

## **Tips for Teaching Oral Communication**

### **Audience Centered**

- At the beginning of class, do exercises in which students can get to know each other. They need to know their audience in order to develop their presentations.
- Keep the audience in mind at each stage of the presentation (choosing topic, researching, organizing presentation.....). This allows the speaker to focus on the attitudes, beliefs, values and other characteristics of the audience. (01, 03)

### **An Overall Purpose**

- Focus on one overall specific purpose (inform, persuade, entertain, sell, train, clarify) for each presentation. (01, 03)

### **Research Presentations**

- Include research into your presentation. Include finding, analyzing, evaluating, and citing research. (02)
- Talk about the differences between a written and oral citation. (02)

### **Student Involvement**

- Students like opportunities to present opposing viewpoints in presentations (especially when their peers take the opposing view). The research is stronger and they engage in a competition to see who can persuade the audience. (07)
- Give them exercises so that they get used to being in front of the classroom. They need to know what it will look like from the “instructor’s” point of view. (06)
- Help them see that oral communication extends beyond the classroom. Students use it in daily lives and in careers.
- When students are allowed to apply speeches to their individual lives, they tend to develop presentations that have more meaning and in-depth research. You can hear about cultures, viewpoints, and interest of students. (In turn, the instructor learns about his/her audience). (01, 03)

### **Main Points and Thesis**

- Show the relationship between having a clear thesis statement and main points. It is also helpful to structure main points as claims. (01, 03)

### **Clear Organization Patterns**

- Choose an appropriate organizational strategy (for example, organizing informative messages topically or chronologically; organizing persuasive messages by refutation, Monroe’s motivated sequence, or problem/solution) that supports the goal or purpose of the speech. (03, 05)
- The area students often struggle with most is organizing presentations according to different organizational patterns. (01, 03, 05)

### **Delivery: Styles/Methods/Elements**

- “Delivery” is only one aspect of a presentation. Organization of ideas and support of arguments is a much larger focus. When grading presentations 70-80% of a grade rubric typically focuses on organization and structure, 20%-30% focuses on delivery. (06)
- Natural conversational delivery allows you to interact with your audience. (06, 07)
- Effective delivery (use of notes, audience interaction, eye contact, expression, gestures, posture, appearance, vocal characteristics) takes practice. (05, 06).
- Different situations/disciplines require different delivery (manuscript, extemporaneous, impromptu, memorized) methods. (06)

### **Progressive Assignments**

- Assignments that build on each other help students see the relationship between simple and complex presentations (such as informative patterns moving towards persuasive patterns). (03, 04)
- Providing feedback, grading multiple drafts and allowing revisions (peer workshops work well) assist students in developing their presentations. (04)
- Students benefit from critically critiquing their peers presentations. (04, 07)
- Presentation arguments tend to be stronger when they include reasoning, logical and emotional appeals. This is a more advanced form of supporting main points. (03)

### **Time Investment (Repeated Practice/Commitment)**

- Repeated instruction, practice and feedback assists students in mastering speaking concepts. (04)
- Plan time into syllabus for students to present presentations. It can be time intensive.

### **Presentation Development**

- Develop the body of the presentation before the introduction and conclusion. (03, 05)
- Add transitions as one of the final steps. (03, 05)

### **Introductions**

- In organizing the key elements of an introduction, it works well to have your attention getter first and preview of main points last. A link to audience and establishing credibility can fit between these elements. (05)

### **Conclusions**

- Explain the key parts of a conclusion (summary of main points, providing closure). It is also helpful to discuss how to end a presentation. (05)

### **Anxiety**

- Include a time to talk about speaking apprehension. A large number of our students deal with the fear associated with giving presentations. (06)

### **Technology**

- Digital communication can be used in gathering research, typing outlines, and developing visual aids such as PowerPoint or Prezi. (01, 02, 03, 04, 06, 07)
- Remember there are rules associated with designing and presenting visual aids using technology. (05)