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Speech consultants at Grand Valley State University: Empowering student voices

Danielle R. Leek

Carl J. Brown
Grand Valley State University, brownca1@gvsu.edu

SPEECH CONSULTANTS AT GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY:
Empowering Student Voices

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Kathleen J. Turner and Theodore F. Sheckels describe the foundation and evolution of college and university communication centers in the 1980s as a natural outgrowth of increasing attention to the value of oral communication skills and a concurrent need to improve student communication competency across the curriculum.[1] In 2011, Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan, joined a growing community of communication center scholars and professionals by establishing the "Speech Lab."[2] The purpose of the Grand Valley Speech Lab is multifaceted. Primarily, the Lab exists to empower student-speakers via project-specific collaboration with highly trained consultants. Additionally, the lab promotes public speaking on campus and in the community. This chapter summarizes the purpose, structure, and administration of the lab in order to offer a more detailed description of how these elements shape the training of undergraduate peer consultants who provide instructional support (tutoring) for oral communication needs on campus.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS

The mission statement of a communication center serves a vital purpose. It defines the scope of the organization's efforts and guides the approach used in training peer consultants and serving students. The mission of the Speech Lab at Grand Valley is to empower speakers to shape their lives, professions, and society through confident and effective public presentations. This mission is grounded in the following values:

- *Listening* as an essential condition for empathy and learning
- *Audience* as the central feature of public messages
- *Speech* as a unique mode of inquiry
- *Voice* as the path to empowerment

The Speech Lab is designed as a community and campus leader for the development of knowledge and skills through speech activities and oral communication.

Program Practices

The Speech Lab is involved with numerous activities on and off campus. In the local community, for example, the Speech Lab helps sponsor high school speech and debate events. On campus, the lab offers curricular support for all instructors who encourage speaking in the classroom. For instance, the lab collaborates with university faculty to design oral communication assignments and to provide specialized assessment techniques for evaluating student presentations. These assignments include a range of speaking formats, including in-class discussions, debates, idea pitches, and panels. The Speech Lab also offers speaking workshops for student organizations, sponsors on-campus speakers, and partners with other relevant university programming.

This range of program activities is anchored by the Speech Lab's primary enterprise, which is providing peer tutoring for oral communication. The Lab's tutors are known as "speech consultants." To encourage multi-literacy, the Speech Lab collaborates with other peer services, including the University Libraries Peer Research consultants and the university Writing Center consultants, in what is known as the "Knowledge Market."

What Consultants Do

Speech Lab peer consultants are trained to work with students on all elements of the speechmaking process, including topic selection, organization, selecting supporting materials, and, most important, practicing delivery. During walk-in or scheduled appointments, consultants help with in-class assignments, such as informative speeches or group presentations, and with public presentations, such as sales pitches or special occasion

speeches. Students who visit the lab can record their presentations in specially designed studio rooms and review their videos with a consultant. Consultants are available in multiple locations on campus and during morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend hours in order to best support the variety of student needs on campus.

ADMINISTRATION

With funding from the university's provost office, the Speech Lab is housed in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at Grand Valley. Both the organizational structure and the program's promotional strategy affect the hiring and training of peer consultants. These aspects of the Speech Lab are described in the following sections.

Organizational Structure

The Speech Lab is affiliated with Grand Valley's School of Communications. Two faculty professors from the school are given primary responsibility for the lab. The faculty executive director oversees budgeting, expenses, and lab policy. The executive director receives no compensation for this work and completes their role as part of the service expected from tenure-track faculty on campus. The faculty director oversees daily operations in the lab and has the primary responsibility for all employment decisions as well as training peer consultants. During the academic year, the faculty director receives course release time for their work. (The equivalent of 60 percent of teaching time is reassigned for Speech Lab duties.) Over the summer term, the faculty director receives a stipend for their on-campus work with the Speech Lab.

In addition to faculty positions, the Speech Lab is staffed by both graduate and undergraduate students from across the university. Students are hired to serve as peer consultants, office assistants, and interns. Interns work with the faculty director to manage communications and promotions for the lab.

