**Syllabus:** Public Speaking

**Course Number:** SPCH 1315  
**Semester & Year:** Fall 2025

**Instructor Information:**

Name: Shanna Cheney, Associate Professor  
 Office: Humanities Building, Office 211

Phone: 903-823-3363

E-mail: [shanna.cheney@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:shanna.cheney@texarkanacollege.edu)

Office Hours:

Monday – 8:00-9:30 am, 11:00 am-4:00 pm

Tuesday – 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Wednesday – 8:00-9:30 am, 11:00 am-4:00 pm

Thursday – 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Friday – 9:00 am-12:00 pm

**Textbook Information:**

Tucker, Barbara and Kristin Barton. Exploring Public Speaking: 4th Revision. Communication Open Textbooks, 2019.

* The link to this online textbook will be provided.

Milan, Sharon. Quick Study Academic Public Speaking. BarCharts Inc. (Optional Supplement)

**Course description:**

Public Speaking is a basic course in the study of effective communications through speech. Emphasis is placed upon content, organization, and delivery of speeches for various purposes and occasions. Skills include analyzing the speaking situation and audience, delivering speeches effectively, and developing the ability to critically listen.

**Student Learning Outcomes for the Course:**

1. Recognize and understand the foundational models of communication.
2. Apply elements of audience analysis.
3. Demonstrate ethical speaking and listening skills.
4. Research, develop, and deliver extemporaneous speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal techniques.
5. Demonstrate effective usage of technology when researching and presenting speeches.
6. Understand how culture, ethnicity, and gender influence communication.
7. Develop proficiency in presenting a variety of speeches as an individual or group (e.g. narrative, informative, persuasive).

**Grading Scale**

The semester is set up on a point system containing 1000 points. There may be opportunities to earn extra points during the semester, as circumstances dictate. The following point system will be used in determining the semester grades:

1000-900 points=A

899-800 points=B

799-700 points=C

699-600 points=D

599 points and below=F

Your grades will be available to view in the myTC page for this class.

**ABSENTEE POLICY**Texarkana College’s absentee policy allows instructors to withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences. If a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she **may** be considered absent. Three tardies constitute one absence. It is the student’s responsibility to check the syllabus for each instructor’s tardy policy.

In some workforce/vocational areas, such as nursing and cosmetology, certification requirements necessitate an absentee policy that is more stringent than the institutional policy. In these instances, the matter of certification takes precedence over local policies, since certification policies are established by the State of Texas.

Faculty members **are not** obligated to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments and tests as a result of a student’s absence from class. The institution is not required to take attendance except for workforce/vocational areas, where certification requirements require taking attendance. However, experience demonstrates that regular attendance enhances academic success. As such, students are expected to attend each meeting of their registered courses.

A student should not stop attending a class without formally withdrawing from the course by the institutions published Last Day for Students to Drop. If a student stops attending class after the published Last Day for Students to Drop, the student **may** receive a grade of “F” in the class. The instructor will submit the last date of attendance for students receiving a grade of “F” or “W”.

Withdrawal from a course(s) **may** affect a student’s current or future financial aid eligibility. Students should consult the Financial Aid Office to learn both short- and long-term consequences of a withdrawal.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES**A student’s absence due to school trips and/or school business will not be counted against a student’s allowable number of absences. Military duty and absences for Holy Days (FBD LEGAL) are covered in a separate section of the catalog and the student handbook. These are the only excused absences that are considered by Texarkana College. Responsibility for work missed for any absence is placed on the student. Instructors are required to allow students to make up work missed if the absence is due to military duty\* or religious holy days when students follow the correct notification procedures. Instructors are not required to allow students to make up work for absences due to other reasons. Make-up policies are listed in each individual instructor’s syllabus.

**ONLINE/HYBRID COURSE ABSENCES**Absence in an **online course** is defined as the lack of an active post or submission within the course including discussion board posts, written assignments, and tests. This standard will be used to determine all absentee issues, including but not limited to, 12th Day Census Reports, last date of attendance, and involuntary withdrawal from a course due to absences. All online students must complete an Enrollment Verification activity within the first week of class (activity depends upon the professor); otherwise the professor **may** drop the student for not having attended. Students must complete at least one activity in their online class per week. Each week in which a student does not complete an activity will be counted as an absence.

