

#513 Public Speaking in the Church 1
Western Reformed Seminary
Pastoral Mentorship Program
John A. Battle, Th.D.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course goals

In this course you will learn about the proper production and delivery of the spoken word, including breathing, posture, and voice quality. You will learn basic principles of public speaking, and the various types of speaking. You will practice preparing and delivering several short messages, some of them dealing with various Christian-related subjects, and others more “secular.” These messages will be of various types—informational, explanatory, persuasive, and motivational. The purpose of this class is to enable you to be comfortable presenting spoken messages in a variety of modes and situations. This class is preparatory for more advanced classes in public speaking, and in sermon preparation and delivery for ministerial students, or in Bible teaching for non-ministerial students.

Contact with the professor

Please feel free to contact the professor (Dr. Battle in this case) anytime you have a question about the course material. Office phone: 253-272-0417. Cell phone: 253-720-7586. Email: battle@wrs.edu.

Required reading

During this class you will read Part 1 of this book:

- Virgil A. Anderson, *Training the Speaking Voice* (3rd ed.)

Part 1 of this text continues with voice production and method, emphasizing the proper production and projection of the human speaking voice. This information, properly assimilated and put to use, will enable you to speak forcefully and at length without discomfort or physiological harm. It is, while often technical, an excellent resource for studying the human speaking voice, and for improving individual strengths and overcoming weaknesses and faults. It contains a multitude of helpful exercises for public speakers.

Exercise log

Training the speaking voice requires many sessions of individual exercises, usually done in privacy. During these sessions you will need to be using various volumes, properly projecting your voice over various pitches; so you should practice in a place where you will not bother others or be self-conscious (the wide open spaces are best!). Each student is required to document at least 20 exercise sessions of 20-30 minutes each. Exercises may be chosen from those in Anderson, *Training the Speaking Voice*, or may come from other sources, as long as they contribute to the same end. The exercise log should contain the date, place, elapsed time, and a list of exercises performed (you should do several during each session). Of course, many of the shorter exercises can be done in addition at various odd times throughout the day. The student should seek to do these exercises until they, and the skills they are seeking to develop, become natural and habitual. The form to use for this log is available on the course webpage.

Speeches and messages

You will be giving five speeches before your Pastoral Mentor and at least two other people. Your speeches will be evaluated by your pastoral mentor and the other listeners. You will need to video record your speeches. You will review your speech and fill out a self-evaluation form for each speech; you also will study the evaluations of your listeners. Electronic copies of each speech, and your self-evaluation, and the evaluations of your mentor are to be submitted to the course instructor. Long files can be transmitted using YouSendIt.com.

Unless otherwise stated, you will be allowed to have brief notes with you and refer to them briefly as you speak.

Each speech or message will have a time limit. It is important that you limit yourself to that time limit when you give the speech. Any deviation beyond 30 seconds (too long or too short) from the required length of the message will result in a lower grade. You will need to arrange for a timekeeper to give you signals.

Here are the speeches you will be delivering:

1. Introduce yourself to a Christian audience that does not know you. Include your Christian experience and goals. Include at least one humorous incident in your life. (3 minutes)
2. Select a book you have read that you have found valuable (besides the Bible). Introduce this book to an interested audience. Tell about the author, about the purpose and design of the book, and give a brief survey of its contents. Explain why it is valuable, perhaps giving some personal effect it has had on you or others. (4 minutes)
3. Tell a Bible story to a group of children. Indicate ahead of time what age range of children you are addressing (the choice is yours). Try to be dramatic without going overboard. Do not use notes in this presentation, so that you can gesture more freely. Include an application that they would benefit from. (5 minutes)

4. Select something complicated to explain, that you know about. This can be an object that is operated in some way, or that works in some way, or some other complicated concept, skill, event, or object. Explain this to an interested audience that has only an average general knowledge, making it understandable without undue oversimplification. You may use a drawing or other visual aid in this message. (5 minutes)

5. Select a controversial topic about which you have an opinion. This subject may be one about which Christians differ, but need not be so. It can be either secular or religious. Give a presentation seeking to persuade the audience to your point of view. Be sure to be “fair and balanced,” fairly representing the opposite view or views. (6 minutes)

Grading

- Required reading 20%
- Exercise log 10%
- Speech 1 10%
- Speech 2 10%
- Speech 3 10%
- Speech 4 15%
- Speech 5 15%
- Self Evaluations 10%