Promoting the Program

A communication center has little value if students do not use its services. Yet, most center directors have expertise in pedagogy, not advertising or promotions. To manage this challenge, the Speech Lab follows Kyle Anne Barnett Love's step-by-step plan for marketing the communication center on campus.[3] Love argues that center directors must start with a clear plan for their marketing campaign. Using data about the center's current visitors, a strong campaign will set specific goals and engage in detailed audience analysis to craft a message that will reach the target audience. For many communication centers, including Grand Valley's Speech Lab, marketing needs to be done specifically for faculty because high levels of student communication anxiety on campus mean that students are reluctant to participate in consultations without direct incentives from their instructors.[4] Once a

marketing message is designed, it should be shared using appropriate channels. These may include a website, email messages, social media, print ads, class visits, workshops, and special events. The Speech Lab has also produced promotional items that are handed out at campus events. These include pens, water bottles, stopwatches, and buttons. Often, students from Grand Valley's advertising and public relations program work with the Speech Lab to help design the center's most creative materials and campaign strategies. Appendix A includes an example of a recent Speech Lab promotional plugger that was distributed to faculty and students and published in the campus newspaper.

> The value of the Lab's services is centered on the idea that we treat each member of the campus community as the important and unique individuals that they are.
>
> *Carl J. Brown, Faculty Director, Grand Valley State University*

HIRING

Peer consultants are paid hourly and are expected to work approximately eight hours per week. On average, the Speech Lab employs fifteen undergraduates during the academic year. Consultants are hired in the winter term and begin their employment in the next fall semester.

Recruiting

The Speech Lab recruits peer consultants from programs across the university. Advertisements for the consultant position are published in the student newspaper, *The Lanthorn*, and posted on bulletin boards in all campus buildings. Social media is used to spread notices about hiring through various student organizations and academic departments. Consultants are also recruited directly from sections of the university's public speaking course. This course is required for students from a variety of majors, including advertising and public relations, communication studies, sports leadership, and computer science. Recruiting through multiple sources contributes to the diversity of the applicant pool and the Speech Lab consultant staff.

Applications

The application for employment as a peer consultant asks students to provide basic information, such as GPA and work history, as well as details about their experiences with speaking in public. Applicants are also tasked with writing brief responses to questions

about the value of public speaking and the role of peer tutors. Applicants must also provide references. One reference must be the student's instructor for their public speaking course. Appendix B is a sample of the Speech Lab peer consultant employment application.

INTERVIEWS

Initially, the student and faculty directors of the lab review applications. The directors collaborate to select a pool of worthy candidates for in-person interviews and presentations. Applicants who are invited for this stage of the hiring process are asked to prepare a short speech about the power of successful speaking in their personal life, their desired profession, and in society. All current consultants have the opportunity to meet with the applicant, ask interview questions, and be audience members for the applicant's speech presentation.

Criteria/Requirements

Qualified applicants are students who have at least one year of college coursework and a cumulative 3.0 GPA. These applicants have also completed Grand Valley's public speaking course or an equivalent course at another college or university. A faculty recommendation that indicates the applicant is both knowledgeable about speech pedagogy and has the personal qualities needed to be a successful peer tutor is also a requirement. Feedback from current consultants helps the student and faculty director consider whether or not an applicant is serious about the position, has empathy for others, and can work well in the team environment necessary for the lab to operate successfully.

TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

All individuals who work in the Speech Lab are expected to participate in professional training. Faculty directors, for example, attend workshops related to supervising student employees and working with at-risk students on campus. Likewise, Speech Lab office assistants have required training so that they clearly understand university policy and procedures related to topics such as student confidentiality. The following sections focus specifically on the training process for peer consultants who are responsible for working with individual students or groups of students who are developing oral presentations.

Training Philosophy

Consistent with the Speech Lab's mission, at the heart of all peer consultant training is an appreciation and understanding of the empowering role that communication plays in a society. All training events and activities include discussions of how communication is at the core of shaping, changing, or creating any and all elements of our personal, social,

and professional lives. Consultant training is also attuned to a growing recognition of the empowering role communication centers can play as a site of learning outside the traditional classroom. Sandra Pensoneau-Conway and Nick Romerhasen, for example, explore the ways that communication centers overcome traditional education's barriers to empowerment.[5] Peer consulting in the center gives students the freedom to learn without the limitations of large class sizes, assignment of grades, and the power differentials between instructors and students. Altering the dynamic of a typical classroom is especially valuable for oral communication since so many students struggle to overcome communication apprehension. Through peer interactions, communication centers are well-positioned to provide a comfortable approach to alleviating communication anxiety.[6] The Speech Lab is committed to this belief:

> If students are afraid to speak—to use their physical voice—then it will be extremely challenging for them to critically engage the world around them—to use their philosophical and theoretical voice. Empowerment is inherently tied to issues of voice, and communication centers are uniquely positioned to directly impact students' conception and use of voice.[7]

Therefore, consultants are also expected to explore their own empowerment as they grow to recognize how their personal voice is shaped and activated when they engage in peer tutoring. Peer consultants need the tools to use their voices effectively, which is why the second tenet of the lab's philosophy is "rounding the learning cycle,"[8] both in training and in consultations. This approach recognizes that individuals often prefer learning in different modes and that by working through different learning styles consultants (and students) can achieve deeper learning. David A. Kolb details four modes of learning: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.[9] Each mode is engaged through the training process.

