

Basic Communication Course Annual

Volume 10

Article 14


1998

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Recommended Citation

Jensen, Karla Kay and Williams, David E. (1998) "Teaching the Honors Public Speaking Course," *Basic Communication Course Annual*: Vol. 10, Article 14.

Available at: <http://ecommons.udayton.edu/bcca/vol10/iss1/14>

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Teaching the Honors Public Speaking Course

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Public universities and colleges long ago realized the need for a large scale curriculum change in order to attract and meet the needs of the nations most exceptional students. Originally, the answer was an increase in the number of honors programs which functioned as “the equivalent of educational boutiques” (Fischer, p. 108). In the 1920’s Frank Aydelotte introduced the honors concept to American universities via Swathmore College. Aydelotte (1944) recounted his early plan for honors education in his book *Breaking the academic lock step: The development of honors work in American colleges and universities*.

The system of instruction which forms the subject of Aydelotte’s book might be described as an extension of undergraduate freedom from the personal to the institutional sphere. It is essentially a system for selecting the best and most ambitious students, prescribing for these students a more rigorous program than would be possible for the average student, and allowing them freedom and opportunity to work out that program for themselves (p. 12).

Aydelotte’s (1944) insight into the need to attract qualified honors students and provide them with a challenging, yet flexible, curriculum which emphasizes instructor-student interaction remains prevalent in today’s honors programs. In recent years the importance of honors programs has increased due to the desire to attract the best students to our institutions (Herr, 1991) and satisfy the growing

number of faculty who are enthusiastic about teaching honors sections.

Honors courses in public speaking were introduced as early as the 1950's. Streeter (1960) found examples of honors speech classes for students at all college levels and "provisions for the special abilities of talented students in basic courses" (p. 223). A 1968 issue of *The Speech Teacher* devoted several articles to the topic of honors courses. Specifically, Peterson (1968) identified some of the perceived learning differences between honors and non-honors students, suggesting that honors students are more individualistic, have greater confidence, and have better organizational skills. In a separate article Gilbert (1968) advised the use of small seminars, independent reading, tutoring, and independent research to address some of these learning preferences.

As honors programs and courses have grown since the 1970's, there has been only a trace amount of research produced regarding the role of the honors public speaking course. Notable highlights include contributions by German (1985) and Wentzlaff (1988). German (1985) provided guidelines for implementing the honors course with the syllabus structured around Bloom's taxonomy for educational objectives. Wentzlaff (1988) revealed results of a study of 49 honors students. Her study discovered that most honors students studied desired collaborative and participant learning styles. She then concluded with a list of suggested honors class activities.

While these and other papers have provided some insight into the honors public speaking course, the recent exchange of information about such courses is still lacking. The present article will differ from others by identifying alternative formats for honors courses and suggesting which format would be most appropriate for different institutions. Additionally, this paper will review the literature on honors students' learning preferences, and then offer

suggestions on how honors courses might best be structured to meet the unique needs of honors students.

HONORS COURSES FORMATS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

While criteria for honors programs will differ among institutions, they share three general expectations. First, student involvement and interaction has added emphasis as a means for student learning; thus instructors are expected to foster an environment where students can discover knowledge through discussion. Second, instructors maintain elevated expectations of student work. Such expectations include greater use of primary sources, a higher expectation for creativity and individual research, and a higher standard for quality work. Third, the honors class is taught by more experienced instructors with demonstrated teaching excellence. In addition, these classes have smaller enrollments, offer a faster-paced presentation of material, and have the possibly of restricted enrollment. These general criteria are meant to ensure a teaching and learning environment most appropriate for the honors student population.

Honors Courses Formats

There are several different ways to structure honors courses. Possibly the most prevalent format is the offering of honors sections of regular courses. According to Schuman (1995) “this option is especially popular in institutions with fairly prescribed general curricula, and hence several multi-sectioned courses” (p. 27). While these sections will generally cover the same material as the regular section, they will also include additional readings and assignments and higher expectations for achievement.

