Speech and Debate Communications

INSTRUCTOR: Christine Williams

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OFFICE HOURS:

My preferred method of contact is through email Cswilliams@angletonisd.net

Please allow 24 hours for response.

Tutoring: by appointment

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance to class is mandatory. Students are required to have 90% attendance. If you are going to be tardy, please email me.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

To develop confident, effective communicators and competitors through:

A positive perception of the work, themselves, and the world - the student develops concepts about self, human relationships, society, and the environment using the elements of communication and public speaking.

Historical and Cultural Heritage: The student relates historical, cultural references, and social experiences to speech, rhetoric, and communication movements.

Creative expression and performance: The student interprets ideas, constructs arguments, and delivers speeches, presentations, and debate cases, using voice and body expressively and persuasively.

Critical evaluation: The student responds to and evaluates speeches, debates, and communication styles. The student is encouraged to develop critical thinking skills and the Socratic method by participating in group activities, debate rounds, and evaluation sessions.

MATERIALS:

Black or Blue ink pen

Students are required to keep:

- 2 journals for the duration of their tutelage with me. One is a reflection journal. The other is a daily log. They will need a notebook or sketch book, for this purpose.
- A legal pad or flow paper, for tracking arguments during debate rounds.

DRESS:

Students will be moving and utilizing class and stage space. They will need to dress comfortably in clothes that they may move freely in. Competition/tournament dress (business or business-casual) will be discussed separately ahead of any tournament.

GRADES:

40% Summative 60% Formative

GRADES WILL BE 60% Participation based (Formative,) 40% Test/Performance based (Summative.)

This includes: participation based daily work, on task participation, class evaluations, self-evaluations, journal work, flowing practice, and attitude.

This also includes mastery of speech performance, debate rounds, written papers, class projects, group projects, six-weeks exams, and class presentations.

Most assignments will be in-class activities and exercises.

PLEASE Only check skyward for grades. Do not rely on Google classroom. Google will only have the assignment

FEES:

There may be extracurricular fees attached to competitions, tournaments, or events.

PRODUCTION HOURS:

Students who participate in extracurricular speech or debate events are required to offer six hours of support to assist with the technical aspects of a successful event (this may include timekeeping, ballot-running, or hosting duties at a tournament).

FORMAT:

Students are required to attend all campus performances. Extra credit will be given for other, outside fine arts performances or tournaments observed. They must write a formal assessment of the performance.

Students will work through the components of group exercises, communication theory, basic elements of speech, elevated text, argument building, extemporaneous and prepared speaking, oral interpretation, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, and Student Congress formats.

COMPETENCIES:

(These may vary)

Year-at-a-Glance

Six Weeks	Unit	Focus
1st	Foundations of Communication	Trust-building, communication elements, vocal/physical warm-ups, personal narrative speech
2nd	Speech Structure and Comic Communication	Classical rhetoric, comic/rhetorical literature, classical speech performance, impromptu speaking
3rd	Persuasion and Group Dynamics	Persuasive speaking, group dynamics, production values, invitational performance
4th	Debate, Argumentation & Public Forum	CX/Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, and Student Congress — case construction, cross-examination, flowing, rebuttal, legislation & parliamentary procedure, culminating mock tournament
5th	Competitive Speech and Audition Skills	Vocal training, subtext/under-meaning, extemporaneous vs. impromptu speaking, audition preparation
6th	Displaying Mastery — Group Performance	Group speech event selection, rehearsal, dress rehearsal, public performance

FIRST SIX WEEKS

Unit 1: Foundations of Communication

Week 1 – Introductions, class expectations, reflection journal, tour, personal contracts, trust exercises, relationship builders, social contracts.

Week 2/3 – Students will develop and practice vocal and physical warm-up techniques. Students will participate in activities to develop concepts about self, human relationships and the environment. Students will present a group icebreaker speech. Students will practice appropriate audience etiquette. Students will critique the presentation practicing the use of communication vocabulary. What makes for an effective speaker? Why is it important to establish trust and ensemble in a speech class? What is appropriate audience behavior? Why?

Week 3/4 – Students will explore the elements of communication (sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback, noise) and identify these elements in everyday exchanges. Students will begin their reflection journal and daily log routine. Why does communication break down? What is the communicator's responsibility to the audience?

Week 4/5 – Students will practice vocal technique (breath support, articulation, projection) and physical presence (posture, gesture, eye contact). Students will draft and deliver a short personal narrative speech introducing themselves to the class.

Week 5/6 – Students will give and receive structured peer feedback using communication vocabulary. Students will revise and re-deliver their personal narrative speech incorporating that feedback.

6 Week Exam *– Students will deliver a polished personal narrative speech and complete a written reflection identifying three elements of effective communication they practiced this six weeks.*

SECOND SIX WEEKS

Unit 2: Speech Structure and Comic Communication

Week 1/2 – Students will study the basic structure of a speech (introduction, body, conclusion) and the function of a thesis/central idea. Students will examine short comic monologues to identify structural patterns.