In each category of training described below, consultants are first provided information that will enable them to do effective consulting. Then they observe consultants and speakers in action before engaging in their own consulting experience. New consultants receive feedback on their successes and areas for improvement. Throughout training, consultants reflect on what they have learned through their experiences. This five-step model (telling, showing, inviting, encouraging, and correcting) is considered best practice for training, especially because it is the model consultants use when helping peers learn in consultations.[10]

Training Schedule

The Speech Lab is committed to continuous training for all peer consultants. At the beginning of fall and winter semesters, all consultants meet for a single-day training seminar with the faculty director of the lab. In addition, all consultants attend a joint training session with peer consultants from the lab's partnership programs in the university Knowledge Market. At the mid-point of each semester, the consultants attend a half-day seminar.

At this event, consultants and the director take up advanced training topics and discuss issues that have arisen during lab operations. Additional training opportunities are scheduled throughout the academic year and are described later in this section.

Lab Handbook

Prior to the start of training, all consultants receive a copy of the Speech Lab handbook. The manual provides consultants with detailed instructions for managing lab activities, lab procedures, and training expectations. The handbook's table of contents is provided in Appendix C. The handbook serves as the official policy guide for the Speech Lab. It lays out clear courses of actions for consultants who seek promotion or violate lab rules. It also includes important information for consultants to use in the event of an emergency. Consultants are expected to have their handbook throughout the training process. Two of the most important sections of the handbook are the lab's code of ethics (Appendix D) and a tear-out checklist to be used to document the completion of required training activities (Appendix E).

Code of Ethics

The Speech Lab's code of ethics is a product of consultant empowerment. The original code was developed by the lab's founding staff and is revisited each fall at the start of the academic year. During training, the lab's staff (including faculty and students) discuss the code and its meaning for lab operations. Experienced consultants reflect on how the code of ethics has shaped their past decisions and practices in working with other staff and during consultations. Then, all consultants are invited to brainstorm about possible revisions to the code before a final draft receives consensus from all lab staff. The code is referred to throughout training as consultants grapple with decision-making moments that arise during consultations.

Praxis Training

A key part of training for consultants is learning to apply theories about effective oral communication and oral communication pedagogy to interactions with student speakers. Put simply, consultants need to be empowered to empower student speakers. Because all consultants have very successfully completed a college-level public speaking course, they are expected to be prepared to utilize their knowledge of basic speech and presentation organizational formats, standard criteria for the effective use of evidence, and techniques for audience analysis. After a review of this foundational knowledge, consultants then delve into more depth using selected readings, lectures, speech videos, discussions, and role-playing to develop expertise in topics such as

- working with communication anxiety;

- advanced theories of persuasion;
- disciplinary speaking styles;
- designing visual presentation aids;
- presentation rehearsal strategies;
- oral presentations for non-native speakers; and
- presenting in groups.

Collectively, such topics form the basis of knowledge and techniques needed to engage in what the Speech Lab calls "speech crafting."

Turner and Sheckels' 2015 text offers three chapters that clearly summarize the pedagogical goals and approaches that should be employed by communication center consultants as they engage the topics of speech crafting. Turner and Sheckels describe the speech development process in three stages: invention, disposition, and style, delivery, and memory.[11] New Speech Lab consultants are assigned this reading, for example, as a learning tool for their first training session. During the same session, experienced tutors give sample speeches using visual aids in order to facilitate a discussion about best practices for using visuals to enhance presentations. Another example of praxis training calls for new consultants to use different rehearsal strategies before giving an extemporaneous presentation to their colleagues in the lab. This exercise emphasizes how doing the work that they may ask of student speakers can illuminate which strategy might be the best fit given what a tutor learns about a student and the student's assignment during a consulting session.