If a student is taking a hybrid course, and it does not meet during the first week of class, the student must also complete an Enrollment Verification activity within the first week of class; otherwise the student **may** be dropped for not having attended.

**MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE ABSENCES**After official registration, the following number of unexcused absences will be the maximum allowable before a student **may** be dropped from the class. Mandated program certification requirements detailed for certain programs regarding the maximum allowable unexcused absences takes precedence over the following information.

**Academic Classes**

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| --- | --- |
| **A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR THE FULL 16 WEEK SEMESTER** | |
| Class or Lab Meets:  Once a week (Night classes or Friday classes)  Twice a week (MW or TR classes)  Three times a week (MWF or TRF classes)  Four times a week (MTWR classes) | An instructor **may** withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed:  2  4  6  8  Three tardies count as one absence |
| **A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR 14 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER** | |
| Class or Lab Meets:  Twice a week (MW or TR classes) | An instructor **may** withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed:  4  Three tardies count as one absence. |
| **A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR 8 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER (Fast-Track)** | |
| Class or Lab Meets:  Four times a week (MTWR classes) | An instructor **may** withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed:  4  Three tardies count as one absence. |
| **A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR 5 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER (Summer Sessions)** | |
| Class or Lab Meets:  3 times a week (MTW) (evening classes)  4 times a week (MTWR) (day classes) | An instructor **may** withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed:  2  2  Three tardies count as one absence. |

**For mini-mesters (2 week classes)**

**One absence is allowed. Three tardy marks count as one absence.**

**Attendance Policy 8-Week Hybrid**

Texarkana College attendance policy allows students to be dropped by instructors for excessive absence.  TC considers excessive absence to equate to anything greater than 15% of the class. In an 8-week term, this means that instructors may drop students for attendance if student absences exceed more than one week of class meetings (2) and/or online assignments. In a 16-week term, instructors may drop students for attendance if student absences exceed more than two weeks of class meetings and/or online assignments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Day Classes | Evening Classes |
| Class meets:  5 days a week (MTWRF)  The instructor **may** withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed five (5) up until the published Last Day for Students to Drop. Absences that exceed this number after the drop day may result in the student receiving an “F” in the program for that semester.  Three tardies count as one absence.  You are considered tardy from the designated class start time through the first 15 minutes of class. After that you will be counted absent. | Class Meets:  4 evenings a week (MTWR)  The instructor **may** withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed five (5) up until the published Last Day for Students to Drop. Absences that exceed this number after the drop day may result in the student receiving an “F” in the program for that semester.  Three tardies count as one absence.  You are considered tardy from the designated class start time through the first 15 minutes of class. After that you will be counted absent. |

* Please note that it is your responsibility to get any missed notes or assignments given for any days you miss. Having a classmate as a contact might help, in addition to coming by my office. Not hearing about an assignment is not a reason for failing to do it or for asking for an extension.

**Attendance Recording – Participation Grade**

Each day you arrive to class, your attendance will be taken. Your attendance/participation is a grade in this class. Be sure you are marked present.

Your attendance and participation grade reflect the work we do in the class and online.

To get credit for the class period, you must arrive on time, bring all items needed for the class period, participate in the conversation/activity, and be present for the whole class session.

Please be sure to attend class regularly so you can earn the maximum number of participation points and understand the concepts and assignments in the class.

**Tardies:**

Please make every effort to be on time. While an occasional late arrival does not pose a problem, students who frequently walk in late disrupt the class and detract from the learning environment. In addition, it is your responsibility to make sure you were marked present for the day if you walked in after the roll was taken. If a student walks in after I have started taking roll, he or she will be considered tardy up until the ten-minute mark. A student who arrives ten minutes after class or later will be considered absent, whether he or she remains for the class or not. A student who walks in late during a quiz will not be allowed to take the quiz. Leaving class early will result in the student being counted absent. Three tardies are equal to one absence.

