

## FALL SYLLABUS

Theater 5 001 – STD 001  
Department of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies  
University of California, Berkeley

### Public Speaking and Presentation Skills

[Instructor]

Course Section:  
M, W, F, 8am – 10am  
[Location]

OH: By appointment or Fridays, 10-10:30 after class

### OVERVIEW

Throughout this course we will explore the following:

- How can we authentically and creatively express our personal identities through different methods of oral communication?
- How can we improve our self-confidence, comfort with vulnerability, and sense of connection to others through public speaking?
- How do different genres of oral expression help strengthen our ability to use our voices to advocate, lead, and publicly engage?

This course is designed to help students analyze and reflect on how they express themselves, connect with others, and use their voices in service of improving the world around them. By exploring public speaking techniques in the context of a range of persuasive and creative styles, students will find an entry point to effectively communicate what they care about. Throughout the course, students will have multiple opportunities to learn different techniques, apply them in practice sessions, receive quality coaching, and perform in a safe, supportive environment. The course is designed so students gain experience with both prepared and spontaneous speaking, building self-awareness about their goals and needs as a public speaker. Work is largely designed to be completed during class time, with multiple practice opportunities to increase confidence and comfort before class performances.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Clearly and effectively structure and present content in a clear and compelling way
- Utilize voice, stress coping strategies, and movement to effectively engage an audience
- Practice strategies for listening and connecting to the presentations and performances of others
- Use rhetoric to persuade and advocate for a position in both prepared and spontaneous contexts
- Explore how public speaking can be used to express identities through performances
- Craft engaging stories that communicate values, interests, vulnerabilities, and personal growth
- Communicate their best selves and connect with others in everyday situations
- Practice giving quality feedback and enacting feedback from others to improve oral expression
- Reflect on personal growth and overcome fears and anxieties around public speaking

## SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES

Fall – Theater 5 001 – STD 001

<b>Week 1 - Powerful Storytelling</b>	
<b>Weekly Objectives</b>  During this week, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline the major components and expectations for the course, get to know one another, and discuss some of our personal goals and experiences with public speaking;</li><li>• Set class routines, warm-ups, and practice structures;</li><li>• Discuss how we can authentically and creatively express our personal identities through different methods of oral communication;</li><li>• Practice structures and templates for powerful storytelling; and</li><li>• Assess ourselves in terms of personal fears, anxieties, and challenges related to communication and public speaking</li></ul>	<b>Daily Details and Notes</b>  Wednesday, August 28th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students familiarize themselves with one another and with class routines, building a strong team culture through storytelling.</li></ul> Friday, August 30th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students analyze examples of powerful storytelling and apply their understanding of story structure to tell personal stories on a variety of topic areas.</li></ul>
<b>Week 2 - Introduction to Public Speaking</b>	
<b>Weekly Objectives</b>  During this week, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get to know personal interests through informative presentations;</li><li>• Review and apply techniques for effective speech writing;</li><li>• Practice foundational techniques to improve oral speaking delivery; and</li><li>• Set personal public speaking goals.</li></ul>	<b>Daily Details and Notes</b>  Monday, September 2nd: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holiday – NO CLASS</li></ul> Wednesday, September 4th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students become familiar with the basics of an effective presentation and practice constructing clear and organized informative speeches on a topic of personal interest.</li></ul> Friday, September 6th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students learn basics of effective oral delivery, including vocal tone, gestures, stance, projection, and movement.</li></ul>
<b>Week 3 - Present, Perform, Engage</b>	
<b>Weekly Objectives</b>  During this week, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Become familiar with three different speaking formats (persuasion, performance, and storytelling);</li><li>• Practice exercises associated with each type of public speaking;</li><li>• Introduce acting techniques to enhance emotional delivery;</li><li>• Introduce persuasive techniques to deliver an effective argument;</li><li>• Introduce storytelling techniques to clearly engage an audience around a lesson; and</li><li>• Reflect on personal preferences and areas of comfort and discomfort.</li></ul>	<b>Daily Details and Notes</b>  Monday, September 9th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students learn the basics of an effective persuasive issue speech, including making clear content decisions and delivery choices.</li></ul> Wednesday, September 11th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students apply storytelling techniques from Week 1 to tell TED-style stories to teach the audience about a lesson.</li></ul> Friday, September 13th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students learn how to utilize acting techniques to perform a speech or monologue with effective delivery.</li></ul>

