variation 1: Life Recipe- Have speakers develop a recipe for their life. They should consider which ingredients they need to make their life complete. (e.g. 1 cup of love? 2 pints of joy? A pinch of friendship? A dash of sarcasm? A gallon of education?) Speakers should construct a speech by which they introduce themselves to the class using the recipe for their life. They must not simply list the ingredients, though, speakers should tell the audience about those ingredients and why they are significant to their recipe.

Variation 2: Interview Introductory- Dyads are formed so that each speaker may interview one another and obtain information to be presented in the speech. The specific information gathered from the interviews is at the discretion of the instructor and may include: Name, major, hobbies, interests, occupation, family information, career goal, etc. The speakers will introduce each other, rather than self-introductions.

PRESENTING AN AWARD

Purpose: This speech provides an opportunity for the speaker to celebrate a person by presenting them with an award. This is a type of speech meant to honor someone by recognizing their accomplishments.

Requirements: The speaker should select an individual who will receive an award. This person and the type of award they are receiving must be identified to the audience at the start of the speech. The speaker must include the accomplishments of the award recipient and why they are receiving this recognition.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Speaker must display an object (certificate, plaque, trophy, etc.) as part of their speech.

Time: 2 – 4 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine point value for their speeches and should make sure that the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

EULOGY

Purpose: This speech provides an opportunity for the speaker to deliver a eulogy, a speech given at a funeral or memorial service honoring the deceased.

Requirements: The speaker should select an individual they know who has passed away that they would like to honor with this speech. The deceased and the relationship the speaker had with them must be identified to the audience in the introduction of the speech. If the deceased is not a family member, the speaker should express condolences to the family. In the body of the speech discuss what made the deceased special; this is the focus of the eulogy. The speaker may include what the deceased meant to them either by including personal anecdotes (which are best kept in chronological order), experiences they shared or the influence they had on the speaker's life. Words of comfort or perhaps a final farewell can be offered in the conclusion.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Optional

Time: 2 – 4 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine point value for their speeches and should make sure that the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

A ROAST

Purpose: This speech provides an opportunity for the speaker to celebrate a person they know well in a fun way. This is a type of speech meant to tease, joke around and make fun of someone – all in good humor. Writing a roast speech is a balancing act and requires both appreciation and sarcasm--the goal is to poke fun without hurting feelings. Recall quirks, strange habits and amusing adventures the speaker and the roastee share.

Requirements: The speaker should select an individual they know well to roast. This person must be identified to the audience at the start of the speech. Consider associations the speaker has with this person. The speaker can include something the roastee did or said, a physical characteristic they have, or any quirks about them. The speaker could include a funny poem, song, or joke or organize the speech around one story with a hysterically funny punch line. Or it could be episodic--going over different moments in the speaker's relationship with the roastee. As the speaker gathers material, remove anything that might hurt the roastee's feelings--or anyone else's. The speaker wants to poke fun, but they don't want to mortally wound. While the speaker should be as funny as possible, they should remember that the purpose is to ultimately honor the roastee.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Optional

Time: 2 – 4 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine point value for their speeches and should make sure that the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

A TOAST

Purpose: This type of speech allows the speaker to praise a person, community, or event within the context of a celebratory gathering (e.g. wedding reception, dinner reception, community event, etc.).

Requirements: The speaker should begin their speech by expressing gratitude towards the audience and provide a brief introduction of themselves. The speaker should identify and discuss what quality, trait, or achievement of the person, community, or event they wish to honor and recognize. The speaker should conclude their speech with an invitation to the audience to toast to the person, community, or event.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Optional

Time: 2 – 4 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine point value for their speeches and should make sure that the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

A TRIBUTE

Purpose: This speech allows the speaker to honor a person, group, or institution they admire or respect and has made an impact in the speaker's life, community or the world.

Requirements: The speaker should identify the honoree to their audience and explain reasons for selecting the person, group or institution. Reasons for selection of the honoree can include, but are not limited to how the subject makes the speaker feel, a positive change the honoree made in the community or world, unexpected accomplishment(s), occasion of speech, etc. Using language that expresses feelings about the honoree is encouraged.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Optional

Time: 2 – 4 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine point value for their speech and should make sure that the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

NARRATIVE SPEECH

Purpose: This speech allows the speaker to describe a personal or family experience in a form of a story. Stories can include but are not limited to sharing: an act of heroism, a eureka moment, problem solving, life lesson learned, etc.

Requirements: The speaker should think of a true experience they or their family have encountered and develop a descriptive and interesting story to share with their audience. Topics can include: an act of heroism (e.g. saving a person's life), eureka moment (e.g. unknown talent), problem solving (e.g. unexpected difficulty), life lesson learned (e.g. importance of communication), etc. An engaging attention getter is encouraged. The speaker should make their audience feel as if they are in the moment at the scene. The speaker should explain why this relates to their audience. When concluding, the speaker should leave their audience with a relatable message, such as: sharing the lesson(s) learned from the experience.

Outline: Optional

Visual Aid: Optional

Time: 2 – 4 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine point value for their speech and should make sure that the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.

DEMONSTRATION SPEECH

Purpose: The demonstration speech provides an opportunity for the speaker to physically show their audience a step-by-step process. The speaker's primary purpose is to teach the audience how to complete a task or process. This is accomplished by demonstrating a task or process through a series of steps.

Requirements: The speaker should choose a task they are comfortable "teaching" to an audience and convey clear instructions to enable the listeners to effectively and safely complete the process themselves. The speaker should focus on providing instructions in chronological order and being detailed. The speaker should also try to coordinate speaking while they complete the steps they describe, rather than delivering the speech and then demonstrating in silence. It is at the discretion of the instructor to have speakers incorporate supporting materials in this speech.

Outline: Required. A speech outline is required of each speaker. The instructor may choose whether a full-sentence outline and/or key-word outline will be used for preparation and/or presentation. If sources are required by the instructor, then a standardized bibliography (MLA or APA style) should be included with the outline.

Visual Aid: Required

Time: 3 – 5 minutes

Grading: This is a flexible speech. Therefore, it is weighted less than the informative speech. Each instructor will determine the point value for their speeches and should make sure the amount of points coincides with the proper weighted value.