

YOUR PERSUASIVE SPEECH

SPCH 1101

This handout contains the necessary information for you to create and present an effective persuasive speech. The following contains key steps in selecting a topic; the guidelines to properly structuring of your speech; an example of an outline; an example of a speech; and possible speech topics in which you can select. REMEMBER, YOU ARE FREE TO SELECT FROM A TOPIC NOT LISTED AT THE END OF THIS HANDOUT.

Persuasive Speech Steps

- Ø Step one, select a controversial topic that is debatable or which requires moving the audience to action.
- Ø Step two, narrow the topic.
- Ø Step three, decide which two points you would like to prove. BE SPECIFIC
- Ø Persuasive speeches are based upon arguments. Remember, an argument is a statement you intend to prove.
- Ø At this point, you should have selected a topic. Next, record three points you intend to prove. The persuasive speech is one of the most challenging speeches. The speech is based upon arguments. In persuasion, you are either for or against. To make this speech easy, you need three specific reasons, which are arguments. Never discuss more than one reason. Each argument is a reason.

Factors to Consider in Creating a Quality Persuasive Speech

1. **Understand the subject well.** This page won't help you at all if it's for a speech due tomorrow. Go over why you feel the way you do about the subject and consider the different challenges that you had to overcome to get to the point where you began feeling this way. Find a subject which you are passionate about. The listener does not want to hear a speech about something that you don't even care about.
2. **Research your audience, understand their perception of the subject, and try your best to learn what obstacles are in place to block them from seeing the subject from your point of view.** Write these obstacles down.
3. **Acknowledge obstacles.** You should not ignore obstacles, but rather prepare for, and conquer them. Search for answers around these obstacles. If you do, people who come across these obstacles during your speech will ignore you. You have to find ways around or through these obstacles to help your audience do the same. To be successful, you have to lead your audience, not assume or even demand that they "understand you".
4. **Note your strategies and ideas.** Write down the obstacles and your methods for getting around them down, and put them in a logical order format. Turn each of the obstacles into a paragraph explaining the method of understanding that gets around the obstacle.

5. **Link where necessary.** If needed, write paragraphs linking the "obstacle" paragraphs together in a logical order. When this is done, you should have a rough draft of your speech.
6. **Practice your speech privately, in front of a mirror.** Make notes on what sounds awkward and what doesn't flow or transition well. Logical flow is a strong tool of a persuasive speech, and without it, a speech is difficult to understand, much less be persuasive. During this process adjust your speech for the time allowed, and correct any errors.
7. **Discover your weaknesses.** Do you happen to say "um" frequently in between sentences or topics? Do you use your hands too much, or not enough by keeping them in your pockets? Avoid these and other bad habits so that you can work towards changing them. Speak with a clear voice, avoiding a monotone, and use your hands casually to emphasize points.
8. **Polish your introduction.** After editing your speech, add an attention story to the beginning. An attention story is a short story that is not related to the subject that highlights a problem that is similar to the problem that you are trying to overcome in your speech. A perfect introduction will: (1) get attention [use something like an analogy or story] (2) establish rapport [means goodwill, something your audience can relate to] (3) Preview what the rest of your speech will be about
9. **Continue editing.** After adding your attention story, edit your speech further again and try not to add last minute ideas.
10. **Practice your speech publicly, in a small group.** Perform it in front of people who agree with your perception of the subject. Welcome their feedback and any obstacles that they might think will become visible. Edit your speech again for any changes, always adjusting the size of your speech for the time allowed. Also, do not stand in one spot (unless on camera), as moving around a bit will help to keep your audience focused because it establishes a sense of interactivity. Engage your audience with your movements and eye contact. Look directly at individuals in your audience, changing your gaze every so often. If a few particular audience members smile in response, remember them as a focal point. They may provide visual support and encouragement if you falter a bit during your speech.
11. **Practice your speech again privately, in front of the mirror.** Try to learn your speech as much as you can to where your notes are mainly just to keep you on track. What your expressions and your mannerisms, make sure that you use voice inflection and that you have emotion in your speech. If there is no emotion in your voice or body, more than likely, there won't be any in the audience either.
12. **Dress appropriately for the gathering where your speech will be held.** Be confident, caring, and humble.
13. **Give your speech.** Prepare yourself ahead of time with your own positive encouragement and praise. If you find it helpful, give yourself verbal encouragement in front of a mirror. Alternatively, seek the encouragement of a friend or co-worker.
14. **Make sure that your speech really focuses on the topic, and that it is coherent and united (in the sense that all items are more or less related to the topic).**