> The inclusion of videos during training was beneficial because it allowed me to see the types of speeches I should expect, to practice hypothetical feedback scenarios, and to evaluate specific elements of speech delivery. Overall, it's nice to get a preview of the work we will be doing.
>
> *Sam Showerman, consultant, Grand Valley State University*

Vocational Training

Extraordinary amounts of knowledge about oral communication are of very little value if consultants are unable to effectively engage students when they come to the Speech Lab. Wendy Atkins-Sayre and Eunkyong L. Yook explain that this feature of all peer-learning services necessitates a call for emphasis on the centrality of communication to the tutoring process. The authors explain that

without effective communication, a tutoring session can turn out to be a monologue of content knowledge, as opposed to an engaged dialogue with the goal of learning. If tutoring is conducted ineffectively, students may very well be turned off by the tutor's lack of communication skills and even resist returning for more assistance when needed.[12]

For the Speech Lab, this means that we place a great deal of emphasis on helping consultants understand their role as a peer tutor and what their role means for effectively interacting with students.

Students begin by reading articles and chapters which explore what it means to be "in the middle" between instructors and students.[13] In order to communicate with peers in a peer-learning situation, consultants must navigate the middle space that emerges from their expert knowledge on speech-making intersecting with their situational position as students. This translates to training, for example, through role-playing experiences in simulated consultations. New consultants are challenged to practice, out loud, the phrases they can use with peers in order to guide rather than take over a student's speech development process. In training, consultants also discuss the negative effects on a student's learning if a consultant uses language during a session that ultimately undermines a faculty member's credibility.

These types of communication issues are embedded throughout a new consultant's vocational training, which also includes topics such as beginning/ending a consultation session, managing time during consultations, professionalism, difficult situations, collaboration with groups, and other peer-consulting techniques that apply to all content areas. During vocational training, consultants learn to round the learning by talking, doing, modeling, and evaluating during the consultation session. Consultants are trained to use communication techniques such as using critical-thinking questions to move a consultation forward, providing clear explanations of concepts, modeling effective delivery techniques, and providing useful and appropriate critical feedback for students.

Vocational training also involves efforts to help consultants communicate effectively with others in the Speech Lab's collaborative peer-learning programs. Speech Lab consultants must work side-by-side with students from the University Libraries' Peer Consulting program and the Writing Center. Therefore, training attends to the dynamics of group interaction, strategies for collaboration, managing conversations in the workplace, and even approaches for introducing oneself to a new colleague.

Administrative Training

As in any workplace, consultants in the Speech Lab must also be trained to effectively manage lab operations, such as office procedures, online scheduling and documentation software, technology, payroll, student privacy, and confidentiality. These administrative topics are very important, especially given the timing of appointments in our lab. For

example, our consultants work in the Knowledge Market at night when no faculty director may be available if assistance is needed.

Diversity and Cultural Awareness

Consultants in the Speech Lab are expected to show respect for others at all times. To facilitate tolerance, understanding, and awareness, consultants attend training events sponsored by on-campus offices such as the Kaufman Interfaith Institute, the Women's Center, the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Consultants also receive training to better understand and communicate with on-campus populations, such as international students, ESL students, veterans, and first-generation students. In addition to completing required programming, consultants are made aware of other training opportunities sponsored by relevant on-campus offices throughout the academic year.

Learning Objectives

Learning objectives for the Speech Lab training program include the following:

Consultants will be able to

1. articulate the mission of the Speech Lab;
2. describe the Speech Lab's code of ethics and apply it to lab operations;
3. describe the policy related to student confidentiality;
4. express understanding of inclusion and diversity commitment for clients and university partners;
5. navigate sessions focused on collaborative brainstorming, organizing, outlining, editing, style, rehearsing, dealing with communication apprehension, and the creation of visual aids;
6. identify strategies for managing difficult interactions in consultations;
7. manage Speech Lab administrative functions; and
8. lead consultant training sessions.

Checklist

In addition to attending training seminars, consultants-in-training are required to complete multiple and various forms of training during their first semester at the lab in order to become active consultants. The training checklist allows trainees and director to track and document this process. Trainees are partnered with experienced consultants. The pairs watch recorded speeches with the dual goals of familiarizing themselves with speech content and delivery styles as well as to develop their own feedback style. Additionally, trainees observe experienced consultants during consultations, experience

a debriefing meeting after each session, eventually partner with experienced consultants, and repeat the debriefing process. Once both the trainee and experienced partner feel comfortable and confident with the trainee's ability to tutor, the trainee meets with the director for a final approval meeting to become an active consultant.

