THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

FACULTY OF CREATIVE AND CRITICAL STUDIES
2026 WINTER Term 1
CORH 304: Persuasive Rhetoric, Public Speaking and Advocacy (3 credits)

The Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies acknowledges that the land on which we are situated is the unceded territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) People.

Instructor Contact	Course Delivery
Instructor: Dr. Sherry Breshears (she/they) **Email:** sherry.breshears@ubc.ca or use Canvas Inbox **Online office hours:** • Weeks 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13 • Wednesdays at 12:00 PM (or by appt) on Zoom **In person office hours:** • Weeks 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12 • Wednesdays at 12:00 PM (or by appt) in CCS 351A	**Mode of delivery:** Hybrid **Class times:** Wed/Fri 9:30-11:00 AM • Online and in-person classes will take place on alternating weeks. • Online synchronous classes take place on Zoom. • In person classes are in ART 102 • See full Course Schedule below.

Academic Calendar Entry

CORH 304 (3) Persuasive Rhetoric, Public Speaking, and Advocacy
Advanced level course in public speaking, persuasive rhetoric, and advocacy to generate social and community change. Prerequisite: Third year standing or permission of instructor.

Course Format and Delivery
This hybrid course aims to create a learning community through synchronous (in person and online over Zoom) and some asynchronous course engagement. The course uses a participatory model of learning. The expectation is that students come to class having engaged with the assigned readings and multimodal resources and prepared to participate in class discussions and activities. As the term evolves, the focus is increasingly on student projects, which will become the main content of the course.

Synchronous and in person classes take place in a seminar format and include lectures, discussions, responses to assigned readings/viewing, resources to review or analyze,

collaborative multimodal activities, guest lectures, workshops by experts in the field, and individual and collaborative speeches and presentations. Some aspects of course delivery will be asynchronous over Canvas. Students will be notified ahead of time when asynchronous classes are scheduled.

Aside from the course textbooks, all course content and information will be available through Canvas. Online videos, websites, and internal course files will be posted on Canvas. Students submit all major assignments on Canvas.

Course Overview, Content and Objectives

Extending concepts and elements from interpersonal, group, professional, and mediated communication contexts, the course delves deeper into the history of rhetoric in public speaking to advocate change in social and community contexts, as well as in public policy. Using multimodal platforms (audio, visual, textual, and digital), and historical as well as current contexts and resources, students will build on their existing skills in public speaking to analyze different forms of persuasive rhetoric through interdisciplinary perspectives. They will also communicate assertively, persuasively, and ethically through goal-oriented responses to current local and global concerns to generate policy changes within diverse sociocultural and community settings. The course uses an experiential learning model where students develop and launch policy-change campaigns of their choosing as part of a course. The student campaigns seek to change a policy (i.e., a rule, law, regulation, norm, or practice of an institution) on campus or in the community.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. communicate their understanding of concepts and theories of rhetoric and persuasion in the contexts of public speaking and advocacy;
2. demonstrate advanced level design and organization of persuasive content, use of public speaking strategies, and assertive presentation skills in their speeches;
3. critically evaluate public, institutional, and governmental policies, by identifying their content and rhetorical features from a range of genres, styles, and modalities;
4. communicate information ethically to a range of intended audiences, using appropriate oral, written, visual, and digital conventions and modes;
5. apply interpersonal and group communication concepts and processes to work collaboratively in group projects;
6. design, develop and implement an action plan to deliver a public advocacy campaign;
7. demonstrate advanced level writing skills in identifying, locating, and efficiently using library resources, and integrating and synthesizing secondary sources using the appropriate citation style in their discipline.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading

The course is graded on a percentage basis. A final grade of 50% is required to pass the course. Grades will be assigned based on the criteria listed for each assignment and will follow the UBC Okanagan standardized grading system available online in the Academic Calendar.

UBCO Standardized Grading System

A+	90- 100	B+	76-79	C+	64-67	D	50-54
A	85-89	B	72-75	C	60-63	F	0-49
A-	80-84	B-	68-71	C-	55-59		

Assignments & Grade Distribution

Handouts with detailed instructions and grading criteria for each assignment will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas. Grades will be assigned based on the criteria listed for each assignment and will follow the UBC Okanagan standardized grading system. All major assignments are to be submitted on Canvas. Most major assignments are due on the **Sunday** of the assigned week. See Course Schedule for due dates.

