Education for Responsible Citizenship

Penn is a great university in part because of its efforts to nurture in its students an ethic of social responsibility and a sense of citizenship. In fact, the Code of Student Conduct begins: “When Benjamin Franklin founded the Pennsylvania Academy, he defined its mission as ‘education for citizenship.’ In pursuit of this mission, the University of Pennsylvania is committed to achieving academic excellence, to creating an environment for inquiry and learning, and to cultivating responsible citizenship in the larger society.”

In hopes of living up to Penn’s promise, a vital part of this course will be our partnership with Girard College. Girard College “is a boarding school for academically capable students, grades 1 through 12, from families with limited financial resources, each headed by a single parent or guardian.” Like Penn, its mission is to prepare young people for ethical citizenship.

As community partners, you will create a multimedia curriculum used to coach Girard’s high school students as they prepare speeches to share with us. This service-learning component is integral to the course curriculum. Our partnership with Girard College enables you to apply lessons in advising and public speaking in order to provide individual attention and support that can instill confidence in our younger fellow citizens.

This course is designed to equip you with the major tenets of rhetorical studies and peer education necessary to work as a CWiC speaking advisor and to voice your citizenship, but it is only an introduction. Your education will continue when you are a CWiC advisor.

A public voice is essential to a productive pluralistic democracy. Hopefully, you will come to appreciate communication education as an essential and exciting part of citizenship. Voice and citizenship are inseparable.

Goals
At the completion of this introductory course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the CWiC program, including the entire web site
2. Consistently demonstrate attentive and respectful listening
3. Identify and implement a variety of rhetorical strategies, including narrative, definition, and comparison
4. Present clearly organized and interesting speeches
5. Adapt to multiple audiences while maintaining credibility and authenticity
6. Recognize one’s communication strengths and weaknesses
7. Offer constructive criticism and guide a speaker through meaningful revision
8. Understand and manage communication apprehension with strategies including cognitive restructuring and thoughtful breathing
9. Accept constructive criticism and revise one’s own speeches accordingly

Required Materials

- 50 4”x6” index cards
- Presenter (remote to control visual aids)
- Stopwatch or timer (smart phone, etc. is fine)
- Save all coursework in three formats, at least one being a reliable cloud (Google, Dropbox or similar).
Respectful Participation/Communication:

1. University Expectations: The Penn Code of Student Conduct outlines the rights and responsibilities of student citizenship. Particularly in a classroom dedicated to developing skills for peer advising, learners need to understand that respectful dialogue is vital. University policies on harassment and discrimination outline behaviors that should be absent from all classrooms. (www.upenn.edu/affirm-action/aa handbook.html) Please talk with me if you feel threatened or disregarded in this class. Building and maintaining a collaborative and learning-friendly classroom are our shared responsibilities.

2. CWiC Listening Expectations: You will be evaluated as a listener as well as a speaker, for effective communication requires both skill sets. Sleeping, reading, checking Facebook, or text-messaging, for example, are unacceptable behaviors for CWiC advisors trying to communicate face-to-face. Therefore, they are not tolerated. To be clear, these behaviors are not accepted, liked, embraced, allowed, excused, valued, and so forth. CWiC speaking advisors need to demonstrate excellent listening habits. Therefore, advisors-in-training must be able to demonstrate and cultivate excellent listening skills during this course. If you are unable or unwilling to meet these expectations, you should drop this course immediately.

3. CWiC Seminar Expectations: Read, answer questions, ask thoughtful questions, offer constructive feedback, reflect upon others’ constructive criticism, and demonstrate that you are thinking about course concepts and what your peers have to say. Please make every effort to avoid the artificial dyad that often appears in classrooms—a student speaking with the professor to the exclusion of the other students. Make eye contact with all of your peers and demonstrate your interest in what everyone in the classroom has to say, not just the professor.

Getting to know one another:
I welcome opportunities to learn about your theories of the world and your experiences, hopes, and plans. In addition to our working together in the classroom and through community engagement (service), I encourage you to schedule lunch with me—individually or with other classmates. (This is not a requirement.) The Student Committee on Undergraduate Education (SCUE) has a program available for undergraduate students who would like to have more one-on-one contact with professors. Free lunch is provided at the University Club, located on the second floor of The Inn at Penn (3611 Walnut Street). In order to take advantage of this program, do the following:

- Ask your professor to go to lunch with you as part of the SCUE lunchroom program.
- Arrive at the Faculty Club (with your Penn student ID) between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. with your professor, and indicate that you are there for the SCUE Lunchroom program.
- http://www.upenn.edu/provost/lunch

Course Attendance:
I will take attendance; students are responsible for signing the attendance sheet at the beginning of class. Attendance should be respectful, meaning (in part) that we do not pack our bags until class has concluded and we are seated and attentive, with cell phones off, on time. It is impossible to succeed in this class without participating respectfully. Consequently, each absence beyond one will result in a (50 point) final letter grade reduction. Classroom activities and speeches cannot be made up unless you have a university-excused absence or serious event discussed with me prior to due dates. Telling me after a missed class period or due date that you were very ill, for example, will not help you develop skills for citizenship, your profession, or CWiC. If you foresee scheduling conflicts, talk with me immediately. Missing one class session will not affect your grade; reserve this ‘free’ absence for a day you may need it due to illness or an important event. You are required to use the new CAR (Course Absence Report) system through Penn-in-Touch, explained here: http://www.upenn.edu/registrar/CT/CT-CAR-User-Guide.pdf. If you cannot easily report the absence until after class, still do a CAR and e-mail me before class if possible.

