

# VOICE AND DICTION

## COMM 247

Instructor: Charlotte A. Elder

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Office Hours: MWF 8:00 – 9:10      Monday 2:45 – 3:15      Wednesday 11:30 – 12:30

**Textbook:** Voice and Diction 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Icon printers      by Payne, K.  
A pronouncing dictionary. Merriam-Webster      by Kenyon, J.S. & Knott, T.A.  
One blank video tape  
A small hand mirror

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** A practical approach to improving the speaking voice. Theory is minimum. A basic premise of the course is not *what* individuals say but *how* they sound when they say it. Emphasis is placed on articulation: speaking clearly and intelligibly; developing a pleasant vocal quality and eliminating such defects as breathiness, nasality, harshness or stridency; building adequate loudness; achieving effective vocal variation, pitch and speaking rate; correcting pronunciation; modifying regional or foreign dialects.

In this course you do not give memorized speeches. The emphasis, as stated in the previous paragraph, is not *what* you say, but *how you sound* when you say it.

When you are assigned various chapters to read outside class, this means that you should concentrate on the discussion or theory portions of the chapter. You don't necessarily have to familiarize yourself with the exercises. They will be covered in class.

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### ATTENDANCE:

This is a three-credit course. You may accumulate up to two unexcused absences.

For three unexcused absences, your final grade will be dropped one letter. For four unexcused absences you will fail the course.

Excused absences: This type of excuse *must be in writing* and from a qualified person (doctor, advisor, college official). Please note: A telephone call does *not* constitute an excused absence.

If you miss an assignment and have an excused absence, we will attempt to make up the work. If time doesn't permit makeup's, you will be given a grade *X* for this missed assignment. An *X* doesn't count *for* you and it doesn't count *against* you.

If you miss an assignment and do not have an excused absence, you will automatically be given a grade of *F* for that assignment. However, if I feel the missed assignment should be made up, you must be prepared at every subsequent class meeting to present the assignment whenever time permits.

Promptness is appreciated. Two tardies count as one absence. *If you enter class after roll has been taken, you are tardy.*

If you're tardy and I'm speaking, come in. If a student is up front talking, wait until the student is finished before you enter.

If you must be tardy, please report to the instructor at the close of class period, otherwise the record will show you as absent.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **1. Diagnostic Appointments**

Each student will be required to complete two diagnostic appointments. The first appointment is designed to indicate areas that you will need to focus on over the course of the semester. The second appointment will be an assessment of the improvements you've made this semester. Each assessment will consist of a short reading and will be recorded.

### **2. Exams**

There will be three exams throughout the semester. There will not be a final exam.

### **3. Practice Hours**

Each student will be required to complete five practice hours in the Student Success Center (across the hall). The material will be provided to you. The student worker must fill in the appropriate information at the bottom of the form and you must sign in to receive full credit. The five hours is made up of ten different exercises that you should read and rehearse for 30 minutes each. The Student Success Center schedule will be made available to you as soon as it is set.

### **4. Assessments**

Each student will complete *four* voice and diction assessments. You will be provided a rubric. You will be asked to observe four different speakers and then complete an assessment rubric for each individual. Each observation should be of an individual speaking (not in conversation) for at least 15 minutes. Examples: political address, guest speaker on campus, preacher, class lecture, etc.

### **5. Assessment Presentation**

Each student will make a presentation to the class that assesses a particular individual's speaking voice and diction. The presentation will include a 2 minute clip of the individual and a 5 – 7 presentation. You may use a character from a movie, a clip for a speech, television personality, or an individual that you know personally (with their permission of course). There will be a rubric provided for this activity as well.

### **6. Self Assessment**

The self assessment will take place during the scheduled final exam time. Each student will set up a short appointment with me to turn in and discuss their improvement over the course of the semester and any areas that still need improvement.

### **7. Word Lists**

Each student will complete 2 word lists.

### **8. Peer Assessments**

Each student will evaluate three classmates during their assessment presentations.

## **EXTRA CREDIT:**

There will only be **one** extra credit opportunity:

Each student is provided with a graph of course assignments and point values assigned to each assignment. You will receive 10 extra credit points if, on the day of the final exam, you present to me a completed graph. *'Completed' indicates that you have recorded the grade you received for each assignment including any additional assignments made during the semester.* I will not report grades to you so that you may fill in the graph – you are responsible for recording grades when they are returned to you.

## **Cell Phones:**

Cell phones are required to be turned off. Cell phones should be off by the time the instructor enters the class. *(Finishing conversations and text messaging during roll call will be considered a violation of this policy.)* If your phone rings, beeps, or vibrates during class you will lose 10 points from your final grade. Each subsequent time your phone disrupts class the point deduction will increase by ten points.

## **HOW ARE YOU GRADED IN THIS COURSE?**

This is a skills course—like taking guitar lessons or learning to ski. Your final grade will largely depend on the overall improvement you've made in the course. In other words, students will be graded in their own individual performances, development, class participation and, of course, improvement.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Received</b>
Diagnostic Appointment #1	25 pts.	
Diagnostic Appointment #2	25 pts.	
Exam #1	50 pts.	
Exam #2	50 pts.	
Exam #3	50 pts	
Voice & Diction Assessment #1	25 pts.	
Voice & Diction Assessment #2	25 pts	
Voice & Diction Assessment #3	25 pts	
Voice & Diction Assessment #4	25 pts	
Assessment Presentation	50 pts.	
Self Assessment	25 pts.	
Word List #1	10 pts.	
Word List #2	10 pts.	
Peer Assessment #1	10 pts.	
Peer Assessment #2	10 pts.	
Peer Assessment #3	10pts.	
Practice Session # 1	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 2	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 3	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 4	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 5	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 6	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 7	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 8	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 9	20 pts.	
Practice Session # 10	20 pts.	
	<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>Total Points Earned</b>

The blank rows are for additional activities and quizzes that you may be asked to complete.