No.	Assignments	Weight	LO
1	**Persuasive speeches (Individual)** • Speech 1: introductory speech (5%) • Speech 2: Persuasive speech of fact or value (Individual, 3 mins, 10%) • Speech 3: Persuasive speech of policy (Individual, 4 minutes, 15%)	**30%**	1, 2 & 4
2	**Advocacy action plan & evaluation (Group)** The team will identify a current issue and needed policy change, design and implement an action plan, and evaluate the campaign. • Campaign & communication plan (Group, 10%) • Presentation of campaign results (Group, 10 minutes, 10%) • Multimodal portfolio & evaluation of advocacy campaign (Group, 15%) • Peer and self-evaluation (Individual, 5%)	**40%**	1-7
3	**Quizzes with reflection** • Quiz #1 (5%) • Quiz #2 (5%) • Quiz #3 (10%)	**20%**	1 & 3
4	**Participatory learning** In-class activities such as speaking tasks, discussion, responses to readings or audio/video materials, and group work. Sample activities include: • Short speeches • Analysis of persuasive speeches • Contributions to Canvas discussions and in class discussions • Participation in campaign	**10%**	1-7

Required Readings, Course Resources & Technology

Required textbook:

1. Myers-Lipton, Scott. (2023). *CHANGE! A student guide to social action*, 2nd edition. Routledge. (Available through the UBC Okanagan bookstore and on course reserve at the library.)

2. Mapes, Meggie. (2019). *Speak out, call in: Public speaking as advocacy.* OER textbook. (Available here: https://opentext.ku.edu/speakupcallin/)

Other **required readings and audio/visual resources** will be available through Canvas. Note: Some readings/resources are subject to change and if so, this will be communicated with notice through Canvas.

Technology requirements. To engage fully with this course, you are required to have a laptop or desktop computer, a stable Internet connection, audio and video. Some course assignments require you to videorecord yourself speaking. We will cover the required skills in class. You will be expected to keep your video on during groupwork and student presentations. You are welcome to use a virtual background.

Technology support. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the software required for their courses. There are several supports on campus to assist students with technical issues, for example:

- Student Learning Hub – Self-guided resources (scroll down to video "Basics of Canvas") - https://students.ok.ubc.ca/academic-success/learning-hub/self-guided-resources/#b2brecordings
- Remote Access Workstation - https://students.cms.ok.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/90/2020/09/StudentGuideandBestPractices_Okanagan.pdf
- UBCO – Know IT - https://knowit.ok.ubc.ca/category/student-support/235/

Course Schedule

Please see the **Tentative Course Schedule** at the end of this course outline. This may be revised to accommodate contingencies. See **Canvas Modules** for the most up to date information.

Final Examinations

There is no final exam for this course.

Attendance, Assignment Submissions & Missed Activity Policy

Assignment submission policy: Detailed information about assignment due dates will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class. Assignments must be submitted online by the due date on Canvas.

2-day grace period for major assignments: Submission deadlines will be posted on Canvas, and two additional days "grace" will be added to submission dates for MOST assignments. Even if Canvas identifies your submission as late, there is no penalty if you submit within these two days. These days are offered to accommodate those of you who may require additional time, and it saves you the bother of seeking a 1-2 day extension. **This grace period does NOT apply to class or group discussion posts, in-class presentations, or group activities (i.e., situations where your participation is required for class or group activities).**

Late submissions will incur a penalty of 5% for each day late (after the 2-day grace period if applicable). Extensions with late penalty exemptions must be preapproved by the instructor at least 24 hours ahead of the due date for an acceptable reason, such medical reasons. Supporting evidence such as a note from a medical doctor may be requested for approved extensions.

Please make sure that assignments are submitted on Canvas well before the deadline to avoid technical impediments. The timestamp on Canvas will serve as evidence for assignment submission times.