**Week 4 - Polish and Precision**

<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a speaking format from Week 3 that best suits your style and message;</li> <li>• Construct content to develop an identity performance piece in the style of choice;</li> <li>• Workshop performance pieces with feedback on speaking delivery and use of vocal techniques;</li> <li>• Reflect on how to improve and act on quality feedback;</li> <li>• Explore sources of anxiety and insecurity related to oral presentations;</li> <li>• Discuss self-talk strategies to address counterproductive self-critique; and</li> <li>• Review techniques for supplementing speeches with engaging movement and physicality</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, September 16th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students construct content for their identity performance pieces and learn techniques for making powerful language choices.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, September 18th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students learn delivery techniques to help clarify and enhance their identity performance piece content as well as strategies for coping with anxiety and insecurity. (Coaching and Practice Day)</li> </ul> <p>Friday, September 20th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice with one another and learn to give quality feedback and act upon feedback from others. (Coaching and Practice Day)</li> </ul>
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**Week 5 - Performance Week: Identity Pieces**

<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop performance pieces with feedback on engagement, facial expression, connection to content, and speaking with feeling;</li> <li>• Organize individual and group coaching sessions to receive in-depth feedback in advance of class performance;</li> <li>• Practice strategies for improving engagement, energy, and passion in speaking delivery; and</li> <li>• Perform 5-minute individual piece in a class “variety show”.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, September 23rd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perform their 5-minute pieces for second hour of class, after spending the first hour on workshop and blog time.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, September 25th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perform their 5-minute pieces for second hour of class, after spending the first hour on workshop and blog time.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, September 27th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perform their 5-minute pieces for second hour of class, after spending the first hour on workshop and blog time.</li> </ul>
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**Week 6 - Speaking Up For Yourself**

<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the basics of limited prep/spontaneous speaking;</li> <li>• Apply spontaneous speaking techniques to personal introductions for meetings, interviews, and sales pitches;</li> <li>• Discuss the art of listening and how to use active listening skills to facilitate conversations and respond to questions;</li> <li>• Practice spontaneous speaking drills and warm-ups to address habits and anxieties.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, September 30th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice spontaneous speaking skills for personal introductions to use in meetings, interviews, and sales pitches.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, October 2nd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice applying active listening skills to identify storytelling opportunities on the spot and formulate effective responses in job interviews.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, October 4th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice using active listening skills to be an effective facilitator and guide conversations through questions and strong summaries.</li> </ul>
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**Week 7 - Feeling Prepared and Inspiring Action**

**Weekly Objectives**

During this week, we will:

- Improve rapid outlining skills to create talking points;
- Apply spontaneous speaking techniques to inspire people to buy a product, take action on an issue, and collaborate;
- Identify areas of stage fright and anxiety and create plans for coping with fears of spontaneous public speaking; and
- Continue to practice spontaneous speaking drills and warm-ups to address habits and anxieties.

**Daily Details and Notes**

Monday, October 7th:

- Students practice spontaneous speaking skills in the context of sales pitches, creating effective outlines that anticipate their audience needs.

Wednesday, October 9th:

- Students practice spontaneous speaking skills to take a stand on an issue of importance, creating effective outlines that inspire people to take action.

Friday, October 11th:

- Students discuss and problem-solve around challenges related stage fright and anxiety and apply anxiety-coping techniques to spontaneous speeches.

**Week 8 - The Speaker as Advocate**

**Weekly Objectives**

During this week, we will:

- Become familiar with how to use public speaking skills in the real world to advocate for an issue of importance;
- Discuss ways to use interviews, evidence, and human stories to enhance audience connection and speaker credibility;
- Discuss techniques for improving speech clarity around complex topics;
- Work to collect field data to support our final advocacy research speeches;
- Use questioning and conversational techniques to conduct interviews;
- Analyze ideas in field interviews and incorporate into next-draft advocacy speeches; and
- Work with team to construct a set of advocacy speech presentations on a single theme to deliver during Week 10.

**Daily Details and Notes**

Monday, October 14th:

- Students become familiar with how to use public speaking to become a community advocate and work in teams to identify an issue for the group advocacy project.

Wednesday, October 16th:

- Students work in teams to plan interview protocols and field research for the group advocacy project.

Friday, October 18th:

- Students refine the content for their team presentation and identify areas for coaching and check-ins.

**Week 9 - Polish and Precision**

**Weekly Objectives**

During this week, we will:

- Receive customized coaching to improve group advocacy presentations;
- Utilize practice time with teams to strengthen presentations; and
- Arrange for virtual check-in with instructor and one peer to receive personalized support.