Students who are late on their speaking days will automatically lose 10 points (if the student is not over 10 minutes late) and may lose the chance to give the speech, depending on the circumstances. Do not come in late to class on a day you are speaking, telling me you had computer problems printing your formal outline. You should print it several days in advance so you can practice with it and condense it to your delivery outline. Do not wait until the last minute to print it out or submit it online.

**Instructor’s Absence:**

I will try to let you know if I am going to miss class for any reason. If I have an unexpected circumstance and must miss, I will either have someone else meet the class with instructions or post instructions for the next class. Additionally, I will be communicating with you through your TC email. If a sign-in sheet is left, be sure and sign in so that you will not be counted absent.

**Drop Date:**

Thisis the last date for the student to drop this course with a W. The professor may drop the student at any time during the semester. Be sure to check the school’s calendar for the exact date. *If you ever consider* *dropping this class, talk to me before making your decision. I will make every effort to work with your situation if I can.*

**Make-up Policy:**

**Students will be allowed to make up one (1) speech with a 10% reduction in the overall grade of that speech. This speech will be given on a scheduled make up day at the end of the semester.** All the rules stated elsewhere must be followed. Missed quizzes and in-class/online events cannot be made up. All assignments given must be turned in on their due dates or arrangements must be made with me prior to the student’s absence or before the next class meeting. Students must complete all speeches assigned.

**Late work: I will accept any assignment, except speeches, for 24 hours after it was due. After 24 hours, it will not be accepted. Late assignments will be marked 10% off.**

**Academic Integrity Statement**

Scholastic dishonesty, involving but not limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of records will make the student liable for disciplinary action after being investigated by the Dean of Students. Proven violations of this nature will result in the student being dropped from the class with an “F”.

This policy applies campus wide, including TC Testing Center, as well as off-campus classroom or lab sites, including dual credit campuses. This information can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu>.

**Plagiarism**

One of the goals of this course is to teach students how to document sources appropriately. Any violation of the following principles in students’ completed work constitutes plagiarism:

1. All written work submitted for credit is accepted as your own work. Another person may not, therefore, have composed it, wholly or partially, without sufficient credit given.

2. The wording of written work is taken as your own, therefore, you may not submit work that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper, another person’s paper or notebook, the Internet, or any other written, printed, or broadcast media source without proper citation. Another writer’s phrases, sentences, or paragraphs may only be included if presented as quotations and the source acknowledged both verbally and in the properly formatted bibliography or works cited page.

3. The ideas expressed in a paper or report are accepted as originating with you, the writer. Written work that paraphrases any written, printed, or transmitted media material without acknowledgements may not be submitted for credit. Ideas from books and essays may be incorporated into your work as starting points, governing issues, illustrations, and the like, but in each case, the source must be cited.

4. Remember that any online materials you use in your speech, both written and visual, are also governed by rules about plagiarism, so you need to learn how to cite anything taken from any electronic source, as well as all other sources.

When you use any source for information in a speech, you must give credit for the information, both visual and textual, to the author or creator, both verbally and in the typewritten works cited.

**Academic Integrity and Use of AI Tools Guidelines**

As members of the academic community, you are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity. The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) tools offers new opportunities and challenges in our pursuit of knowledge and academic growth. To maintain fairness and integrity in our academic work, the following guidelines are established for the use of AI in this course:

**Acceptable Use of AI Tools**

1. Research Assistance: AI tools may be used for preliminary research and to assist in locating academic sources. Proper citations must be provided for any materials found via AI tools.

2. Skill Development: AI may be employed for skill development in areas such as coding, languages, and mathematical problem-solving. Use these tools responsibly to enhance your understanding rather than replace your learning efforts.

**Prohibited Use of AI Tools**

**1.** The use of AI tools to generate content or answers for assignments, projects, quizzes, or exams may be prohibited. Submitting AI-generated work as your own is considered academic dishonesty.

