An Assignment Written to Fulfill the Blue Ridge Community College/James Madison University

Writing and Communication Transfer Alignment Grant Proposal Requirements

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**Audience Analysis Assignment for a Persuasive Value Speech**

**Description**

As the student prepares to deliver a persuasive speech, the added element of adapting to an assigned audience will be given. Not only will the student seek to create a logical and well delivered persuasive speech, but, as in real life, the student must learn to adapt that speech to the audience to whom it will be delivered. Therefore, the student will be assigned one of 5 different audiences for whom they must prepare the speech. They will be assigned these audiences randomly after their topic has been chosen. They may not change their topic, but must adapt it to the audience. Neither can they change their speech topic to adapt to their audience. They must adapt their communication strategy to adapt to the audience drawn at random. These audiences include:

* **Captive Audience:** An audience that is forced to be there, not because they expect to be entertained or intellectual stimulation
* **Committed Audience:** An audience that wants to be there, so they are willing to invest the time and energy to listen
* **Contrary Audience:** An audience that is initially hostile to your position on an issue and are ready “to go to battle” with the speaker
* **Concerned Audience:** An audience that chooses to hear a speaker because audience members care about the speaker’s ideas or topic
* **Casual Audience:** An audience because they were curious or heard something they liked that interested them

**Objectives**

Upon completion of the assignment the student will be able to:

1. Identify the key characteristics that allow for optimum communication with a specific style of audience they may encounter.
2. Strategically seek out and find legitimate sources for key demographic information that comprise specific audiences.
3. Synthesize the information of a presentation topic with information about an audience to build a coherent communication plan.
4. Develop a strategy to communicate successfully that shows adaptation to diverse audiences.

**The Assignment**

* The student will choose a topic to deliver orally where they will seek to persuade an audience.
* Once the topic is chosen the student will randomly select one of the five types of audiences. The student would present his/her persuasive presentation to that audience type.
* The student will create a 1-2 page communication strategy that will provide (1) a description of the audience, (2) a strategy designed to develop a relationship with the audience, (3) a strategy to make the topic applicable to the specific audience.
* The communication strategy paper will be presented one class before the oral presentation and a portion of the oral presentation will be graded based on the evidence of the student’s communication strategy with the assigned audience and outlined in the strategy paper.

**Audience Analysis Rubric**

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| **Graded Area** | **Exemplary**  **Student shows mastery of the skill and uses it throughout presentation (5)** | **Advanced**  **Student shows knowledge of the skill and uses it generally throughout the presentation (4)** | **Competent**  **Student shows knowledge of the skill and briefly addresses it in presentation (3)** | **Developing**  **Student shows vague knowledge of the skill and slightly makes it evident without addressing it (2)** | **Unsatisfactory**  **Student shows little to no indication of the skill in the presentation (1)** |
| **Factual Evidence Given about Audience** | The student states specific research that is relevant to the audience and gives demographic data that is pertinent to the audience | The students states research but could be more specific as to source and only generally gives demographic data | Student generally describes the audience and adapts to them without really stating specific demographics | Student shows some slight adaptation to the audience but no research or demographics are given | Student fails to address the audience |
| **Addressing Audience** | Student states who their audience is and seeks to intentionally invite them into subject | Student states who their audience is but does not intentionally invite them into subject | Student generally references an audience with some descriptors | Student adapts for a general audience but fails to address the specific audience | Student fails to address audience in any way |
| **Building Relationship with Audience** | Student shows an intimate knowledge of the audience and communicates information that would be considered specific and pertinent to their goal | Student show an intimate knowledge of the audience and communicates to them but fails to address specific info to goals | Student generally refers to the audience and builds some casual interest in the audience | Student seeks to build a general relationship with a general audience without any attempt to build specific relationship. | Student creates no identification with the relationship to the audience |
| **Making Topic Relevant to Audience** | Student offers the audience practical ways that the topic applies to the audience | Student offers practical ways the topic applies to a general audience but not specific audience | Student offers general help with the topic but not specific to the needs of the audience | Student references vague application of the topic | Student does not offer any practical application of the topic or tries to apply it in any way |
| **Communication Strategy for Reaching Audience** | Student shows a very specific strategy for communicating with the specific communication needs of this audience | Student attempts to generally reach the audience by communicating personally but not specifically in the communication style needs of this audience | Student communicates in a way to reach a general audience of all types but no adaptation of communication style to the audience | Student communicates clearly but does not attempt to adapt communication style in any way for any audience | Student does not communicate clearly or adapt to a general audience or the specific audience assigned. |

**Five Types of Audiences**

**Captive Audience**

A captive audience is an audience that is forced to be there, not because they expect to be entertained or to get any intellectual stimulation. An example of this type of audience is students required to be in class when their peers are delivering speeches. Other examples of captive audiences could be found at formal ceremonies, luncheons held by clubs and organizations, and at most business meetings.