**Daily Details and Notes**

Monday, October 21st:

- Students practice with their teams and receive personalized coaching – 3 groups only. (Coaching and Practice Day)

Wednesday, October 23rd:

- Students practice with their teams and receive personalized coaching – 3 groups only. (Coaching and Practice Day)

Friday, October 25th: VIRTUAL CHECK-INS

- Students check in on coaching needs and arrange for independent practice time.

**Week 10 - Performance Week: Advocacy Project Presentations**

<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve our speeches to enhance clarity and credibility;</li> <li>• Introduce techniques for supporting vocal health, support, and resonance;</li> <li>• Utilize breath support and appropriate stance to improve volume, pitch, and speed to deliver a powerful performance;</li> <li>• Practice capturing and holding the interest of an audience by making effective vocal choices; and</li> <li>• Organize individual and group coaching sessions to receive in-depth feedback in advance of class performance;</li> <li>• Present in a 20-minute team presentation (roughly 5 minutes each)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, October 28th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice delivering speeches, with an emphasis on techniques for effective voice, face, and physicality (Coaching and Practice Day).</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, October 30th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three teams perform their 20-minute team presentations (roughly 5 minutes per person) for second hour of class, after spending an hour on practice/blog time.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, November 1st:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three teams perform their 20-minute team presentations (roughly 5 minutes per person) for second hour of class, after spending an hour on practice/blog time.</li> </ul>
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**Week 11 - Adapting to Audiences**

<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss methods for adapting to a variety of unfamiliar audiences, including public comment scenarios, professional networking, and virtual communication;</li> <li>• Dive deeply into personal goals related to spontaneous speaking;</li> <li>• Apply techniques for building connections, making strong impressions, and speaking succinctly and clearly; and</li> <li>• Discuss ways to read audiences and adapt on the fly.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, November 4th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students revisit spontaneous speaking techniques in the context of a public comment simulation, learning to adapt to a community audience.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, November 6th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students explore how to communicate effectively and spontaneously in the virtual world, including Zoom calls, video recordings, and phone interviews.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, November 8th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students apply spontaneous speaking to professional networking situations, including spontaneous storytelling, questioning, and connection seeking.</li> </ul>
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**Week 12 - Navigating Difference**

<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss factors that silence people’s voices and prevent them from speaking up for themselves;</li> <li>• Share strategies for navigating power and being an advocate for others;</li> <li>• Brainstorm ways to use our voice to improve conditions for speaking up; and</li> <li>• Develop a safe space for sharing personal challenges and barriers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, November 11th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday – NO CLASS</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, November 13th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OFF CAMPUS BREAKFAST</li> <li>• Students discuss inequities and factors that silence people and prevent them from speaking up for themselves, learning to anticipate barriers and potential bias.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, November 15th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students apply strategies for being authentic while also navigating power dynamics, stereotypes, and assumptions.</li> </ul>
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<b>Week 13 - Professional Keynotes</b>	
<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit storytelling in the context of constructing keynote speeches that illustrate vulnerability and authenticity;</li> <li>• Decide on topics for final keynote speech assignment; and</li> <li>• Revisit and deepen understanding of how to apply effective oral delivery strategies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, November 18th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students become familiar with how to structure effective keynote speeches and identify a topic for final showcase.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, November 20th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice constructing stories in the context of their keynote speeches and receive peer feedback to improve their content.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, November 22nd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students practice effective delivery techniques to use in their keynote speeches.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 14 - Polish and Precision</b>	
<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop keynote speeches with feedback on personal areas of growth; and</li> <li>• Organize individual and group coaching sessions to receive in-depth feedback in advance of class performance.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, November 25th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have time to work on keynote speeches and receive individual and group coaching. (Coaching and Practice Day)</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, November 27th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanksgiving Holiday – NO CLASS</li> </ul> <p>Friday, November 29th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanksgiving Holiday – NO CLASS</li> </ul>
<b>Week 15 - Performance Week: Final Keynote Showcase</b>	
<p><b>Weekly Objectives</b></p> <p>During this week, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice techniques for effective communication coaching and teaching;</li> <li>• Perform in a final class showcase.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Daily Details and Notes</b></p> <p>Monday, December 2nd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perform their keynotes for second hour of class, after spending the first hour on workshop and blog time.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday, December 4th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perform their keynotes for second hour of class, after spending the first hour on workshop and blog time.</li> </ul> <p>Friday, December 6th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students perform their keynotes for second hour of class, after spending the first hour on workshop and blog time, and then reflect on lessons learned.</li> </ul>

NOTE: This syllabus and schedule are subject to change.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Fall – Theater 5 001 – STD 001

### 1. *Class Attendance*

All students will be responsible for coming to class on time every week. Absences are only excused if they are approved in writing by the instructor via email in advance of the class, or if there are special emergencies. Students should come to class prepared to be a participant who listens actively and respectfully to the thoughts and opinions of others and is willing to speak publicly and participate in class workshop time. Students are allowed up to 3 excused absences without penalty over the course of the semester, as long as the student contacts the instructor in advance. Four tardies counts as one absence.