Attendance policy: Attendance is mandatory and expected for synchronous Zoom and in person classes. Please let Sherry know by email if you cannot attend. There will be in-class assignments and activities that contribute to your participation grade. **There are no make-up activities for missed in-class assignments**/activities. However, to accommodate contingencies that result in missed classes, your lowest 2 participation marks will not be included in final participation grade. Exceptions to this rule may be applied to participation assignments designed to prepare for major assignments.

Basically, if you're not here, we will miss you 😊, and you won't be able to practice the skills you will be applying in the assignments or participate in important group project work. So come to class!

Communicating with your instructor and peers

Communicating with your instructor. Contact me through email and scheduled office hours or make an appointment to meet over Zoom outside of office hours. Email responses can usually be expected within 48 hours during weekdays. If I take longer than a day to respond to an email (during weekdays), feel free to send me a reminder. All email communication must be professional, courteous and concise, with the course indicated in the subject line or sent through Canvas.

Student conduct online. All students are expected to respect the intellectual property of this course, which is copyright protected. Do not share any of this course material. Please refrain from taking recordings or screenshots of our sessions and respect the privacy of fellow students and the instructor. Please be patient and engage respectfully with your fellow learners.

Accessibility and accommodations. I welcome you to meet with me or email me about any specific accommodations you may require, whether or not you are registered with the Disability Resource Centre (see information about the DRC below).

Academic Integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are

imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the *Academic Calendar* here and on the FCCS site here: https://fccs.ok.ubc.ca/student-resources/academic-integrity/

Generative AI Policy.
Generative AI tools (e.g., Copilot, ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini) may be used for planning, research support, and feedback on organization, clarity, grammar, or style for some assignments. However, they may **not** be used to generate analyses, discussion posts, reflections, reports, or other course work that is intended to demonstrate your own understanding and communication skills.

A central goal of this course is to help you understand and apply concepts of rhetoric and persuasion, critically evaluate public discourse and policy, and develop your own skills in persuasive communication, public speaking, and advocacy. You are therefore expected to develop and communicate your own analyses, interpretations, arguments, and campaign ideas. Specific expectations regarding AI use will be provided for each assignment. Students are responsible for following the AI requirements outlined in the assignment instructions.

If you use AI for an assignment, you must report how it was used. You remain fully responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and quality of all submitted work. Unauthorized use of AI may be treated as academic misconduct. If a student uses AI tools contrary to expectations of the course, then the standard academic misconduct process will be followed. Learn more about UBC's Principles for the Use of Generative AI Tools here.

There may be exceptions related to academic accommodations arranged through the DRC. Instructors receive notice of the use of note taking support software in the classroom in the Accommodation Letter provided by the DRC to the instructor.

Some Important UBC Okanagan Services and Resources

Indigenous Programs and Services

The primary goal of the Indigenous Programs and Services is to provide culturally appropriate services and support to First Nation, Metis and Inuit students. Please contact us if you have any questions or inquiries. Web: https://students.ok.ubc.ca/indigenous-students/

The Global Engagement Office
The Global Engagement Office provides advising and resources to assist International students in navigating immigration, health insurance, and settlement matters, as well as opportunities for intercultural learning, and resources for Go Global experiences available to all UBC Okanagan students, and more. Come and see us – we are here to help! You may also contact

geo.ubco@ubc.ca

Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness offers a range of student health and wellness services, including a health clinic, counsellors, and health promotion programs. Students are encouraged to stay at home if they have a minor or communicable illness (such as flu-like symptoms) to prevent further spread of illness to other students, staff, or faculty. If students are too ill to attend class, the student should contact the instructor immediately and submit a "Self Declaration of Absence Due to Illness or Injury" form: Student Declaration of Absence Due to Illness or Injury (PDF) For more information about missing class due to illness, please visit: https://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/student-health-clinic/missing-class-due-to-illness/

Please note: Use of the self-declaration form during the final exam period is not accepted—students are advised to communicate directly with their instructor if they are sick and unable to write final examinations**. This declaration is not an exemption from any exams, papers, or projects that were missed during the time of absence and does not modify any academic obligations.** For long-term or ongoing illness or injury requiring academic accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Centre.