2. Paraphrasing and Translation: Using AI to paraphrase text or translate assignments is not permissible if it disguises the source material without proper acknowledgment. All work submitted should be in your own words and reflect your own understanding.

**Disclosure and Citation**

1. Acknowledgment: If any AI tools are used to aid in your learning process (e.g., for brainstorming or editing), their use must be disclosed in a brief statement in your submission.

2. Citation: All AI-assisted content must be properly cited according to the appropriate academic style guide mentioned in this syllabus.

**Consequences of Misuse**

Violating this policy will result in disciplinary actions consistent with the College’s Academic Integrity Policy, which may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or further disciplinary measures.

**Disability Act Statement:**

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Tonja Blasé at 903-823-3349 or go by the office of Disability Services located in the Academic Commons (library) for personal assistance.

If a student qualifies for accommodations from the TC Director of Disability Services indicating that he or she has a disability that requires academic accommodations, the director will send an email to the instructor so accommodations can be made. *It is best to request these changes at the beginning if not* *before the start of class so there is ample time to make the accommodations.*

TC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities, admission or employment. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Director of Human Resources/Title IX Coordinator, 2500 N. Robison Rd., Texarkana, TX, 75599, (903) 823-3355 [human.resources@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:human.resources@texarkanacollege.edu)

**Basic Needs Security:**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing enough food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course or ability to remain in school, is urged to contact Tonja Blase, Director of Student Retention, at 903-823-3349 for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that are available.

**Financial Aid:**

Attention! Dropping this class may affect your funding in a negative way! You could owe money to the college and/or federal government. Please check with the Financial Aid office before making a decision.

* **Alternate Operations during Campus Closure**

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, Texarkana College may need to move to altered operations and course delivery methods. During this time, Texarkana College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: online learning management system (Jenzabar or Moodle), online conferencing through TEAMS, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule.  It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Texarkana College's website ([www.texarkanacollege.edu](http://www.texarkanacollege.edu)) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, instructor email notifications on the method of delivery and course-specific communication, and Texarkana College email notifications for important general information.

**Computer Requirement Policy:**

Students are required to have a computer with Internet access for classes. The computer must be an actual computer – smart phones, iPads, Androids, Chromebooks, etc., are not acceptable substitutes because they lack software compatibility necessary to complete all assignments and tests. Financial costs for the necessary equipment and internet access are the responsibility of the student.

Students needing to purchase a computer may do so through the Texarkana College Bookstore. Systems purchased through the bookstore meet or exceed all requirements, are competitively priced, and may be purchased using financial aid funds. If the system is purchased through another source, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure the system meets all requirements.

Computer systems requirements:

* Webcam, microphone, and speakers or headphones
* Windows 10 or a recent version of Mac OS (minimum Sierra). Windows 10 S mode is not supported
* Hardware capable of running Microsoft Teams (free download) and supports multi-media playback
* Support for Chrome or Microsoft Edge – Note: Firefox, Safari, or other browsers may not work on all TC applications
* Able to run Microsoft Office which will be provided free to TC students
* Adobe Reader or another PDF viewer
* Antivirus software such as Windows Defender or another 3rd party anti-virus solution
* The Respondus Lockdown browser is used for taking tests; therefore, the system must be capable of running this software. Most newer systems that meet other specifications should work.

Students should regularly backup content to prevent loss of coursework due to hardware failure. Backup copies of documents and other coursework may be placed on OneDrive cloud storage. OneDrive is included free of charge for all TC students.

**Course Policies**

**Written Work**: Although this is a public speaking class, there is a written component. Part of creating a message as a communicator is doing so in both oral & written avenues.

Basic Requirements:

1. All outlines must be typed and double-spaced using 12-point Times New Roman in black ink. Computer emergencies can, and do happen, but will not be an excuse for a late paper or speech.
2. Outlines must be submitted prior to speaking. They will not be accepted after the fact, and you will not be allowed to give your speech without it.
3. Unless otherwise instructed, the heading should include the following:

* Student Name
* Course and Section Number
* Professor’s Name
* Date

1. Outline must have resources cited MLA or APA.

**Reading:** You are responsible for all reading assignments. It is imperative that you read the assigned material so that you will be an informed participant, have a better understanding of the subject matter, and can contribute to the learning environment of the class.