A second approach allows for an enriched learning experience for the honors student within regular courses. With this option, honors students are in the same section with regular students but are given a different criteria for evaluation. For instance, the different criteria might take the form of an additional paper assignment or a special project or presentation. Honors students might also be expected to present longer speeches than usual or use a greater number of sources in their speeches. This is an easier format for institutions to use as there is no additional costs involved and the additional work for the instructor is minimal.

A third approach to teaching honors sections is the special honors course which is modeled after graduate seminars. Gabelnick (1986) noted that these courses are often interdisciplinary seminars with a thematic organization (i.e., great World orators) or a core-curriculum approach (i.e., public speaking across the curriculum). A seminar can be taught by one instructor or with a team-teaching approach. The latter format would follow a colloquium model with two or more instructors dividing the course according to their respective expertise. The team-taught seminar provides the obvious benefits of more perspectives presented to students and a shared work load for the faculty members. However, the equal division of work with regard to department or institutional teaching load requirements may take some administrative work. Enrollment in the seminars can be restricted to junior and senior level students. The upper level honors seminar is designed to build upon the content of previously taken courses. Whereas honors students should be able to step into the regular interdisciplinary honors seminar and succeed, success in the upper-level seminar should partially depend on mastery of content from previous communication (and perhaps honors) courses. Small honors seminars are often a very desirable format for both students and in-

structors, however, they can also be among the most expensive courses because of the lower than average student-teacher ratio.

Gabelnick (1986) describes a fourth format which can be identified as a core area seminar. This approach offers a “course or group of core courses representing an important body of information and usually organized around categories of knowledge such as the humanities, behavioral sciences, or physical sciences” (pp. 78-79). In this course (or courses) students have a reading list of key works in a particular area. When an institution utilizes this format, the core course(s) are usually required for all honors students while interdisciplinary seminars will be electives.

The honors project is the last course format which usually serves as a capstone requirement for honors programs (Schuman, 1995). The project is generally a thesis or other complex assignment which is reserved until the senior year. The project might also take the form of an oral exam, public presentation or combination of both. These projects can be either discipline focused or inter-disciplinary.

In some cases, the public speaking instructor will have control over the format which his or her course will take, but often the structure will be dictated by the department, honors program, or upper administration. Ideally, the choice of how to offer an honors public speaking course would depend on the preferences and abilities of the faculty member or members who would teach the course. However, the number of honors students, financial and administrative limitations, and the amount of time available to planning and preparation of the course will also play a major role in the decision.

Despite the format selected for the honors course, a question of elitism may surface. Honors courses may be perceived as elitist because students receive special privileges such as access to senior faculty, enrollment priority and smaller classes. The honors course is also susceptible

to the image of academic snobbery. Cummings (1986) recognizes both a positive and negative element to this elitism. Negative elitism can cause animosity toward honors courses and students. Positive elitism suggests that the privileges of an honors program is balanced by the elevated requirements placed on students' performance. Cummings (1986) suggests the following for dealing with elitism:

- Acknowledge that a degree of elitism exists in the honors program
- Foster positive elitism
- Be flexible with admissions for students who fall a little short of entrance requirements into the honors course or program
- Establish and maintain high retention.

Course Format Selection Criteria

The following is meant as an initial guideline for decision-makers to use and modify in planning the honors public speaking course at their own institutions. Estimates will be made as to the best choice in regard to four general types of institutions: small colleges with one to three sections of public speaking offered per quarter or semester, somewhat larger institutions with four to ten sections at one time, large universities with multiple sections (over 10), and institutions with high flexibility regarding teaching assignments and financial expenditures for instruction.

For smaller institutions, honors public speaking instructors should initially look toward the enriched option format. It is likely that the number of honors students who want to take public speaking at any given time would not be enough to create an autonomous section. The honors students should be allowed to enroll in the section of their choice and accept an extra assignment for honors credit. (The last section of this paper will provide suggestions of

assignments which would be appropriate for the enhanced option course.)

