PERSUASIVE SPEECH GUIDELINES
COMMUNICATION 140—PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

MR. POCOCK

OBJECTIVES:
We spend most of our communicating time trying to influence the attitudes and behaviors
or others. Since persuasion is so much a part of our lives, not just in the public speaking
context, we will spend two speaking assignments on it.

LENGTH:
1. Persuasive Speech #1: Five (5) to seven (7) minutes.
2. Persuasive Speech #2: Six (6) to eight (8) minutes.

PROCEDURES:
Note: Use one of the “Strategies for Organizing Persuasive Message” as detailed on
pages 224 - 227 of the text.
1. Persuasive Speech #1- The Constructive Speech:
   A. In formal debate, each speaker begins by presenting the issue under discussion
      and his/her position on it. This period is known as the “constructive period.”
   B. For your constructive speech, select a problem area that interests you. You may
develop a topic you presented as an Information Speech.
   C. Be prepared to announce your topic and conduct an informal survey of the
      audience on the night you turn in your working outline as scheduled on the
      Syllabus. The purpose of this survey is to determine the audience’s attitudes and
      knowledge about your topic. Prepare two questions that can be answered with a
      show of hands or check off on slips of paper.
   D. Prepare a speech in which you explain the problem (inform) and present a
      solution (persuade).
   E. Include at least two (2) pieces of “evidence” to prove the problem is significant
      and record your sources on your outline.
2. Persuasive Speech #2: The Rebuttal Speech
   A. In formal debate, after a speaker has presented his/her constructive speech, the
      opponent has an opportunity to challenge, known as a “rebuttal.”
   B. Be prepared to announce your topic area and survey the class when you turn in
      your working outline as scheduled on the Syllabus.
   C. For your rebuttal speech, select an issue with which you disagree. It is preferred
      that you select an issue presented in class. However, you may select an issue
      presented in the public forum (press, television, etc.) You may develop a topic
      you have presented earlier this semester.
   D. Prepare a speech in which you challenge the way in which the problem is defined
      or the solution is offered by your “opponent.”
   E. Include at least three (3) pieces of “evidence” to support your challenge. Sources
      for you evidence must be recorded at the end of your technical outline.
   F. Be prepared to answer questions from the audience.

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DEADLINES:
As scheduled on the Course Syllabus.

TEXT REFERENCE:
Section 23 & 24

SPEAKING HINTS:
1. Relax. Nervousness is helpful. It lets you know that adrenaline is present to help you with vocal projection, descriptive gestures and a purposeful walk. Simply train the “butterflies” in your stomach to “fly in formation”
2. Take a breath before your start speaking.
3. Use sustained eye contact.
1. Concentrate on sharing what you know.
2. Use comfortable, but purposeful posture and body movements.
3. Dress so you feel good about yourself when delivering the speech. Confirm your dress is appropriate for your topic.
4. Be comfortable with appropriate silence and pauses.
5. Practice, practice, practice. But do not memorize it!
6. Consider using a visual aid for clarity, especially when you are presenting statistical or complex information.

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