Since this type of audience would rather be somewhere else, getting and maintaining their interest is important.

**Committed Audience**

A committed audience is an audience that wants to be there, so they are willing to invest the time and energy to listen. A committed audience already agrees with the position of the speaker, so getting and maintaining their attention is not as important as it is with a captive audience. People who attend a Sunday church sermon, a political rally, or join a social protest demonstration are examples of committed audiences.

Getting them to act, persuading them to do something, or empowering them to act decisively are important when addressing a committed audience.

**Contrary Audience**

A contrary audience is an audience that is initially hostile to your position on an issue and are ready “to go to battle” with the speaker. People who attend school board meetings, public meetings of county boards of supervisors, and meetings at which raising public utility rates are discussed are examples of contrary audiences.

Because of their hostility toward the speaker’s position, audience members are likely to listen for weaknesses in in the speaker’s argument and pounce on perceived misstatements of fact, so it is important for the speaker to have researched topic and be well prepared.

**Concerned Audience**

A concerned audience is an audience that chooses to hear a speaker because audience members care about the speaker’s ideas or topic and are there to gather information and to learn. People who go to book or poetry readings or lecture series are examples of a concerned audience.

When dealing with this type of audience, the focus on presenting new ideas and information in an engaging and stimulating way.

**Casual Audience**

A casual audience is an audience because they were curious or heard something they liked that interested them. They will remain in the audience until they are bored or until they are sated.

When addressing a casual audience it is important to connect with them immediately and create more curiosity and interest.

Source: Rothwell, J. D. (2013). *In the company of others: An introduction to communication* (4th ed.) (pp. 345-346). New York: Oxford University Press.

**Audience Analysis for a Persuasive Value Speech**

**Purpose**

This is a speech whereby you will reveal to an **unconvinced audience** a value that you hold dear to your heart and firmly believe to be true. It is an opportunity to persuade your audience to also firmly believe and live by this value about life. It is also a value that you will carry into your profession that you believe to be essential in dealing ethically, honestly, or respectfully with people.

**Audience**

The speaker will also be assigned a particular audience situation in which the speaker must adjust the speech to take into account the audience when speaking.

Definition of Value

* An Opinion – A position that evaluates an object or event as to its quality
* A Belief - A social principle, goal, philosophy, or standard held or accepted by an individual, group, or society in general which you think all people should believe
* A Behavior – An action you think others should take/avoid in life that will make themselves, society, or the world a better place to live

**Evidence**

You must back up your opinion with support by using examples (hypothetical, real, or extended), statistics, or expert testimony. At minimum, each speaker must use at least one outside expert source, one personal example or story, and one logical analogy or a comparison of two things to make a point.

**Address Your Audience in Your Speech**

You will be given an audience to address and you must determine how best to address your speech to them and build relationship with them. The following must be evident in your speech:

* Who your audience is – We should be able to guess them by how you address them
* How you try to build relationship with them - how do you build Rapport with them?
* How your topic specifically applies to them – How does your value apply to them?