Week 2/3 – Comic and Rhetorical Literature. Students explore the history of rhetoric, comic values, and structure of the joke. Students will receive modernized classical speeches. They will incorporate the foundations they have learned earlier and apply it to the rehearsal process of their speech.

Week 3/4 – Classical Speech Performance, audience etiquette, group evaluation, self-evaluation (written and oral)

Week 4/5 – Students will receive a modern humorous speech topic, rehearse, perform, and evaluate.

Week 5/6 – Students will explore aspects of impromptu speaking and quick-thinking exercises.

6 Week Exam *– Students will compile and deliver an impromptu speech routine*

THIRD SIX WEEKS

Unit 3: Persuasion and Group Dynamics

Week 1/2 – Students will begin to explore group dynamics, communication movement, and creative expression through persuasive speaking. Which is more valuable, the journey (process) or the destination (product)? What does self-discipline mean to a communicator who is creating? Writing means rewriting; is a project ever really complete? How does today's need for instant gratification fit into a communicator's work?

Week 2/3 – Students will be using speech outlines from journal #1; the instructor will select and assign the speeches that will be performed in class. Every student will present but not all speeches will be performed for the invitational audience. ASIDE: Assignment should be done according to type and sensitivity to subject matter and group dynamics. Students will now rehearse both their journal #1 speech and their journal #2 performance piece.

Week 3/4 – Students will study production values: visual aids, props, renderings, and exploring all production values for their persuasive speech.

Week 4/5 – Students will incorporate technical aspects (visual aids, media, sound) into their persuasive speech performance.

Week 5/6 – Students will perform their persuasive speech for an invitational audience.

6 Week Exam *– Students will give a presentation of production value and history*

FOURTH SIX WEEKS

Unit 4: Debate, Argumentation, and Public Forum

This unit merges the persuasive-narrative and media work of Speech Communications with the full competitive debate curriculum, cross-referenced to UIL, TFA, and NSDA guidelines.

Week 1/2 – Introduction to competitive debate: comparing CX/Policy, Lincoln-Douglas (LD), Public Forum, and Student Congress formats. The students will score text, create a super objective and commanding image, and structure the argument — students will study the Monomyth, or Hero's Journey, as it applies to persuasive narrative and case construction (resolution analysis, contentions, evidence).

Week 2/3 – Cross-examination technique and rebuttal structure. Students will master techniques for coaching the speaker and techniques of critique and rehearsal for media and stage, applied to debate rounds. Students practice flowing (the note-taking system for tracking arguments) a sample round and delivering a rebuttal speech; introduction to burden of proof and clash.

Week 3/4 – Student Congress: legislation writing and parliamentary procedure (motions, points of order, presiding officer duties). Students will collaborate with a production team on pre-production, production, and post-production using the Monomyth for a UIL Speech/Debate or media project, then draft and debate a piece of mock legislation.

Week 4/5 – Case-building workshop: students construct their own case (Policy, LD, or Public Forum) using the persuasive-narrative techniques from earlier in the unit, then run peer cross-examination practice rounds.

Week 5/6 – Full mock tournament preparation: students compete in in-class mock rounds, rotating through CX/Policy, LD, Public Forum, and Student Congress, and receive ballots/critiques from peers acting as judges.

6 Week Exam *– Students will compete in a culminating mock tournament in one debate format of their choice (CX/Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, or Student Congress) and will be evaluated using an official-style ballot.*

FIFTH SIX WEEKS

Unit 5: Competitive Speech and interp Skills

Week 1/2 – Students will explore the audition process for competitive speech and theatre, including how judges/auditors evaluate a performer. Students will learn basic vocal training techniques: breath, diction, and resonance.

Week 2/3 – Students will explore finding the "under-meaning" of a text (subtext) and how a speaker discovers a piece's given circumstances and intention.

Week 3/4 – Students will compare extemporaneous and impromptu speaking in a competitive setting, practicing both under timed conditions.

Week 4/5/6 – Identify a good piece to compete with. Learn five objectives of voice and delivery.

6 Week Exam *– Identify three areas of voice training one should improve. Explain how a speaker finds the under-meaning of the lines. Discover the advantages of preparation when auditioning. Explain the role of the coach in the audition process. Identify the difference between extemporaneous and impromptu speaking in a competitive setting. Practice basic vocal and physical delivery training.*

SIXTH SIX WEEK

Unit 6: Displaying Mastery — Group Performance and Direction

Week 1 – Choosing a group speech event, impromptu routines, and pieces — discussing production values, agreeing on structure, assignment — utilizing every tool they have learned.

Week 2/3 – Rehearsal, production, self-evaluation, group evaluation

Week 3/4 – Rehearsal, production, self-evaluation, group evaluation

Week 4/5 – Finalities, wrapping up loose ends for show

Week 4/5/6 – Dress Rehearsal, Performance for public

6 Week Exam *– Performance*

Semester Exam TBD

I have read, acknowledged, and agree with the terms set for this course

Student Name (Print) Date_____

Student Name (Signature) Date_____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date_____