KEYS TO DELIVERING A GREAT PERSUASIVE SPEECH

Select a topic that is appropriate for your audience but also a topic on which you feel very strongly. Some of the most interesting topics for persuasive speeches focus on controversial issues. Review several types of print media and watch television news programs, local and national, to see what controversial issues are being discussed. Remember that you are taking a stand on a position in this speech. Some audience members may agree and others may disagree with your position. Your goal is to reinforce the audience members who agree with you and to change the mind of those who do not. This will be challenging but very exciting! Think about the power of your "words" ! (I love listening to my students' persuasive speeches because they are so creative and strategic in trying to persuade the audience.)

It is required that you argue a proposition (or Question) of policy. In arguing a proposition of policy, you will be urging your audience to take action, to do something.

In developing your specific purpose, take a stand or position on a current issue. Review different news media to keep abreast of controversial and current issues, local, national, and international. Take a position on a particular issue. Make sure that you are really committed to the position. The stronger you feel about your position, the harder you will work to convince your audience.

Your central idea should consist of three main points. Think in terms of reasons in developing the main points. What are three reasons that you can give your audience members that will persuade them to do what you want? Once you develop your central idea, you should list three reasons to support your position. These three reasons will serve as your three arguments for the body of your speech.

Research is required for this speech. Your ideas and opinions are great, but do research to find an experts or peers to support your ideas. The more support, the better the speech. Do not plagiarize. It is appropriate and you are encouraged to use ideas from different sources, but always give the source credit.

Use a keyword or phrase outline. Use the *outline format* to assist in the development and organization of your speech. Your central idea should include at three main points and no more than four. Most audiences are very comfortable with three main points.

EXAMPLE OF GOOD PERSUASIVE SPEECH OUTLINE

Topic: “Why The Death Penalty Should Be Abolished”

Specific Purpose: To persuade my audience why death penalty should be illegal in the U.S.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Attention material/Credibility Material: **(Example)** You have spent 25 years in jail. Fifteen years on death row. You could not afford a good attorney. The jury saw a young, black male and without impartially weighing all the evidence, of you of the murder of someone you did even know. Now tomorrow, the state is going to kill you.

B. Tie to the audience: **(Example)** How many of you know someone (or even you yourself) have been accused of an action that you did not do? What if the false accusation was murder? What if the result of that false accusation was you being sentenced to death.

C. Thesis and Preview: **(Example)** The death penalty should be abolished because it is not a deterrent to murder and innocent people may be executed.

[Transition into body of speech – your 1st point]: I’ll begin by telling you why the death penalty is not a deterrent to murder

II. BODY

A. MAIN POINT #1 (THE DEATH PENALTY IS NOT A DETERENT TO MURDER) – You only need to state key phrases below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

[Transition into your 2nd point]: Now I want to stress that the death penalty is causing some innocent people to be executed.

B. MAIN POINT #2 (INNOCENT PEOPPLE MAY BE EXECUTED) - You only need to state key phrases below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

[Transition into conclusion of speech]

III. CONCLUSION: *(note that this conclusion has three parts. You are only required to have two.)*

A. Brakelight/Transition: **(Example)** As you can easily see, there are too many indefinites to support something so definite as the death penalty.

B. Summary: **(Example)** I've told you why I feel the death penalty should be abolished - because it is not a deterrent to murder and innocent people may be executed.

C. Concluding Remarks: **(Example)** Many people are on death row and subsequently executed not because of guilt and innocence, but because of race and money. I agree that some convicts are guilty, and they deserve to be punished. However, if there is ONE person convicted of a murder and it put to death, while the courts overlooked a single detail - the person is innocent, then that is ONE executed person too many.