**Speech Policies:**

* Any student who brings a manuscript in front of the class and/or reads a speech word-for-word rather than speak using a brief key-word outline or note card, unless otherwise instructed, will receive zero points for the speech grade and all its component parts**. Do not just read a speech**.

**You will not deliver your speech without first handing me a typed outline or submitting it online if required.**

Students should choose speech topics that are fresh and of genuine interest. Your topic must be approved by the instructor. There are some topics that will not be allowed in this class. Your speech should not offend anyone in the audience, and the subject should be in good taste. Profanity and vulgarity are not to be part of anyone’s speech.

Wikipedia is not allowed as a source/reference for speeches.

Dress appropriately/professionally on the day you are scheduled to speak. In other words, you should “dress for success”. Do not wear a hat while speaking unless necessary.

Do not speak with gum in your mouth.

**NEVER ENTER THE ROOM WHEN A FELLOW STUDENT IS PRESENTING A SPEECH.**

If you are late getting to class, stop outside the door, and wait until you hear applause. Then quietly enter the classroom and take your seat before the next speech begins.

When you walk into the room in the middle of someone's speech, you effectively destroy whatever is happening between the speaker and the audience. Attention immediately shifts to you, away from the speaker, and audience members stop listening.

You will be penalized if you create that kind of disruption for one of your fellow speakers.

**Class expectations and etiquette:**

You must be present for the entire class and give your full attention. Physical presence alone is not enough; you must come to work, not to just watch.

Disruptions or behaviors which take away time from my teaching or from students learning will not be tolerated. As such, I will give you a single warning when you have created a disruption. If there is another incident at any time during the semester, you will be asked to stop and leave the classroom. I will then decide whether to drop you from the class.

Here are some examples of what I consider disruptive behavior:

1. Shouting out during my lecture.
2. Making negative comments about me, the class, or other members of the class.
3. Engaging in any activity that is loud or annoying to those around you.
4. Speaking inappropriately to others when working in pairs or groups.
5. Leaving in the middle of class without previously discussing it with the professor.
6. Eating, making noise, using an electronic device or any disruption while someone is speaking.
7. Using a cell phone at any time, other than when being directed to is unacceptable.
8. Do not sleep during class.

Since this is a public speaking class, you will spend a considerable amount of time being an audience member. Please be courteous and attentive when listening to other speeches. You may not do anything other than listen when someone is speaking. This includes use of technology, working on homework or preparing for your speech. Discourteous audience behaviors will be reflected in lowering the participation grade.

* Please silence your cell phones. You may not text, talk, check email, or use social media during class. No cell phones should be out during class time. If you have an emergency that necessitates using your cell phone, discuss this with me prior to class. I will give a verbal warning for the first incident of cell phone use and will lower your participation grade by 10 points for each subsequent violation. If there are more than two incidents during class, you may be dropped.
* Do not wear earbuds during lectures or speeches.
* Do not bring food to eat during class that would be distracting or unless medically necessary. You may bring a drink if it has a cap or lid and you are not disruptive with it.

**Communicating by email:**

Feel free to email me at any time. However, because I value your time and my time, I request that you follow this simple format: Use your TC account. Have the subject line be a clear indication of the subject of the email. Sign the email with your full name and the class you’re in.

Communication is important, and it is that very subject on which we will concentrate our efforts this semester. I will be more than happy to talk to you during my office hours or make arrangements to meet with you another time. You may also email me, phone me, or leave a voicemail. As your professor, I respect each of you as learners, and I promise to treat you with respect and be available to help you on this journey.

**Note:** The above guidelines are subject to change at any point during the semester. Students will be notified in class if changes occur. Students are responsible for any changes after they have been announced.

**You will be asked to sign and submit a syllabus receipt form.**