### 2. *Class Participation*

**DUE: Two self-assessment checks during semester**

Given the interactive and project-based nature of this class, participation is calculated separately from attendance. Students will be given a rubric for participation and will complete self-assessments of their participation and previously announced points throughout the semester. Quality participation includes demonstrating effort, coaching others, practicing, and participating in discussions.

### 3. *Blogs*

**DUE: Class Following Each Prepared Presentation**

During the three weeks of prepared performances, students will be given time during class to document their stories, experiences, and reflections in the form of a short 300 to 500 word blog. Blog articles will be emailed to the professor and are due by the class following the student's presentation.

### 4. *Identity Performance Piece*

**DUE: Week 5**

The first section of this course is focused largely on self-expression. The Identity Performance Piece is the culmination of student learning in this section and each student is responsible for performing a 5-minute individual piece in a communication "variety show" during Week 5. Students can select from any style of communication that best expresses their identity out of the formats covered during Week 3 (issue speech, monologue, story). For more information, please see the rubric and performance guidelines distributed in class.

### 5. *Advocacy Project Presentation*

**DUE: Week 10**

The second section of this course is focused on advocacy for self and others. The Advocacy Project Presentation is the culmination of student learning in this section and students work in teams of 4 or 5 to construct a 20-minute research presentation on an advocacy question of their choice. Each student must present for at least 5 minutes and the overall presentation must incorporate field interviews and other evidence to support arguments. For more information, please see the rubric distributed in class.

### 6. *Final Keynote*

**DUE: Week 15**

During the second to last week of the semester, students create a 5-minute individual keynote speech designed to inspire the audience about ideas, experiences, and issues of personal importance. Students are encouraged to use this opportunity to reflect on their journey as a public speaker and ways they want to use their voice in the world. For more information, please see assignment description and rubric.

## GRADING POLICY

Fall – Theater 5 001 – STD 001

Class participation is a substantial part of the course grade, calculated separately from class attendance. All presentation assignments should be completed on time during the assigned week. Assignments will be weighed as follows:

Class Participation	30%
Class Attendance	10%
Blogs (at least 3)	10%
Identity Performance Piece	15%
Advocacy Project Presentation	20%
Final Keynote Speech	15%

Please double-space all written work and use a 12-pt. font. All written work should be emailed, no hard copy required. Any references to readings should be in APA format.

Reference assignment rubrics for specific grading expectations for each assignment, including expectations for class participation.

Letter grades are assigned on the standard scale based upon a possible total of 100 points.

(A: 95-100; A-: 90-94; B+: 86-89; B: 83-85; B-: 80-82; C+: 76-79; C: 73-75; C-: 70-72; D: 60-69)

## COURSE POLICIES

1. **Promote/Drop Policy:** As of the beginning of the semester, there is a wait list for this course, so students who decide to drop the course should do so as soon as possible after the first meeting of the course, so as to give students on the wait list a chance to enroll. Any student who does not attend the first two meetings of the class will be immediately dropped in order to make room for those on the wait list. The instructor will promote students on the wait list so that they can roll into the course according to the wait list order (i.e., the first student on the wait list will be rolled in first, the second student will be rolled in next, and so on) – there will be no “jumping ahead” of one’s order in the wait list, for any reason.
2. Regular attendance and active participation is required. If for any reason a student must miss the class, it is his/her responsibility to notify the instructor beforehand by email and to arrange with a fellow student to make up work and/or to obtain class notes. Students are allowed up to 3 excused absences without penalty over the course of the semester, as long as the student contacts the instructor in advance.
3. The class will start promptly at 8:10am and tardiness is not tolerated. Four tardies will be considered the equivalent of one absence.
4. Cell phones must be turned on vibrate and cannot be out during class. Laptops may be used during select periods during class for note-taking or other required online exercises, but may not be out during class discussions and practice time.
5. Students enrolled in the class are expected to adhere to university’s student code of conduct and cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated.
6. Confidential support services and accommodations are available for all students with disabilities and students who need accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor.
7. When religious holidays require students to be absent from class activities, students should inform the instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the class each semester and will be responsible for making up any missed work.