This approach could provide an additional benefit for the students enrolled in the course. The honors student(s) may be able to function as models for other students to observe. According to the typical academic strengths of honors students, these students should excel in the areas of research, organization, and idea development. To the extent that these strengths are apparent to the rest of the class and are seen in speeches, other students might be able to employ modeling behaviors thus improving their own speech-making abilities. While this should not be an intentionally planned and implemented element of the course, it could be a beneficial result of the enriched option public speaking course. In rare cases, particularly in an enriched public speaking course, the honors student could take on a formal mentoring role or be relied on for demonstration of certain components of the public speaking process.

Slightly larger institutions, with between four and ten sections of public speaking, will need to demonstrate a degree of flexibility in planning the honors course. When enrollment will justify an autonomous section of honors public speaking one should be offered. However, it is possible that during some terms the enrollment will be low, thus creating the need for the enriched course option.

Because of a lack of flexibility in instructor's schedules or departmental curriculum, a choice may be necessary between these two options. In such cases, the enriched option would be the preferred format as it would require the least amount of change from one term to the next. The instructor or instructors involved in enriched options of the public speaking course can then determine which assignments to offer for honors credit. While the department may not be able to offer an honors section when demand is high, it can benefit from a structured approach to the enriched

option course. Through trial and error, instructors can determine which options work best for their students and meet their own pedagogical objectives.

Larger institutions with more than ten sections offered at one time will most likely want to begin with the honors section(s) of the regular public speaking course. Institutions of this size will be able to attract enough honors students at a given time to hold, at least, one honors section. This provides the instructor with the opportunity to develop a complete syllabus tailored to the needs of the honors student. This option would also carry the advantage of not creating extra work for instructors who have one or two honors students in their section.

Larger institutions also offer the greater possibility for an interdisciplinary style seminar. While this is not the most likely means for conveying honors public speaking instruction, it is a possibility. Honors students could be enrolled in a communication course which is team taught by instructors from speech communication, mass communication, theater or other related disciplines. Blending the performance elements of public speaking with the rest of the course could be a barrier to syllabus development. The course would also have the administrative barrier of high costs and the faculty work load complications that arise from team teaching. However, the course could have high potential as an introduction to the communication discipline. Such a course designed for first year students could attract talented individuals into the communication major.

The team taught interdisciplinary seminar would become a more feasible option for specific institutions with either well-developed and supported honors programs or colleges or institutions with flexibility in instructor teaching assignments and resources. Such institutions can offer the honors student the full benefit of a team taught seminar with a small enrollment and great flexibility in the syllabus. Aside from the most closely related disciplines

(i.e. mass communication) the public speaking course might be combined with business, political science, history or other disciplines. These institutions could also rely on the honors section of public speaking. They, however, would seem to have the greatest latitude for creativity in developing and integrating public speaking across the curriculum.

HONORS STUDENTS' LEARNING PREFERENCES

Regardless of the course format, instructors must be aware of honors students' learning preferences. Previous research has provided a fairly comprehensive view of honors students learning styles and classroom tendencies (Friedman & Jenkins-Friedman, 1986; Hunt, 1979; Skipper, 1990). While much of this research is of a descriptive nature, relying on personal experience, or observation, there is also some experimental evidence which helps characterize the honors students' classroom performance.

Characteristics of Honors Students

The honors class presents a unique student population for several reasons. Most obviously, honors students have a stronger academic history than non-honors students. A review of programs suggests that most honors students received an ACT composite score of 24 or better (Jefferson, 1996; Mathiasen, 1985; Triplet, 1989). Honors students will also generally be in the top 25 percent of their high school graduating class. Some programs report a selection process which is even more restrictive to the point that entering students were, on average, in the top one percent of their high school class (Fischer, 1996).