Example of an Excellent Persuasive Speech-ESSAY

Why the Death Penalty Should Be Abolished

More than 8,000 men and women who have been put on death row since the 1970s were falsely convicted. Eight thousand! Today there are many things that plague society. People have many fears and opinions about those fears. Imagine being put to death by a jury made up of what is supposed to be your peers. I located my information in the journal of Sociology and the book entitled You Decide. Now, imagine being one of those. **The death penalty should be abolished because it is not a deterrent to murder and innocent people may be executed.**

According to the University of Alaska Anchorage Criminal Justice Center, the effect of the death penalty as a deterrent is non-existent. Advocates against the death penalty argue that a criminal is not going to rationalize the effects of his actions upon society or think about execution before committing a crime. Death penalty opponents also argue that life imprisonment will have an equally incapacitating effect on criminals as an execution will have on those who commit capital offenses. In a 1984 statement, criminologists from the University of Florida, explained to the Governor that no credible scientific research existed that supported his theory that execution was a deterrent for homicide. The criminologists stated that any research used to support the death penalty as a deterrent would be political and any credible research could not be gathered with politics as a premise (Sun, 2006). They further stated that any research that had been presented to support the death penalty was flawed and that it should not be used as a basis to conduct executions in the State of Florida.

According to *The Chicago Tribune*, innocent people may be executed in a report that Carlos De Luna was executed in December of 1989 for a crime that Carlos Hernandez committed and bragged about it. The paper reported that a 16 years after an execution for a murder that he did not commit, new evidence has surfaced to support Carlos De Luna's claim of innocence. In an April 2002 editorial, the *Tribune* reported that the Governor of Illinois imposed a moratorium on the death penalty because their system was so flawed and too many innocent people had been sent to death row. The Death Penalty Information

Center reports that since 1973, 123 people in 25 states have been released from death row because new evidence proved their innocence. John Ballard of Florida was the last man released from death row in February 2006. The Center also reported that there is no way to know how many innocent people were executed out of the 1,000 people executed since 1976. In 2005, The Georgia Board of Pardons and Parole announced a full pardon for Lena Baker 60 years after she was tried, convicted and executed. Her case cried out for mercy and although she did commit the murder, manslaughter would have been a more suitable punishment for her crime.

In conclusion, the death penalty should be abolished because it is not a deterrent and innocent people may be executed. Many criminologists, lawyers, journalists, and death penalty opponents all agree that this practice has no place in our society. Life imprisonment can have the same incapacitating effect on a murderer as an execution can have. The criminal would not be a part of society and they would repay their debt with time served in the penal system. Over 123 people have been released from death row with new information which proved their innocence. Execution is a final act that cannot be reversed. Those men were caged and almost killed for crimes that others have committed. Where is the justice for them? Where is the justice for the men who were innocent yet put to death? Again, I ask you, could you make the decision to end a man's life on facts alone?

WORKS CITED

Gundersen Lutheran I (Lacrosse, WI): "The Death of the Death Penalty: "Share Your Life, Share

Right to Life. 2018 brochure. "Innocent People are Dying" undated brochure.

LifeSource:Newsnotes. October 2016. Accessed November 2, 2017. <www.lifesource.org/newsnotes.htm>.

Narrative/Essay STRUCTURE

1. Paragraph 1 will consist of no more than four sentences for the introduction: Gain Attention, relate the topic to the audience, and **type your two arguments**.
2. Paragraph 2 must consist of 5 to 7 sentences. Sentence one (1) is the topic sentence; the statement you intend to prove, your argument! Next, type five to seven sentences to prove your argument.
3. Paragraph 3 must consist of 5 to 7 sentences. Sentence one (1) is the topic sentence; the statement you intend to prove, your argument! Next, type five to seven sentences to prove your argument.
4. Paragraph 4 is the closing. Type two to four sentence to summarize your speech.
5. Remember, the paper is the concise version of your speech; in the speech, you will explain in detail, using facts, examples, and details.

Use the above as a format for delivering your speech. Remember, you must type your outline and narrative (from Assignment #7 and #8) speech before delivering the speech.

POSSIBLE PERSUASIVE TOPICS

Remember these are broad topics so make sure you narrow your area and choose your side so that you can properly defend your position. **YOU MUST BE FOR OR AGAINST ONE OF THESE TOPICS.**

These topics are only suggestions. You are strongly encourage to pick your topic.