Responsibility for coursework:
Late work will not receive full credit, if accepted at all. Time management is a necessary skill for all professionals, citizens, family members, etc. Assignments—written and oral—are due during scheduled class periods unless otherwise noted during the term. Come to class prepared to rethink the assigned material and share your ideas and questions. Again, always speak with me before a due date if a problem arises. For my part, I will return feedback to you as promised, (usually by the next class session).
Academic Integrity:
Plagiarism or cheating in any form will destroy your credibility as a communicator—whether it is with faculty, neighbors, or coworkers. Take credit for your work. Cite others for theirs. Academic integrity includes being honest in all things academic. I will not question students’ reasons for absences or incomplete assignments. I assume the best of your intentions. Don’t spend your time trying to convince me that you are a good person. I believe you. I will evaluate the outcome of course assignments, however. Plagiarism, taking credit for another’s work without proper citation, will result in an F in the course and a letter of misconduct to appropriate university administrators and your advisor. As a rule, do not copy anything from any source. Copying from a web site is usually inappropriate even if you do cite the source, because you need to speak in your voice. Direct quotations should be used sparingly and purposefully. In any case, always cite the source. If you didn’t think of it, cite it. Ultimately, if the author were in the room, would you be confident that she or he approves of how you are using her/his work? You are responsible for knowing Penn’s Code of Academic Integrity. (www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html; http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/PORT/documentation/plagiarism_policy.html)

Appropriate Use of Technologies:
Laptops and iPads (or similar) may only be used for typing relevant classroom notes and/or conducting assigned classroom activities (except during peers’ speeches, when they cannot be used). If you use your laptop or similar technology (hand held device, cell phones, etc.) for anything other than classroom notes during class, you will be asked to drop the class immediately. If you want to note important dates, please write them down during class; note them in phones, etc. during breaks or at the end of class sessions. If you need to check Facebook or complete an assignment, then you should not attend class. More importantly, you should not be a CWiC Advisor. Please be certain that all cell phones, beepers, snooze-buttons, egg timers, and other distracting devices are silenced and out of your peripheral vision before class begins. The bottom line—if you believe that your texts, etc. are so important that you must view/send them during class, then you should not be representing CWiC. Of course, if you have an unusual situation, such as a loved one being in a hospital, you may certainly have your phone on vibrate for a necessary call. Please discuss this with me before class. (Taking a job interview during class does not constitute an unusual situation.)

Equal Opportunity:
No disability should impede you from success in this course. But, lack of initiative may. Any student with a disability who believes she/he needs accommodation(s) in order to succeed in this course should contact the Office of Student Disabilities Services immediately. The staff will determine what accommodations are appropriate and reasonable under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Contact the Weingarten Learning Resources Center—phone: (215) 573.9235; online: www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc.

Grades

♦ Meaningful Grades: Most students are able to present work that fulfills the university-level requirements of the assignment. This is average—the typical level at which students perform. Students need to go beyond just meeting the requirements if they want to earn grades higher than C. I point this out because many students seem to believe that if they do the assignment, they should earn an A. An A means excellence in quality, not completed on time.

  Guidelines for Meaning:
  A—High distinction, an exceptionally high achievement
  B—High achievement
  C—Average achievement
  D—Pass, below average achievement
  F—Failure, unsatisfactory

In order to be hired as a CWiC advisor after completion of this course, your final grade must be a B or higher. You may not register to be graded pass or fail in this course. If you commit to thoughtful and on-time preparation in this course that integrates feedback from peers and me, then there is no reason you cannot achieve an A, A-, B+, or B and become a great CWiC advisor.

♦ Holistic approach: I do not grade partially. Specific criteria will be included in major assignments. I also do not grade from a deficit model. For example, I will not deduct one point per mistake. Some students assume they have an A and the burden of proof lies with the professor: “why didn’t I get an A?” I won’t explain why a completed assignment was short of an A. Again, most students are perfectly capable of checking off each standard. Works of
high achievement and high distinction go beyond checking off a list of requirements.

♦ **Performance not performer:** Students may feel that the professor’s grade is an evaluation of them as persons: “she gave me a D, she hates me.” I am not hired by the University of Pennsylvania to make such evaluations. I do not judge your personality, your intellectual potential, or your intentions with a grade. I judge your performance in our class. Completed work and class participation are evaluated. In order to improve your public speaking and peer advising skills, you will have to be able to use feedback from your peers and myself as part of the learning process.

♦ **Complete Participation:** In order to earn a B or higher and become a CWiC Advisor, you must complete every assignment in the course, including prepared and impromptu speeches. You also must consistently demonstrate respectful listening.

♦ **Grade disputes:** Understanding the above expectations, I invite you to discuss any written evaluation with me after you have thoughtfully read my comments. If you think a grade is unwarranted, you should take the following steps, in order: (1) reread the assignment, (2) reread/view your work—speeches are recorded, (3) reread my evaluation, (4) type a 1-page justification for the grade you think you earned given the standards of the assignment, and (5) e-mail your written justification to me 24-72 hours after you received my grade. Once you have completed these five steps, we will arrange a time to discuss both evaluations.

**Course Points/Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech Matters Speech</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Matters Speech Evaluation (mid-term)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Prezi Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Web site</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service-Learning/Girard Reflection Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful Listening/Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit or No-credit Activities (impromptu, homework)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>