Grove (1986) and Jefferson (1996) argued that high school achievements and future college success for honors

students are a result of thoroughness in academic work and a proclivity for research. Grove (1986) further explained that honors students are “more responsible for their own learning, more self-starting, more assiduous readers,” and demonstrate “more thorough implementation of assignments, higher expectations for academic success, and more enthusiastic work attitudes” (pp. 99-100). Sharp and Johnstone (1969) also revealed that honors students thrive with independent study and research. They suggested that honors students respond positively to the opportunity to work closely with a faculty member while taking responsibility for their own education and researching a narrowly defined topic.

Honors students certainly bring many qualities to the classroom which instructors perceive as a benefit to the educational process. However, the instructor should not overlook limitations which can affect any student population. Generally speaking, honors students are not immune to immaturity, emotional changes or problems, or any other behavioral concern which could interfere with student performance (Haas, 1992).

Grove (1986) noted however, that the qualities which will generally be considered beneficial to the learning process might also cause some concern for the instructor. For example, the thoroughness found in honors students might lead to confusion. Honors students typically are quite analytical in evaluating a course assignment, thus interpreting directions in ways not intended by the instructor. Grove (1986) suggested “perhaps honors seminar students need initial direction and focus even more than do other classroom groups. Advanced, bright students understand material at many levels and are sensitive to a variety of implications and possibilities” (p. 100).

Of specific concern to instructors of public speaking is the dilemma raised by Jefferson (1996) who noted that the brightest students are not necessarily the best speakers.

While it might be expected that honors students would excel in organization and content, the honors student qualities will not necessarily translate to delivery ability. In this component of public speaking, the honors student would not be expected to excel beyond their non-honors counterparts.

It is essential that instructors do not assume that honors students will automatically excel in a public speaking course; just because a student has a 4.0 grade point average or a 30 on the ACT does not necessarily mean the student will enjoy or be skilled in speaking. As in any other classroom, instructors should expect a variety of attitudes, skills and beliefs about public speaking among students, and then be able to adapt to these specific characteristics. Even when teaching an honors course, the instructor still needs to gather such information as students' goals for the course, career goals, and previous speaking experience. Each course should be tailored to the unique needs and concerns of the class members.

Adapting Your Teaching to Meet the Needs of Honors Students

As a group, honors students may have the most varied learning strategies and preferences as individuals because they are automatically able to use the most efficient learning mode for whatever content they are studying. Consequently, regardless of the topic or the format selected for the honors course, the instructor is challenged to demonstrate a variety of instructional styles to complement the learning preferences of the honors student. "The key word in honors education is diversity — of presentation, of approach, of educational context. Those who have been teaching honors students intuitively have recognized that these students not only respond to a formal academic

curriculum but will also enjoy a variety of teaching strategies” (Gabelnick, p. 85).

This would suggest that the honors instructor who can demonstrate a competency with a variety of presentation styles will have a better chance of meeting the needs of honors students. Balancing dynamic lecture and discussion techniques with a variety of activities which incorporate the various learning modes will allow students to learn most effectively.

Friedman (1986) suggested that honors instructors might also wish to consider the use of peer teaching. This rationale is based on the recognition that many honors students anticipate careers in teaching. Friedman (1986) contended that by their senior year, honors students will have the competency to help beginning students learn material. By serving this peer-instructional role, the honors student can learn for him or herself and facilitate the learning process of other students. Possibilities for peer teaching include allowing the honors student to lead discussions or seminar meetings, enrolling the honors student in a concurrent independent study to prepare for peer teaching, and implementing a modified new teacher training system similar to what is provided for new graduate teaching assistants (Fleuriet & Beebe, 1996; Roach & Jensen, 1996).

The notion of independent study was also alluded to by Skipper (1990) who researched the learning styles of higher conceptual level students. Skipper’s research revealed a difference in learning style preferences with students at lower conceptual ability levels. Findings confirmed Hunt’s (1975) conceptual level hypothesis as Skipper (1990) noted “students at higher conceptual levels are structurally more complex, more capable of independent action, and more capable of adapting to a changing environment than students at a lower conceptual level” (p. 9). He explained that honors students, especially in their

senior year, were more appreciative of instructors who emphasized teaching through simulation, library work, and independent learning.