If students would like to access a UBC physician, nurse or counsellor, please call our office at 250 807-9270 or visit our website: https://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/

The UBC Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a free, 24/7 wellness resource for students. Services include personal counselling, life coaching, group programs and more, based on your needs: https://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/student-assistance-program/

Here2Talk
Here2Talk is a free, immediate, 24/7 tele-counselling service that was custom developed for BC's post-secondary students. Students can reach out as often as needed, anytime, from anywhere in the world, any day of the week. Canada-wide toll free: 1 877 857 3397
Canada-wide direct: 604 642 5212 Web: www.here2talk.ca

Student Counselling Services
Student Counselling Services is an on-campus service that offers confidential appointments for UBCO students, Monday - Friday. **Call to book an appointment:** 250 807 9270. Web: students.ok.ubc.ca/counselling

Student Learning Hub
The Student Learning Hub is your go-to resource for free math, science, writing, and language learning support. The Hub welcomes undergraduate students from all disciplines and year levels to access a range of supports that include **tutoring in math, sciences, languages, and writing, as well as help with study skills and learning strategies**. Students are encouraged to visit often and early to build the skills, strategies and behaviors that are essential to being a

confident and independent learner. For more information, please visit the Hub's website: https://students.ok.ubc.ca/academic-success/learning-hub/
LIB 237 250.807.8491 Email: learning.hub@ubc.ca

Academic Integrity Matters (AIM) Program

AIM is a program that provides help with academic integrity (AI) issues for undergraduate and graduate students. Please contact the Student Learning Hub and ask specifically for an AIM appointment.

Library Information

The **Library** is available for research support and can be accessed here.

UBC Okanagan Disability Resource Centre

The DRC facilitates disability-related accommodations and programming initiatives to remove barriers for students with disabilities and ongoing medical conditions. If you require academic accommodations to achieve the objectives of a course, please contact the DRC at:

UNC 215 250.807.8053 Email: drc.questions@ubc.ca

Web: https://students.ok.ubc.ca/academic-success/disability-resources/

UBC Okanagan Equity and Inclusion Office

Through leadership, vision, and collaborative action, the Equity & Inclusion Office (EIO) develops action strategies in support of efforts to embed equity and inclusion in the daily operations across the campus. The EIO provides education and training from cultivating respectful, inclusive spaces and communities to understanding unconscious/implicit bias and its operation within in campus environments. UBC Policy 3 prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of BC's Human Rights Code. If you require assistance related to an issue of equity, educational programs, discrimination or harassment please contact the EIO (UNC 325H).
Email: equity.ubco@ubc.ca Web: https://equity.ok.ubc.ca

Office of the Ombudsperson
The Office of the Ombudsperson for Students is an independent, confidential and impartial resource to ensure students are treated fairly. The Ombuds Office helps students navigate campus-related fairness concerns. They work with UBC community members individually and at the systemic level to ensure students are treated fairly and can learn, work and live in a fair, equitable and respectful environment. Ombuds helps students gain clarity on UBC policies and procedures, explore options, identify next steps, recommend resources, plan strategies and receive objective feedback to promote constructive problem solving. If you require assistance,

please feel free to reach out for more information or to arrange an appointment.

UNC 328 250.807.9818 Email: ombuds.office.ok@ubc.ca

Web: www.ombudsoffice.ubc.ca

FCCS Communications Portal

Consider signing up for our FCCS Communications portal for students in our undergraduate and graduate programs in Canvas. This one-stop space will be used to keep students informed and up to date with important information related to your academic matters as well as updated on FCCS and campus events. Self-enroll: https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3KBYFY

SAFEWALK

Don't want to walk alone at night? Not too sure how to get somewhere on campus? Call Safewalk at **250.807.8076. For more information, visit:** https://operations.ok.ubc.ca/security-and-emergencies/safewalk/

Tentative Course Schedule
CORH 304: Persuasive rhetoric, public speaking & advocacy