Ongoing Training Opportunities

Speech Lab consultants are encouraged to actively participate in additional training opportunities. For example, our Knowledge Market partners often host training sessions relevant to all peer tutors, and Speech Lab consultants are invited to attend. Other on-campus opportunities include a bi-annual conference on peer consulting, guest lectures, and the university's student leadership institute. Consultants may also elect to complete independent study credits with faculty in the School of Communications by taking on a research project that will increase their knowledge about peer consulting, public speaking, or oral communication pedagogy.

The primary opportunity for consultant development off campus is the annual meeting of the National Association of Communication Centers. This conference event includes speaker presentations and workshops designed to develop peer consulting skills. Speech Lab consultants can also present original research at the event.

Opportunities for Promotion

Student consultants advance through three stages of titles. When students are first hired, they are known as "consultants-in-training." Once these consultants finish their checklist, they become an official consultant of the lab. This means that students are then able to lead one-on-one sessions. Consultants who make the effort to attend additional training are rewarded with the possibility of applying for a lead consultant position. In addition to getting paid extra money, these students are expected to lead training and observe and mentor new consultants. Finally, the most advanced consultants can apply for the position of student director. The student director(s) collaborate with the faculty director on training schedules, employment reviews, and lab programming.

Training Program Certification

The National Association of Communication Centers (NACC) is the organization responsible for overseeing the development and progress of programs like Grand Valley's Speech Lab. The organization offers certification and assessment of communication center training programs.[14] Key criteria for certification include attention to all three areas of training described in this section (praxis, vocational, and administrative) and the involvement of qualified communication scholars and instructors in the training process. In 2015, Grand Valley's Speech Lab became one of fifteen colleges and universities to be recognized with NACC certification for its training procedures.

ASSESSMENT

We believe that assessment should be ongoing, purposeful, and polyvalent. Therefore, assessment of the Speech Lab happens throughout the year, using a variety of measures, including appointment reports, faculty feedback, and follow-up with on-campus partners. The assessment of peer consultants and the consultant training process primarily involves the use of self-assessments, student/faculty reviews, a training quiz, and a faculty director evaluation of all consultants. The following sections these assessment processes.

Self-Assessment

At the end of each academic year, all consultants are asked to write a reflection of their experiences and work. This reflection requires a self-assessment of their performance on three levels. First, consultants assess their performance in tutoring sessions. Second, they assess their performance as a Speech Lab team member. Finally, they assess their contribution to the lab in terms of partnership collaborations with the university Knowledge Market or special programming projects, such as our on-campus speech competition or events hosted with our ESL institute. This self-assessment is reviewed by the faculty director and contributes to the faculty director's evaluation of the consultant.

Client/Faculty Reviews

Each student who visits the lab completes a consultant evaluation at the end of each session. These evaluations ask questions about the student's level of satisfaction with their appointment and about how well the consultants contribute to their development of speech-crafting skills. The faculty director compiles and reviews these evaluations as one element of the consultants' overall evaluations. Additionally, faculty members frequently email the director to comment on the services received by their students. These evaluations are invaluable in the decision-making process related to training and the future directions of the lab.

Training Quiz

A consultant-training quiz is used as a pre- and post-test to each semester's training sessions. Consultants are asked to complete the quiz prior to training in order for the director to identify strengths and weaknesses that should be the focal points of training. Following training, the quiz is repeated in order to measure training effectiveness and the comprehension concepts included in the training. A version of the training quiz is included in Appendix F.

Director Evaluation of Consultants

At the end of each semester, each consultant is required to meet with the faculty director for a performance evaluation. Prior to this meeting, the faculty director meets with the

lab's student director in order to get a more well-rounded picture of a consultant's ongoing ability to follow through on the learning that takes place during training. These meetings allow the director to provide feedback to the consultant, the consultant to provide feedback to the director, and for specific, individual learning to take place in an effort to continually improve each consultant's performance. At the conclusion of the meeting, the faculty director and peer consultant come to a consensus on how to maintain success and strengthen areas of improvement during the next semester.

Communicating Assessment Findings

In order to sustain university-wide support for communication centers and their activities, it is essential that the outcome of thoughtfully planned and completed assessment efforts be shared with all stakeholders.[15] Results of Grand Valley's peer consulting assessment (including details, such as the average score from student evaluations, scores on the training quiz, etc.) are compiled with other assessment data into a yearly executive report. This report is distributed to on-campus representatives, including the university president and provost, the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the director of the School of Communications. These findings are also shared with the Speech Lab's on-campus partners, and with the lab's faculty and student staff.