1. same sex marriage
2. adoption
3. heaven and hell
4. abortion
5. TV violence
6. gun control
7. Being respectful
8. internet
9. profiling
10. Black Lives Matter
11. immigrant laws
12. Exercise
13. Sagging
14. cloning
15. breast feeding
16. bilingual education
17. voting
18. red light cameras
19. salary caps for athletes
20. vegetarian lifestyle
21. organ donation
22. morning after pill
23. school dress codes
24. school standards
25. second hand smoke
26. pit bulls
27. The best rapper ever!
28. spay or neuter pets
29. divorce
30. doctor assisted suicide
31. sex education
32. Miss American pageant
33. women's rights
34. SUV's
35. iPhone vs. Android
36. Capital punishment
37. drunk driving laws
38. legalizing marijuana
39. affirmative action
40. Donald Trump
41. Fathers in children lives
42. women in combat
43. gays in the military
44. drug testing on the job
45. dating multiple people
46. boycott certain products
47. donate blood
48. welfare reform
49. children with cell phones
50. sodas in schools
51. organic foods
52. change drinking age
53. change voting age
54. spanking children
55. socialized medicine
56. no more fraternities
57. premarital sex
58. living together
59. public transportation
60. women ministers
61. women in politics
62. more or less military
63. censorship of prime time shows
64. Alcoholics Anonymous
65. sexism in advertising
66. online classes
67. Paying college athletes
68. Seeing a live play
69. go to the museum
70. read a classic book
71. take a specific class on campus

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| 72. price of textbooks | 98. The Black Panther | 123. fireplaces |
| 73. parking on campus | 99. Snapchat | 124. bar-b-ques |
| 74. Being a true gentleman | 100. Athletic scholarships | 125. dogs in cars |
| 75. censorship of songs on the radio | 101. College tuition | 126. Eat dinner as a family |
| 76. Advantages of tech. college | 102. Genocide | 127. calories on menus |
| 77. arranged marriages | 103. Adopt an animal | 128. Starbucks |
| 78. Best author ever | 104. Purchase land on the moon | 129. Wal Mart |
| 79. home ownership | 105. Go Green (environment) | 130. women in media or men in media |
| 80. breakfast | 106. President Obama Legacy | 131. cultures in media |
| 81. best movie ever! | 107. The coolest car ever | 132. Best song ever! |
| 82. best sit com ever! | 108. Join the Peace Corp | 133. Best singer/or group ever |
| 83. best sports team ever! | 109. Hate Crimes | 134. Why your favorite sports team is the best! |
| 84. disneyland or disney world | 110. Mandatory drug testing | 135. alternative fuel |
| 85. the best dessert! | 111. SAT (or standardized testing) | 136. off shore drilling |
| 86. reality tv | 112. street racing | 137. homeschooling |
| 87. animal testing | 113. plastic surgery | 138. extreme fighting |
| 88. prison system | 114. Instagram | 139. homelessness |
| 89. The best recipe! | 115. hunting | 140. abstinence |
| 90. over population | 116. Heavy metal | 141. kids playing football |
| 91. deforestation | 117. R & B Music | 142. bed and breakfast |
| 92. partial birth abortions | 118. English as our official language | 143. burial vs. cremation |
| 93. STD's | 119. paparazzi | 144. Atlanta's best restaurant |
| 94. Mac or PC's | 120. learn a foreign language | 145. stock market |
| 95. Being a true lady | 121. take in a foreign exchange student | 146. Political parties |
| 96. Space exploration | 122. minimum wage | 147. solar panels |
| 97. FCC regulations | | 148. speed limits |

Assignment #11 - SPCH 1101 - Persuasive Speech Assignment

Writing ROUGH DRAFT Outline

Name: _____ Date: _____

DIRECTIONS: We are all passionate about something! Now is the time to tell us about it, and more importantly, persuade the audience why they should share in your passion.

*Topic for your Persuasive Speech: _____

***REMEMBER THIS IS OUTLINE, THEREFORE YOUR MAJOR POINTS FOR II AND III SHOULD CONSIST OF ONLY KEY WORDS AND PHRASES. THE NEXT ASSIGNMENT (#12) SHOULD CONTAIN ALL FULL SENTENCES.**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Attention-getting Statement or Statistics:

B. Tie to the audience: (*Example: One of the people on the waiting list for an organ transplant might be someone you know.*)

C. Thesis and Preview: (*Example: Today I'd like to talk to you about first, the need for organ donors in our area, and finally how your family and organ donor recipients benefit from you donation.*)

II. FIRST MAJOR POINT SUPPORTING YOUR THESIS: _____

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

F. (Optional) _____

G. (Optional) _____

III. SECOND MAJOR POINT SUPPORTING YOUR THESIS: _____

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

F. (Optional) _____

G. (Optional) _____

IV. Conclusion

A. Repeat/Summarize Thesis: _____

B. Concluding Remarks _____