WT1 2026

Week, dates & delivery	Weekly Topics	Assigned reading, viewing and/or listening	Sample activities, assignments & due dates
Week 1 Sept. 8-13 **ONLINE**	• Introductions & course orientation • Public speaking, rhetoric & advocacy • Experiential learning • Building confidence	• *CHANGE!* – Preface, pp. xiii-xvii • *Speak out, call in*: Ch. 1: Public Speaking as Advocacy • *Walk the Walk* documentary https://vimeo.com/345582963/57c6ce810c	• Class intros • Analyze speech samples

Week 2
Sept. 14-20
IN PERSON
	• Speech genres
	• Introductory speeches
	• Issue development
		• *CHANGE!* - Ch. 1: Issue development
		• *Speak out, call in* - Ch. 2: Centering Audiences
		• Speeches to analyze, e.g.:
		  ○ Emma Watson
		  ○ Karen Lewis
		• SJSU Student reflection
			• Jan. 16 – Course withdrawal deadline
			• **Speech 1: Introductory speech (in class) (5%)**

Week 3 Sept. 21-27 **ONLINE**	• Setting the tone for group work • Understanding how change happens	*CHANGE!* • Ch. 2 – Setting the Tone • Ch. 3 – Change Theory	• Identify issues & form groups • Develop & test your demands • **Quiz & reflection #1 (5%)**
Week 4 Sept. 28 - Oct. 4 **ONLINE** Truth & Reconciliation Day – No Wed class.	• Persuasive speaking • Argumentation • Ethos	*Speak out, call in*: • Ch. 13 – Persuasive Speaking • Part II. Arguments & Information – Ch. 3, 4, 6 • Speeches to analyze	• Speech analysis • Participation: Test your demands (report to group) • **Topic proposal for Speech 2**
Week 5 Oct. 5-11 **IN PERSON**	• Delivery • Speaking online	*Speak out, call in*: • Part II – Aesthetics & Delivery, Ch. 7, 8, 9 • Sample speeches	• Work on Speech #2

Week 6 Oct. 12-18 **ONLINE**	• Building power • Researching the issue • Group dynamics	*CHANGE!* • Ch. 4 – Building Power • Ch. 5 – Research • Ch. 6 – Group Dynamics	• Class discussion & group work: Campaign strategy, tactics & message • Guest speaker: Speech coach (TBD) • **Speech 2: Persuasive speech of fact or value (10%)**
Week 7 Oct. 19-25 **IN PERSON**	• Strategy & tactics • Campaign plan	*CHANGE!* • Ch. 7: Strategy & Tactics • Ch. 8: Campaign kickoff • Ch. 9: Campaign Plan	• Creating a campaign website • **Quiz & reflection #2 (5%)**
Week 8 Oct. 26-Nov. 1 **ONLINE**	• Campaign kickoff	• Writing a media release (reading/viewing)	• Organizational raps & peer feedback • Guest speaker re: UBC Blogs (TBD) • **Assignment: Campaign & coms plan (Group, 10%)**
Week 9 Nov. 2-8 **IN PERSON**	• Communicating with media • Using social media	• Social media & social change (reading/viewing)	• Tabling event • Guest speaker on communication strategies (TBD)
Mid-Term Break – Nov. 9-13			
Week 10 Nov. 16-22 **ONLINE**	• Persuasive speech of policy	• *Speak out, call in* - Ch. 5: Crafting arguments • Watch speeches of policy & Monroe's Motivated Sequence	• Examine policy speeches
Week 11 Nov. 23-29 **IN PERSON**	• Work on campaigns	• Campaign planning & actions	• Student campaign actions • **Speech 3: Persuasive speech of policy (15%)**
Week 12 Nov. 30 - Dec. 6 **IN PERSON**	• Work on campaigns • Prepare for evaluation, presentation & portfolio	• *Speak out, call in* - Ch. 10: Presentation Aids • Campaign actions • In class presentations	• **Assignment: Presentation of social action campaign (Group, 10%)**

Week 13 Dec. 7-9 **ONLINE**	• Campaign presentations & evaluation	• Course wrap up	• **Assignment: Campaign portfolio & evaluation (Group, 15%)** • **Assignment: Peer & self-evaluation (Individual, 5%)** • **Quiz & reflection #4 (5%)**