A final insight into the instructor's need to have an arsenal of available instructional styles can be gleaned from the research of Mathiasen (1985) which revealed the pleasant yet predictable results that honors students have good study habits, good attitudes, and are achievement oriented. However, he warned that "although these students wanted to obtain good grades and do better than other students, they refused to accept passively teaching practices they opposed" (p. 173). This would suggest that the instructor not only needs to be able to utilize a variety of teaching styles for different learning styles but also needs to be able to quickly recognize when one approach is not working and immediately adapt. While this could be said for any type of student audience, Mathiasen's (1985) research suggested that the honors students' reaction to an ineffective teaching style will be faster and more pronounced than that of a non-honors peer.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND COMPONENTS

The structure and composition of the honors public speaking course will vary greatly depending on which format is being used. For example, an enriched option public speaking course will not offer the exact same projects and assignments or the same number of honors-oriented assignments as an autonomous honors section of public speaking. However, in creating the honors public speaking course, in whatever form it takes, the instructor should "balance the rigor of analysis and the exorbitance of creativity" (Brown, p. 4).

To design a rigorous course, instructors might follow the recommendation of German (1985) who noted that when teaching the honor public speaking course, "instruc-

tors can design a single course that begins with lower level cognitive abilities and then progresses rapidly to the higher cognitive skills” (p. 4). German (1985) relied on the work of Bloom (1956) to show that the instructor should move quickly from course content which stresses knowledge, comprehension, and application to content which stresses, the cognitive elements of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

The following activities outline a variety of course components which could be offered in an honors public speaking section or as part of an enriched option or interdisciplinary honors section with public speaking. No matter what type of honors format is implemented these activities can be incorporated as they are presented or adapted to meet the needs of your class and its format. Naturally, these activities can be used in non-honors sections of public speaking. We have found, however, considering the usual smaller class size and eagerness of students to be highly involved in the class, these particular exercises are more effective and beneficial to a class of honors students.

SPEAKER'S RESOURCE

The speaker's resource is an assignment which should be introduced approximately the second week of the course. This assignment is an expanded version of the traditional speaker's notebook which is a compilation of interesting topics or pithy stories which could be used for a variety of speaking engagements.

The speaker's resource assignment asks students to prepare a one to three page written report about a "great work" or "work of great significance." The students should select a work to read which they deem to be of great importance. The choice could range from a great piece of literature (e.g. Homer's Iliad, Dante's Inferno) to a significant book or manuscript in their particular major or area of in-

terest. The student would be given several weeks to complete the assignment, possibly to the end of the term.

The student will submit his or her report and in turn receive a copy of every other student's report. Thus, at the end of the assignment period the student will have a synopsis for many different "great works." The student can then select from these reports the works he or she would like to read next. The instructor merely has the responsibility of conveying to students the importance of being a knowledgeable speaker. It is then up to the student to make use of the opportunity to use the speaker's resource. If the instructor chooses, each new honors class could receive the accumulated copies of previous students reports. This would create a large storehouse of material to be given to students after just a few terms of the assignment.

The purpose of the assignment is two-fold. Initially, it is based on the belief that excellent speakers have a wealth of knowledge to draw from. This is a classical rhetorical concept which can be added to the honors public speaking course. The second purpose of the assignment is to promote lifelong learning. In one class, students will receive a reading list which would take a great deal of time to complete. While some students may not follow up on the entire reading list, the instructor has at least provided a means and a rationale for continuing to learn outside of the classroom.

This assignment would likely appeal to the honors students because it provides the opportunity to do individual research into a primary source. To further appeal to the needs of the honors student, the instructor can emphasize that the report should not just give an overview of the work, but also offer a critique or some other type of evaluation. This element of the assignment will move the student toward the more complex cognitive levels and increase their personal interest level in the project.

