

Fall 2005

(((SPEAKING FROM THE CENTER)))

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The official newsletter of the University Speaking Center

University Speaking Center Mission: To support our clients in their ongoing process of becoming more confident and competent communicators.



From the director's desk:

Many faculty members have told me that during classroom presentations they can tell the difference between the students who have come to the Center for help and those who have not. The difference is that the speaker has practiced and received feedback from our staff before the final in-class presentation!

We do not believe that the first run through of a speech should

be graded; we advocate practice.

Our consultants have identified several key concepts related to the organization/clarity of public speeches. While many of our clients come to us to practice what they believe to be a "ready for the classroom speech," the speeches often lack a complete introduction and conclusion as well as smooth transitions.

During the course of a consultation, consultants offer instruction and other assistance in hopes of achieving better understanding of a well organized speech from the perspective of each individual client. Keeping in mind the informative speech organization requirements identified by individual faculty members and departments across campus, we introduce our clients to the following elements:

Introduction

- Attention getting device
- Credibility
- Motivation
- Preview of main points

Conclusion

- Signal end of speech
- Review of main points
- Memorable Statement
- Topic or thesis statement

Transitions Words or phrases used to connect main points within the body of a speech.

I have been in the public speaking classroom for over fourteen years, and these are the same areas where my own beginning speakers most commonly need improvement. Additionally, many of the business professionals that I have coached have used these key concepts to improve their professional presentations. Regardless of a client's speaking ability, when they leave us they are armed with the knowledge they need to become more confident and competent oral communicators.

~Kim Cuny~

MYTH BUSTERS ~ The Truth About the Speaking Center Revealed April Reece

Myth: All Speaking Center consultants are Communication Majors.

Truth: Our 36 consultants represent 17 different majors!

Myth: All Speaking Center consultants are upper-class or graduate students.

Truth: We are all undergraduate students here, representing the full spectrum from freshmen to seniors!

Myth: The Speaking Center only helps with "speaking".

Truth: Our clients receive assistance with anything involved in the oral communication process from organizing and outlining a presentation to non-verbal delivery skills.

Myth: Clients can come to the Speaking Center whenever they want.

Truth: We do take walk-in appointments, but it's best to call ahead and reserve a space. Also, we can only help clients **2 days or more** before the day their speech is due.

What to Expect During a Consultation

Christen Hanley

Upon entering into a consultation, a knowledgeable, professional consultant will ask the client what they hope to accomplish from the visit. The consultant then evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the client's presentation skills by having the client perform their presentation, or viewing a previously recorded presentation and providing feedback. Or, the client may choose to receive help on the organization and content of their speech without presenting. The consultant then offers some ways to improve the problems areas; this is done verbally and through tip sheets (handouts that summarize methods). The client leaves with lowered anxiety and more confidence about their capabilities.

Workshop Series – Fun and Free!

Jackie Haywood

Having trouble turning that paper in to a presentation? Not sure how to use those visual aids? Check out our Workshop Series! These are hour long interactive sessions (meaning you don't sit through a boring lecture) on a variety of helpful communication topics. To participate, simply sign up online by visiting our website and clicking "Events." Workshops are completely free and any UNCG student or staff member is welcome. The workshop opportunities still available this semester include:
Nov 1st – Dynamic Speaking
Nov 11th – Effectively Using Presentation Aids
Nov 15th – Persuasive Speaking as an Art Form
Nov 21st – Paper to Presentation
Nov 30th – Successfully Communicating in the Workplace

Seeing Stars!

Amanda Lawing

You may have been wondering what all those stars are doing on the walls in the Speaking Center. Our staff uses the stars to give one another compliments and show that we appreciate each other. We try to keep up a family feeling in the Center, and this is a great way for us to show our love! The stars also help cover the gray walls and make this a more inviting place for both consultants and clients. If you would like to give a staff member a star, just ask and we'll be happy to get one for you.





Bridgette Lewis
Senior
Consultant
CST Major



Clarissa LeSane
Senior
Consultant
PSY Major



Jenny Mueller
Communication
Consultant
BUS Major



Melissa Wooten
Communication
Consultant
CST Major



Morgan Steele
Managing
Consultant
ART Major



Lynette James
Managing
Consultant
ATY Major

Consultant Relationships

Alex Vizzier

As a second-year Communication Studies graduate student, I am required to complete a comprehensive research project. I have chosen to research consultant relationships in the University Speaking Center for my project. Using ethnography as my research method, I have taken field notes and conducted interviews to complete this project.

I am interested in researching this area for two reasons. First, I want to show how the Center's success depends on its staff. Second, I want to show how UNCG's Speaking Center could serve as a recruitment model for other emerging speaking centers. I am using two areas of Communication theory to serve as the basis for my research: Communities of Practice and Communication Apprehension.

The theory of Communities of Practice looks at how people form together in an organization through expertise and passion. The consultants at the Speaking Center are bound through their expertise of public speaking knowledge and their passion for helping students with their speaking abilities.

The theory of Communication Apprehension looks at the effects of speaking anxiety. The Speaking Center consultants are trained to help students manage their anxiety. However, the consultants themselves are not free from the fear of speaking anxiety! Through encouragement and positive attitudes, the consultants help each other manage their anxiety, and this encouragement extends to how they help their clients.

I am really looking forward to doing more research on this topic. I truly believe that the success of the Speaking Center has depended upon the encouragement, expertise and passion of our consultants.



To Consult or Not to Consult: That is the Question

Neubia Williams

"This activity would be great for you!"

"Join our organization!"

"Come out on Wednesdays at six!"

How many times have you heard these things while walking to class on campus? I have been involved in numerous activities here at UNCG, and I am proud to admit that being a consultant at the Speaking Center is one of the most rewarding experiences.

Consultant Christen Hanley, asserts, "I love helping others, but most of all I love sharing what I have learned and what really works for me." The Center prides itself on being student run. No one understands the perils of being a student like another student.

Consultant Zynasia Jasper offers, "I feel like the Speaking Center is a prestigious and very professional environment." The Speaking Center has a standard of excellence. Eight students including myself are currently training to become a part of that excellence. CST 390 is a unique experience that educates the newest consultants on how to work with their peers on issues of public speaking. It prepares us, regardless of our majors, for what lies ahead in our future careers as motivational speakers, lawyers, doctors, and businesspersons. We have taken the challenge, will you?

Know Your Role!

Steven Stein

Most people dread those encounters that put them in a group setting. I am here to tell you that if it was not for my understanding of groups, I would be one of those people. So let me share with you the things that I have come to understand. All members in a group *will* assume one or more roles, which are interchangeable. Those roles consist of a Task Leader, Socio-Emotional Leader, Tension Releaser, Information Provider, Central Negative, and Silent Observer. The Task Leader is exactly what it seems; they hold the high status and will control the task at hand. The Socio-Emotional person is the popular one, they are well-liked and they support all other members. The Tension Releaser will focus on easing the tension of the group through jokes and laughter. We all play the Information Provider; everyone brings something valuable to the group. The Central Negative will help the group strengthen the quality of its outcome by playing "Devil's Advocate." The Silent Observer analyzes the group and provides valuable insight when they do speak. We all encounter these situations sooner or later. So, know your roles, they are all necessary for a successful group experience!



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