

# VOICE AND DICTION / COMM 247

**Instructor:** Charlotte A. Elder

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**OFFICE HOURS:** Available via ZOOM

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A practical approach to improving the speaking voice. A basic premise of the course is not *what* individuals say but *how* they sound when they speak. Emphasis is placed on articulation: speaking clearly and intelligibly; developing a pleasant vocal quality and eliminating such defects as breathiness, nasality, harshness or stridency; building adequate loudness; achieving effective vocal variation, pitch and speaking rate; correcting pronunciation; modifying regional or foreign dialects.

In this course students do not give memorized speeches. The emphasis, as stated in the previous paragraph, is not *what* you say, but *how you sound* when you speak

## HOW ARE YOU GRADED IN THIS COURSE?

This is a skills course—like taking guitar lessons or learning to ski. Your final grade will largely depend on the overall improvement you’ve made in the course. In other words, students will be graded in their own individual performances, development, class participation and, of course, improvement.

## ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is essential in a Voice and Diction course!

0 Absences = 30 pts.

1 Absence = 28 pts.

2 Absences = 25 pts.

3 Absences = 20pts

4 Absences = 0 pts.

5 Absences = Failed from course

Excused absences: This type of excuse *must be in writing* and from a qualified person (doctor, advisor, college official). Please note: A telephone call does *not* constitute an excused absence.

If you miss an assignment and have an excused absence, we will attempt to make up the work. If time doesn’t permit makeup assignments, you will be given a grade *X* for this missed assignment. An *X* doesn’t count *for* you and it doesn’t count *against* you.

If you miss an assignment and do not have an excused absence, you will automatically be given a grade of *F* for that assignment. However, if I feel the missed assignment should be made up, you must be prepared at every subsequent class meeting to present the assignment whenever time permits.

Promptness is appreciated. Two tardies count as one absence. *If you enter class after roll has been taken, you are tardy.*

If you’re tardy and I’m speaking, come in. If a student is up front speaking or presenting, wait until the student is finished before you enter.

If you must be tardy, please report to the instructor at the close of class period, otherwise the record will show you as absent.

## Title IX:

WKU is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and support applied against other protected categories such as race, national origin, and religion.

If you have experienced any form of sexual misconduct (sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence) we encourage you to report this to the University. Please understand WKU is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct and cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. You can speak confidentially with the **Counseling and Testing Center, 270-745-3159; Talley Family Clinic, 270-745-4204; and Hope Harbor, 270-782-5014. I am not a confidential resource. I must inform the university if you share with me an incident has occurred.** You have the right to maintain your privacy. **I will report only what you share with me to the Office of Student Conduct.** We report to make sure you have all the support and help you need, both on campus and in our community..

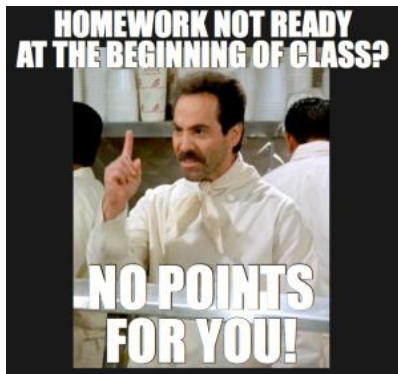
For more information about our policies and resources or about reporting options, please visit:

<https://www.wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/titleixmandatoryreportingguidelines.pdf> and

<https://www.wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixresources.pdf>; <https://www.wku.edu/studentconduct/>

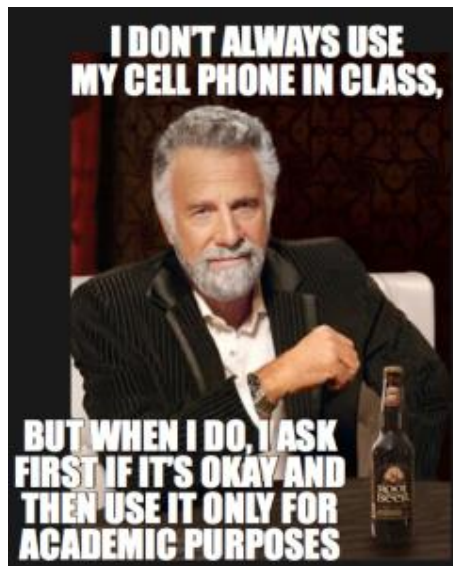
## LATE WORK:

Late work is not accepted unless the absence is excused.