**JMU Rubric for Academic Presentations**

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| **Traits** | **Unsatisfactory** | **Developing** | **Competent** | | **Advanced** | **Exemplary** | |
| **Purpose:** Conveying the presenter’s thesis or claim and its relevance to the audience, setting and context. Examined features may include topic selection, appropriateness, content, language, clarity, or focus. | Weak or unclear thesis or claim. Presenter demonstrates poor audience analysis. Purpose is inappropriate, lacks relevance, and intention. Audience gains little from the presentation. | Meets some requirements for a satisfactory presentation. Moving toward competent. | | Clear, discernible thesis or claim. Presenter demonstrates use of audience analysis. Language and word choice appropriate for audience, occasion, and setting. Presentation communicates intended/assigned content to audience. | Meets all requirements for competent. Includes some characteristics of exemplary. | | Presentation develops sophisticated thesis or claim. Presenter demonstrates sophisticated analysis of the audience, occasion, and setting. Presenter provides audience with substantial knowledge and/or awareness beyond assigned goal of the presentation. |
| **Structure:** Organization and coherence of presentation elements. Features include flow or sequencing of ideas (introduction, body, conclusion, & transitions) and other conventional elements appropriate to the content; aids audience’s understanding and supports purpose. | Presentation lacks cohesive organization and flow. Many structural features are missing or not used logically. Organization detracts from audience’s ability to identify thesis and fails to support claims. | Meets some requirements for a satisfactory presentation. Moving toward competent. | | Presentation follows logical and cohesive pattern. All necessary and appropriate structural features present. Organization assists audience’s identification of thesis and supports claims. | Meets all requirements for competent. Includes some characteristics of exemplary. | | Sequencing of ideas exceptionally clear; progresses logically within and between conventional elements. Structural features used skillfully to frame and unify presentation. Organization enhances audience’s understanding of thesis and strongly supports claims. |
| **Complexity:** The depth or sophistication of ideas presented to the audience(s). Features may include evidence or research that supports thesis, use of analysis, integration or synthesis of the content; an ethical purpose, creativity, and perspective(s). | Little to no appropriate evidence or data to develop claims. If used, sources lack variety, validity, accuracy, are misused or uncited. Ideas presented are simplistic, illogical, superficial, or unoriginal. Content merely summarizes information and/or lacks critical analysis. | Meets some requirements for a satisfactory presentation. Moving toward competent. | | Accurate, appropriate, and relevant evidence and data develop thesis or claim. Sources are credible and appropriately cited. Presentation demonstrates some critical analysis and interpretation. Information presented goes beyond summary by making connections that develop thesis or claim. Some evidence of synthesis. | Meets all requirements for competent. Includes some characteristics of exemplary. | | Evidence and data strongly develop thesis and are well integrated into presentation. Sources are critically selected to reflect multiple authoritative perspectives. Critical analysis and interpretations demonstrate originality, depth, and/or creativity. Synthesis and connections evident. |
| **Delivery**: Presenter’s control of the **vocal** (rate, pitch, tone, volume, rhythm, and articulation), **physical** (eye contact, posture, movement, gestures, position, and appearance), and **audio-visual** dimensions (use of presentation tools PowerPoint or Prezi, images, sounds, and objects) of the presentation or performance event. Other features may include evidence of rehearsal/preparation, adherence to time guidelines, and creativity. | Presenter’s delivery lacks sufficient control of all three dimensions.  Delivery detracts from purpose, structure, and complexity of presentation. Delivery features are simplistic, unpolished, inappropriate, uncomfortable, or unnatural. Delivery does not meet assignment requirements. | Meets some requirements for a satisfactory presentation. Moving toward competent. | | Presenter’s delivery demonstrates satisfactory control of all three dimensions. Delivery supports purpose, structure, and complexity of presentation.  Delivery features are appropriate, varied, and engaging. Delivery dimensions are used purposefully. Delivery meets assignment requirements. | Meets all requirements for competent. Includes some characteristics of exemplary. | | Presenter’s delivery demonstrates masterful control. Delivery creates cohesive whole by strongly reinforcing purpose, structure, and complexity of presentation. Delivery creates dynamic and engaging relationship with audience. Delivery features are used to enhance meaning creatively with polish and intention. |

**JMU Rubric for Academic Presentations**

**Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Rater: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **Level**  **Trait** | **Unsatisfactory (U):**  Presentation fails to meet minimal academic competencies at the college level. | **Developing (D):**  Presentation meets some but not all requirements for competent presentation. | **Competent (C):**  Presentation meets minimal academic competencies at the college level. | **Advanced (A):**  Presentation meets all requirements for academic competency and includes some characteristics of exemplary. | **Exemplary (E):**  Presentation goes beyond competency and consistently surpasses expectations. |
| **Purpose:** Conveying the presenter’s thesis or claim and its relevance to the audience, setting and context. Examined features may include topic selection, appropriateness, content, language, clarity, or focus. | Mark one: **U D C A E**  Comments**:** | | | | |
| **Structure:** Organization and coherence of presentation elements. Features include flow or sequencing of ideas (introduction, body, conclusion, & transitions) and other conventional elements appropriate to the content; aids audience’s understanding and supports purpose. | Mark one: **U D C A E**  Comments**:** | | | | |
| **Complexity:** The depth or sophistication of ideas presented to the audience(s). Features may include evidence or research that supports thesis, use of analysis, integration or synthesis of the content; an ethical purpose, creativity, and perspective(s). | Mark one: **U D C A E**  Comments**:** | | | | |
| **Delivery**: Presenter’s control of the **vocal** (rate, pitch, tone, volume, rhythm, and articulation), **physical** (eye contact, posture, movement, gestures, position, and appearance), and **audio-visual** dimensions (use of presentation tools PowerPoint or Prezi, images, sounds, and objects) of the presentation or performance event. Other features may include evidence of rehearsal/preparation, adherence to time guidelines, and creativity. | Mark one: **U D C A E**  Comments**:** | | | | |