REFLECTION

One of the greatest challenges in working with peer consultants is that it requires a fine balance between attention to both parts of the consultant's role as employees and as students. As employees, consultants must be held accountable for their performance. In our role as supervisors then, we strive to maintain high standards and model the behaviors we hope to see in our consultants. Yet as teachers, we are motivated to help consultants learn about themselves, about working with others, and about oral communication. Clear information and expectations can accomplish many of the goals we have for consultants, but at some point, consultant learning will require opportunities to try, fail, and succeed. By keeping our attention on empowering peer consultants and the students we work with, we believe that the Speech Lab training approach is on the right path to accomplishing the experiential learning needed to be successful as both student and employee.

APPENDIX A

SPEECH LAB PROMOTIONAL AD

APPENDIX B

GVSU—SPEECH LAB CONSULTANT APPLICATION

Section 1: Applicant Information

Name _____

Current phone _____Current email_____

Local Address _____
Include city, state & zip

Your **current** class standing (mark one): ☐ Freshman ☐ Sophomore ☐ Junior ☐ Senior
☐ Graduate

Your major(s)_____ Your minor(s)_____

Current GPA _____ (*At least a 3.0 cumulative GPA is preferred*)

Have you taken COM 201 at GVSU? _____ Yes   _____No

Section 2: Experience and Qualifications (Please attach in a separate document).

A. What previous experiences do you have with public speaking and speech crafting?

B. What previous experiences do you have with tutoring/mentoring?

C. We seek to have confident and competent consultants from a broad range of disciplines. Extra-curricular involvement and leadership experience are highly preferred. Please list any clubs and extra-curricular activities you are currently a part of

D. What leadership roles have you held in the past? How do you feel they have shaped who you are?

E. What do you think are the qualities every peer tutor must have to be successful? Why?

Section 3: Essay Response (Please attach in a separate document).

Please answer the following question: *What is the value of speech and public speaking in a contemporary society?* Write as much as you feel necessary.

Section 4: Prepared Speech

After your application has been reviewed, you may be contacted for an interview. Part of the interview process will be giving a three-minute speech that creatively addresses the following points:

1. The significance of speech for you personally.
2. The significance of speech here at Grand Valley.
3. The significance of speech for the world at large.

Note: You will be notified in advance when your interview will be held. The advanced notice will allow for proper preparation to deliver a professional presentation.

Section 5: Employment History (Please attach in a separate document).

A. Include the name, location, and contact information of your current and past employers (if applicable).
B. Indicate if we can contact your place(s) of current/previous employment.
C. Provide a short explanation of why previous employment ended.
D. If you plan to hold employment outside of the Speech Lab, how many hours do you plan on working at that other position?

Section 7: References

Please list below the names and contact information for three professional references. One of these references must be your instructor for your college-level public speaking course.

Section 8: Pre-Employment Information

Please type your name and date at the bottom of the page in acknowledgment of the following:

To confirm that the information you've provided is accurate and complete.

- If hired, I am required to attend an all-day pre-employment training session; the employment is contingent on my attendance at this training. Date TBA (usually the week before fall and spring semesters).
- Consultants can expect to work only a few hours each week with the potential for extra hours for special speech-related assignments and tasks outside of regular consultation.

Signature_____ Date_____

APPENDIX C

STAFF HANDBOOK

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
SPEECH LAB

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APPENDIX D

GVSU SPEECH LAB CODE OF ETHICS

- **We are respectful.**
  - We are honest and truthful with our clients, coworkers, and selves.
  - We are understanding and willing to listen to clients and coworkers.
  - We are thankful for the opportunity to work with students and practice our communication skills.
- **We are responsible.**
  - We are engaged in learning the best practices of communication consultation.
  - We are dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes in all of our consultations and Speech Lab projects.
  - We take pride in supporting students and advancing the Speech Lab.
- **We are welcoming, approachable, and positive.**
  - We are accepting of and open to all people and ideas.
  - We are supportive of our clients and coworkers.
  - We value diversity of individuals and thoughts.
- **We are professional.**
  - We are patient and willing to take the necessary time required to be successful.
  - We are punctual for all shifts, consultations, and projects.
  - We are tactful in the ways in which we behave, provide feedback, and communicate with clients.
- **We are self-reflective.**
  - We are committed to continual improvement as individuals and as a group.
  - We are aware that we always represent the Speech Lab.
  - We thoughtfully seek the best in all we do for our clients, coworkers, and the Speech Lab.