## CELL PHONES and EAR BUDS:

Cell phones are required to be turned off. Cell phones should be off by the time the instructor enters the class. (*Finishing conversations, texting, tweeting, swiping left or right, stalking, searching, etc. is USING your phone.*) **Any student using their phone or ear buds during class/ZOOM will be counted as absent and not receive credit for attending class on the particular day of the offense.**



## WKU STATEMENT ON FACE COVERINGS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Out of respect for the health and safety of the WKU community and in adherence with the [CDC guidelines](#), the University requires that a cloth face covering (reusable or disposable) that covers both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times when in public areas within all buildings. Students must properly wear face coverings while in class regardless of the room size or the nature of the classroom activities. Students who fail to wear a face covering as required will be in violation of the WKU Student Code of Conduct and will be asked to comply or will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University. Accommodations to face coverings must be determined by the Student Accessibility Resource Center and documented before a student may attend class.

## PROCEDURES FOR TRADITIONAL & HYBRID MODALITY CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE:

In an effort to lower the chance of transmission and in adherence with the [CDC guidelines](#), the following procedures should be followed when attending class physically:

- Prior to heading to class, check your temperature with a reliable thermometer. Do not head to class if the reading is at or above 100.3° F
- Do not enter the classroom building more than 10 minutes before the start of class.
- Make sure your face covering/mask is in place (covering both nose and mouth) prior to entering the building and at all times while in the building.
- Follow all directional signs as may be provided for walkways, stairs, and entrances/exits.
- If you arrive at the classroom and students from the previous class are still present, wait until they exit the classroom to enter.
- Do not congregate with other students in the hallway outside of a classroom.
- Always maintain a distance of six (6) feet between others and yourself in the classroom and hallways (as much as is possible).
- Use hand sanitizer (when available) upon entering and exiting in the classroom.
- Do not share any objects with others. Everyone must be responsible for coming to class prepared and with all the materials needed.
- Please DO NOT attempt to meet with your instructor in the classroom before or after class time. DO reach out to her/him through email or phone and feel free to request a time to have a video conference if the matter is more involved. If a question is one which will positively benefit others in the class to hear the answer, ask the question as a part of class.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Diagnostic Appointment (10 points each)** Each student will be required to complete two diagnostic appointments. The first appointment is designed to indicate areas that you will need to focus on over the course of the semester. The second appointment will be an assessment of the improvements you've made this semester. Each assessment will consist of a short reading via ZOOM and will be recorded on your phone. If you miss your appointment you will receive a 'zero' for the assignment.
2. **Quizzes (10 points each – The Oral Quiz will be 25 points)** There will be quizzes throughout the semester, 6 to 7 written and 1 oral. The oral quiz will cover words chosen from the "Word of the Day" list.
3. **Assessments of an Individual (15 points)** Each student will complete *four* voice and diction assessments. You will be provided a rubric. You will be asked to observe four different speakers and then complete an assessment rubric for each individual. Each observation should be of an individual speaking (not in conversation) for at least 15 minutes. Examples: political address, guest speaker on campus, preacher, class lecture, etc.
4. **Assessment Paper (100 points)** Each student will assess a particular individual's speaking voice and diction. You may use a character from a movie, a clip for a speech, television personality, or an individual that you know personally (with their permission of course). A rubric will be provided for this activity.
5. **Self Assessment (25 points)** Each student will complete a self assessment toward the end of the semester. The self assessment will allow students to evaluate their own progress in the course.
6. **'Word of the Day' (5 points each)** Students will present their 'word' via discussion board. Each student will explain why he or she decided to examine their particular word and then explain the correct pronunciation of the word of that word. The oral exam will be composed of these words. A review sheet will not be given to students so students should record the words themselves.
7. **Phrase Origin (5 points)** Student will explain the origin of an interesting/common catch phrase.

- 8. Discussion Boards (10 points each)** Discussion boards will be announced in class and on Blackboard and will relate to class lecture. Each discussion board will carry a point value based on the amount of work required for the discussion and the point value will be announced.
- 9. Class Work and Homework** Students will be assigned a small group to complete in class and out of class work with, as a group. Students who do not participate professionally with their group will not receive credit for the assignment. 'Professional' includes but is not exclusive to: meeting with your group as assigned, actively participating, being timely, communicating professionally.

#### **COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR:**

Email: When you contact me via email please allow up to 48 hours for a reply. Please include your full name in the email as well as the class section.