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

Impromptu speaking is certainly not an assignment which is exclusive to the honors course. However, a more challenging variation on the assignment would make it more appropriate for honors students. Williams, Carver and Hart (1993) devised a variation of impromptu speaking which they call reasoned response. In reasoned response, the student is provided with more information than the standard impromptu quotation. The reasoned response prep slip will provide a hypothetical location, speaker's role, and situation. For example, the prep slip might say:

Location: Lawrence, Kansas
Speaker's Role: Candidate for Mayor
Situation: You are giving a "stump speech" to senior citizens on why you should be mayor.

The student now has the greater challenge of developing speech content which is tailored to a specific audience instead of the generic classroom audience. The normal impromptu challenge of thinking quickly and delivering a smooth speech on short notice is still in the assignment.

This assignment can be conducted a few times during the course to allow students to gauge their development in thinking and organizational skills, as well as challenging their audience analysis and adaptation skills. The assignment fits the needs of the honors students as it provides an additional challenge to their knowledge and ability and requires the higher-level abilities of analysis and synthesis. The assignment can be tailored to fit either the student's major area of study or current regional or national news events. One key to the success of this assignment is to convey to the students that they should rely on their

reasoning ability and previous knowledge of the location or situation to respond to the prep slip.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

German (1985) and Wentzlaff (1988) suggested the use of a debate activity in the classroom. One limitation of using debate in public speaking is determining how to modify the activity to function in a two to four week period. The answer to this dilemma may be found in the growing popularity of parliamentary debate. Parliamentary debate is a team oriented debate activity which is modeled after the British House of Parliament. Therefore, instead of competing as affirmative and negative, the opposing teams are the government and opposition. The topic for each debate is different and no research is conducted on the topic as students are given only 15 minutes to prepare for the activity after receiving the resolution.

Students are asked to use their knowledge and persuasive skill to either propose or oppose the resolution. The government and opposition alternate sides with a total of four constructive speeches about the resolution. The opposition then offers a rebuttal followed by the government rebuttal which concludes the debate. The complete functioning of parliamentary debate will not be described here as there are other sources which do so (Appendix, 1992; Epstein, 1992; Williams & Jensen 1997).

This activity should be conducted toward the end of the term as it greatly challenges the students' ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate not only what they are saying but what their opponents are saying as well. This activity would be enjoyed by the honors student because of the challenge it offers as well as the ability to use knowledge from a variety of previous classes. This activity would also provide variety to the presentation assignment which would likely be appreciated by the honors student.

The nature of responding to another's speech and creating arguments spontaneously changes the "speech assignment" in a way that the honors student must rise to an increased level of expectation.

THE PUBLIC SPEAKING PORTFOLIO

A Public Speaking Portfolio can be used to help honors students personalize the learning experience and become more mindful of their communication and continued progress toward competence during the term. The portfolio assignment can include only one or all three of the following components: a journal, collected artifacts, and a videotape of their own speeches.

Videotape. A first component of the Public Speaking Portfolio is the videotape. Students are asked to record consecutively each of their speeches on one videotape. After each speech, students review their performances and evaluate them in their journal. Then, after the last speech, all the performances are viewed in succession and another journal entry is made concerning the overall accomplishments over the course of the semester. By viewing themselves on tape, students will see that they can organize and deliver a speech, reason and defend an argument, and notice consistent improvements between each speech.

Journals. Journal writing can help engage and guide students on their path toward being more competent communicators. Instructors can simply ask students to record daily or weekly reflections about what occurred in class or questions can be more structured such as: 1. What were the thesis and main ideas of the day?; 2. What idea did we discuss that you were most interested in?; 3. What questions do you have about the topics covered? Structured questions can also help students link the course material to the personal, scholastic, and social dimensions of their lives. For instance instructors might ask: 1. How is this

material connected to material we've already covered in this class?; 2. How is this material connected to material you've studied in other classes?; 3. How is this material connected to what is presently happening in your own life or in the world?