APPENDIX E

GVSU SPEECH LAB TRAINING CHECKLIST

1.   **Introduction to the Speech Lab**

Training consultants will receive a complete tour of the Speech Lab's main office (and other Knowledge Market spaces as applicable) from the Director or an experienced staff member. Training consultants should review and will discuss the staff handbook with the Director or experienced staff member. Additionally, training consultants should be introduced to:

- Payroll procedures
- Online scheduling system
- Guide sheets
- LAKERS program binders
- Blackboard resources
- Technology (laptops, iPad, Sony camcorders, copier/printer/scanner, phone, email)
- Center protocol (space management, welcoming, beginning/ending sessions, what to do if…)

Date of Tour/Discussion: _____

Tour/Discussion Leader: _____

2.   **Videos & Critiques**

Training consultants should partner with experienced consultants to watch recorded student speeches. Act as though the student is in the room as the training consultant critiques them. When watching and critiquing, be sure to pay attention to the following issues:

- High/low order needs
- Taking notes during the session
- Nonverbal control
- Organizing thoughts before launching into a critique
- Sandwich method for feedback
- Being specific with feedback and providing examples
- Offering specific advice

Each new training consultant should watch ***at least*** three videos, but watching as many videos as possible during the first semester in the Speech Lab is ideal.

After this step is completed, the experienced consultant should contact the Director with a training update. Provide specifics of the new consultant's strengths and weaknesses.

Training Consultant/Date: _____

Trainer/Date: _____

3. Shadowing Sessions

New consultants should shadow experienced consultants prior to taking their own appointments. After each shadowing, the two consultants should discuss the session and ask questions of each other. Ideally, ***training consultants should shadow at least three sessions.***

Session One, Who/When: _____

Session Two, Who/When: _____

Session Three, Who/When: _____

4. Partnered Sessions

New consultants should take the lead in at least three sessions while an experienced consultant observes them. After each partnered session, the two consultants should discuss the session and ask questions of each other.

Session One: Who/When: _____

Session Two: Who/When: _____

Session Three: Who/When: _____

5. Consultant Quiz

New consultants must pass the training quiz available on Blackboard.

Quiz completion date: _____

6. Director Meeting

New consultants will meet with the Director after training steps are complete. The meeting will be to determine the consultant's preparedness to be added to the schedule. Upon completion of the meeting, the consultant will either be added to the schedule or scheduled for further training.

Meeting Date/Outcome: _____

Consultant Signature:_____

Director Signature:_____

APPENDIX F

GVSU SPEECH LAB TRAINING QUIZ

Section I: Speech Lab Protocol

1. Before starting a typical session, list FIVE questions that a consultant should ask a client in order to best assist the client.
2. If a client asks a consultant what numeric or letter grade they are likely to earn as a result of their practice-run presentation, how should the consultant respond?
3. If a consultant feels he or she is unable to satisfy a client's needs due to the choice of speech topic (e.g., their position goes strongly against your religious beliefs), what should/can the consultant do?
4. If a client attempts to persuade a consultant to include false details in the session notes (e.g., they were required to practice, did not want to practice, but ask you to say they practiced), what should/can the consultant do?
5. In an attempt to better serve clients and increase Lab appointment numbers, what should all consultants do at the end of each session?
6. If a professor or non-Lab employee asks about a client's performance or attendance at the Lab, how should consultants respond?
7. If two consultants are scheduled to work the same shift and your partner is more than 10 minutes late for work, what should you do?
8. Scenario: You are working in the Knowledge Market, have a client who needs to practice their presentation, but both practice rooms are in use by non-Lab students. What should you do?

Section II: Running a Session

1. What are some examples of guiding questions you can ask a client to maintain the smooth flow of a session?
2. When providing feedback to a client after a practice-run of a speech, how should a consultant structure feedback/balance positive and negative feedback?
3. If a client does not have a topic and needs to brainstorm for topic ideas, what are FIVE questions the consultant can ask to start this process?
4. If a client has a complete, high-quality speech prepared, what are some areas the consultant can focus on to provide useful feedback?
5. As a consultant, what are some ways in which your approach to a session might change if a client's speech is due in two hours or two days or two weeks?
6. Scenario: A client comes in and is required to have a speech and PowerPoint (due in five days). The client wants to begin working on the PowerPoint but has not yet

begun working on their speech. What should you do? What is your strategy for helping create an effective PowerPoint in fewer than 30 minutes.

