

## **APSU Writing Center**

### **Preparing a Speech**

#### **Public Speaking**

Public speaking can feel intimidating, but remember, you are capable! The biggest difference between giving a speech and writing an essay is the audience. A presentation lets your audience experience your points directly through your voice, tone, and presence.

#### **Professor Requirements**

Always follow your professor's specific speech guidelines for structure, timing, and content. This is your first step before planning.

#### **Planning Your Speech**

Start with an outline, just like an essay. Ask yourself:

- What kind of speech is this? → Informative, persuasive, or demonstrative?
- What's my topic? → What are my main points and supporting evidence?
- Why am I giving this speech? → What's my goal or purpose?
- How long should it be? → Check the assignment guidelines (5–10 minutes).
- Who is my audience? → Why should they care about this topic?

#### **Choosing an Organizational Pattern**

Choose the pattern that best fits your topic, assignment sheet, and audience.

- **Sequential:** Steps in a process or timeline order.
- **Chronological:** Historical events or predictions for the future.
- **Categorical:** Dividing a topic into natural categories.
- **Cause & Effect:** Shows how one condition generates, or is generated by another.
- **Compare & Contrast:** Highlight similarities and differences between topics.
- **Problem & Solution:** Present a problem, then offer a solution.

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#### **Introduction**

Your introduction sets the tone and grabs attention.

- Start your speech with a surprising fact, a question, a quote, or a bold statement.
- State your thesis, this gives your audience an intro into what they will learn or take away.
- Give a brief overview of your main points.

#### **Body**

Each main point should be its own section, like a paragraph in an essay.

- Introduce the main point.
- Explain why it matters by supporting it with data, stories, or quotes.
- Summarize the idea before moving on.
- Create a smooth transition to guide into the next point.

#### **Conclusion**

The conclusion summarizes your points and leaves a lasting impression.

- Summarize key points.
- Restate your thesis in a new way.
- Connect back to the thesis.
- End with one of the following:
  - Call to action
  - Invitation for questions
  - Memorable closing statement

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**Delivery and Practice Tips**

Once your speech is planned and organized, focus on how to deliver it confidently.

**Practice Speaking**

- Practice your main points out loud, either in front of a mirror or a peer.
- Avoid memorizing word-for-word from slides or note cards.
- Add reminders on your cards, such as “pause here” or “speak slowly.”

**Speak Clearly and Loudly**

- Speak at a volume everyone can hear.
- Pause between main points to let ideas sink in.
- Use hand gestures or move around the room to appear natural and engaging.

**Connect with the Audience**

- Make eye contact with your listeners.
- Use personal pronouns like we, us, and our to build connection.



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### References

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