Across human history the one consistent feature of a prosperous education has been learning how to communicate newly acquired knowledge and ideas effectively to target audiences. As communicative beings, we spend much of our valuable time talking and listening without clear consideration of what is being said and how we are saying it. This class will ask you to reflect on the best methods of human communication in order to perfect the valuable skill and the art of public speaking.

Why take a course dedicated to improving your speaking skills? In truth, it is time for you to get out of the student-chair and take hold of the speaking situation. Learning the skills before graduation will help prepare for the hard truths of speaking situations that are inevitable in the job market. Verbal communication skills are consistently ranked as a top concern for future employers, whether governmental or private. The ability to communicate policy matters also determines successful elevation of concerns into the public eye in order to warrant corrective action. Furthermore, communication skills determine successful implementation of policy actions in mobilizing human capital within organizations. A failure to command the power of speech undermines personal empowerment and access to influential methods of moving audiences towards good public ends.

While the art of successful public speaking can be applied to any topic, Speaking and Public Affairs will take a particular interest in matters of policy and issues of public concern. Students will learn how to persuasively elaborate on issues of public controversies using the tools of speech. Through four-student performances and with the analysis of public speeches, we will establish standards as well as vet your ability to make yourself a credible, passionate, and logically sound speaker.

What will you learn?

- Control your fear of public speaking and learn effective body language
- Speech writing skills and practices, such as using outlines
- Persuasive speaking, learning constraints and opportunities on moving audiences
- Narrowing down topics and organizing ideas for specific speaking situations
- Audience analysis and adaption to diverse and homogenous groups
- Small/large group presentation styles
- Speaking through new technology. The camera and microphone
- Guidelines of visual aid usage, Power Point and Prezi

***The course will count toward SPEA’s oral communication requirement***