Section III: Interacting with Clients

1. If a client is exhibiting signs of anxiety and/or states that speech anxiety is a problem for them, what are some tips the consultant might give the client?

2. If a client has no goals for a session and seems to only be in the Lab for class credit, what are some steps the consultant might take to engage the client and make the session useful?

3. If you are working with a group or individual client who is either getting off topic or not taking the session seriously, what are three approaches you might take to change the situation?

4. If you are working with a client who speaks English as a second language and are having difficulty understanding them, how might you address the issue?

5. If a client is working on an informative speech but clearly has too many persuasive elements in the text, how can you correct them without making them feel "stupid?"

6. Scenario: A client comes in for a session and only gives one-word answers to all of your questions. What should you do?

Section IV: Content & Delivery of Speeches

1. List five general items all consultants should check for in an informative speech.

2. List five general items all consultants should check for in a persuasive speech.

3. List five general items all consultants should check for concerning delivery.

4. List five general items all consultants should check for when collaborating on an outline.

5. What are three organizational structures for persuasive speeches?

6. What are the elements of Monroe's Motivated Sequence? Provide an example.

NOTES

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2. Grand Valley State University Speech Lab, https://www.gvsu.edu/speechlab/.

3. Kyle Anne Barnett Love, "Successful Marketing of Communication Centers," in *Communication Centers: A Theory-Based Approach to Training and Management*, eds. Kathleen J. Turner and Theodore F. Sheckels (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015), 27–43.

4. Michael L. King and Wendy Atkins-Sayre, "If You Build It They 'Might' Come: Empirically Identifying Motivations Surrounding the Use of Communication Centers" (paper presented at the annual meeting for the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA, November 14–17, 2010). See also Danielle R. Leek, "Incentives for Participation in New Communication Centers" (paper presented at the annual conference for the National Association of Communication Centers, Glendale, AZ, April 10–12, 2014).

5. Sandra L. Pensoneau-Conway and Nick J. Romerhausen, "The Communication Center: A Critical Site of Intervention for Student Empowerment," in *Communication Centers and Oral Communication*

Programs in Higher Education: Advantages, Challenges, and New Directions, eds. Eunkyong Lee Yook and Wendy Atkins-Sayre (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 39–53.

6. Stephen K. Hunt and Cheri J. Simonds, "Extending Learning Opportunities in the Basic Communication Course: Exploring the Pedagogical Benefits of Speech Laboratories," *Basic Communication Course Annual* 14 (2002): 60–86.

7. Pensoneau-Conway and Romerhausen, "The Communication Center," 49.

8. Carl J. Brown, Michael L. King, and Steven J. Venette, "Learning Styles: Rounding the Cycle of Learning in the Context of Peer Tutoring," in *Communicating Advice: Peer Tutoring and Communication Practice*, eds. Wendy Atkins-Sayre and Eunkyong L. Yook (New York: Peter Lang, 2015), 123–37.

9. David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1984).

10. Steven A. Beebe, Timothy. P. Mottet, and K. David Roach, *Training and Development: Enhancing Communication and Leadership Skills* (Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2004). See also Rhonda Troillett and Kristen A. McIntyre, "Best Practices in Communication Training and Training Assessment" in *Communication Centers and Oral Communication Programs in Higher Education: Advantages, Challenges, and New Directions*, eds. Eunkyong Lee Yook and Wendy Atkins-Sayre (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 257–72.

11. Turner and Sheckels, *Communication Centers*, 69–127.

12. Wendy Atkins-Sayre and Eunkyong Lee Yook, "Training the Trainers: Improving Peer Tutoring through Communication Education," in *Communicating Advice: Peer Tutoring and Communication Practice*, eds. Wendy Atkins-Sayre and Eunkyong L. Yook (New York: Peter Lang, 2015), 4.

13. Muriel Harris, "Talking in the Middle: Why Writers Need Writing Tutors," *College English* 57 (1995): 27–42.

14. Information about the National Association of Communication Centers (NACC) is available online at: http://commcenters.org/resources/certification-and-assessment.

15. Danielle Leek, Russell Carpenter, Kimberly M. Cuny, and P. Anand Rao, "Strategies for Assessment in Communication Centers," *The Communication Center Journal* 1 (2015): in press.

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