Journals can also include a "Speech Process Log" for each speech. These logs capture for display and reflection the activities, time and effort put forth during speech creation. To encourage active reflection, students are required to keep an on-going tally of their efforts as they progress through each of the following areas of the speech-making process, as well as the time spent in each activity such as brainstorming, researching, outlining or practicing. Following the presentation of each speech, the student reviews the log to analyze the speech preparation process. Students also evaluate the actual performance by viewing the videotape and reading comments from peers and the instructor. Next, using the information recorded in the Speech Process Log, students analyze the speech-making process: How effective was it? What worked well? What would have worked better had different decisions been made, time used differently, etc.?

Collected Artifacts. This portfolio component is a collection of items which show students' miscellaneous accomplishments, technical mastery and knowledge integration. Such artifacts include, but are not limited to, peer evaluations and teacher evaluations of each speech, completed paper assignments and other course activities and class notes. Students can also be encouraged to be mindful when reading newspapers and magazines and watching the news so that they may include examples of communication or specific public speaking occasions in their portfolio (i.e., a newspaper clipping or summary of a news program). Finally, the "artifacts" component might include the PRCA (Personal Report of Communication Apprehension)

(McCroskey & Richmond, 1989) which the students could complete at the beginning and end of the term.

As a unit, the videotape, the journal and the collected artifacts help students see their continuous progress toward public speaking competence. The Public Speaking Portfolio allows honor students to do what they enjoy and excel in—specifically, being more active in the learning process and moving beyond simply recognizing material, to having the responsibility of synthesizing and evaluating course concepts as well as their own performances.

ADDING CLASS INVOLVEMENT TO INFORMATIVE AND PERSUASIVE SPEECHES

Because honors students enjoy being active in the classroom, simply sitting quietly on speech days might be a frustration. Even if they are required to critique class speeches, honors students may want more hands-on involvement on speech days. The following are suggestions to provide an extra challenge for all students, even if it isn't their day to present a speech.

Introductions. Before every speech each speaker will be introduced by another student who isn't presenting an informative or persuasive speech that day. Assignments of who is introducing whom should be made well in advance of the speaking date so that the "introducer" can interview the speaker. Introductions, which might be from 30 to 90 seconds long, should set the stage by establishing the significance of the speech or the topic, as well as highlight the speaker's credibility. The introduction might also contain some biographical information about the speaker.

Formal Questioning. Two to four students can be chosen for each speech to be the "formal questioners." Assignments of who will fill the role of questioners should be made in advance of the speech so that those who will be posing questions may gather information on the topic in

order to be well informed. The questioner's purpose is not to interrogate the speaker, but simply to think critically about the material and have practice formulating well-stated questions. Naturally, speakers will also have the added challenge of responding to those questions.

Pre-speech, Post-speech Questionnaires. The final suggestion for encouraging involvement is through an attitude measurement before and after every speech. Each student is responsible for creating a questionnaire to measure fellow students' beliefs, attitudes and values about their speech topic. The questionnaires, which could be completed either in class or outside of class time, should include several types of questions such as fixed-alternative, open-ended or Likert scales. Completed before the speech, the questionnaires can serve as an audience analysis tool. Completed after the speech, students can measure the amount of change that occurred as a result of their speech. Knowing that they will be completing a questionnaire encourages all students to pay closer attention to each speech and gives a greater sense of audience involvement.

Each of the above described activities is designed to empower honors students in their learning process by providing maximum involvement and use of higher level thinking skills. Using a wide variety of active learning techniques can help promote the dynamic, hands-on approach to learning which honors students require and appreciate to reach their fullest potential.

CONCLUSION

Knowing the variety of honors courses formats, honors students' characteristics and learning preferences and some ideas for restructuring the typical public speaking course to best accommodate honors students, can be the first steps toward creating a new honors course or re-structuring an existing course. The honors student comes to the

public speaking class with a unique set of needs and preferences which require alterations to the traditional course. Considering format and content changes can create the added challenge and participatory experience which helps improve honors education.

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