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THE NEED, FEASIBILITY, AND MEANS OF ESTABLISHING A SPEECH CENTER

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of English at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	1
Chapter	
1 The Importance of a Rhetorical Education	5
2 Why a University Needs Both a WAC and a SAC Program.....	22
3 The Basics of SAC: The Speech Center.....	36
4 The Student-Consultant/Tutor Component.....	42
5 Established Speech Centers.....	49
6 A Proposal for a VCU Speech Center.....	62
Conclusion.....	71
Works Cited and Consulted.....	73
Appendices	
A Email Prototype.....	78
B Syllabi and Course Materials for SPCH 121.....	79
C Syllabi and Course Materials for SPCH 321.....	85

Abstract

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Major Director: Dr. Patricia H. Perry
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According to Tom Shachtman, “the speech of too few people achieves eloquence, and that of the vast majority does not even reach a tolerable level of articulate behavior” (5). Articulate behavior has not always been a rare characteristic; from antiquity through the mid-twentieth century, the study of rhetoric was privileged and considered necessary for a well-rounded education. If today’s society is inarticulate, then how can eloquence and articulateness be reintroduced as staples of a successful person in today’s society? The answer is easy—through the study of rhetoric. After examining the study of rhetoric from antiquity to the present, I will demonstrate the need for a strong rhetorical education, both Writing Across the Curriculum and Speaking Across the Curriculum (through a Speech Center) programs, a dialogic peer/tutor relationship, and a Speech

Center that fits the needs of a university, in order to reverse the downward spiral of eloquence in speech.

INTRODUCTION

Kenneth Burke writes:

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress (*The Philosophy of Literary Form* 110-111).

Burke got it wrong.

Simply entering the discussion—"passing through"—is not enough. The goal is to leave a lasting and positive mark—to make a change for the betterment of society. And that is what colleges and universities should enable their students to do. Students should leave their collegiate experience with the knowledge and skills that will aid them in endeavors to aid themselves and society. Colleges and universities should approach the study of rhetoric and communication with an approach that teaches students that the rhetoric and communication are both important and necessary in order to succeed.

In some universities, public speaking classes are offered to undergraduates; however, they are seen mostly as "an easy way to get an 'A'" or a mere fulfillment of a requirement. Priority is given to smooth, flawless delivery—not substance of thought or even the intricate process that precedes the delivery of a speech. Excellence in speech is not accomplished this way. Mere public speaking classes will not leave a lasting impression on the student—the background, the importance, and the

fundamentals of a rhetorical and communicative education should be examined and applied throughout life.

While public speaking classes are steps in enabling students to receive a rhetorical and communicative education, more resources can be available to the university community to ensure that students will not graduate from a university or college without learning the importance of speaking well. By placing emphasis on the art of speaking well, not just in speaking or theatre classes but also throughout the whole college or university, students will realize that rhetoric and communication is an esteemed course of study. Through the implementation of a Speaking Across the Curriculum program, this message can be accomplished.

Speaking Across the Curriculum programs, such as Speech and Communication Centers have been speedily emerging in colleges and universities throughout the country since the early 1990s. Schools in Virginia like Lynchburg College, Hampton-Sydney College, The College of William and Mary, Mary Washington University, University of Richmond, and Virginia Tech all have speech and/or communication centers. Not only does a Speech Center enable a college or university to be more competitive, but also to address the communication needs of its undergraduates.

Personally, my love for Rhetoric and Communication started in high school when I was entrenched in extemporaneous speaking competitions. At first in college, I desired to explore other subjects; however, by the time I was to register for my second semester classes of my first year, I noticed a void in my learning—I missed rhetoric. I missed speaking. I enrolled in Rhetoric 101. From there I became a major, a Speech Consultant for their Speech Center, a Rhetoric Fellow teaching a section of Rhetoric 101, an Honors/Thesis student in the department,

and a lover of rhetoric and communication. Being a Speech Consultant and a Rhetoric Fellow were two of the most rewarding experiences of my life—I learned not only from the instruction I received to work these positions, but I also learned from the students I consulted and taught. I worked in the Speech Center for a minimum of six hours per week—during those six hours, I saw students who hated public speaking, who had no idea how to come up with ideas for speeches, and those who procrastinated until the night before and wanted *me* to invent a stellar speech to get them an “A”. My favorite students were those who kept coming back. And those who also saw the magic in the speech center and after a semester of being consistent clients, applied to be consultants to help others.

I entered the Master’s program in English, with a concentration in rhetoric in writing, at Virginia Commonwealth University for, perhaps, one reason—my love for rhetoric. Studying English while concentrating on writing and rhetoric seemed like the perfect fit; however, I found out through my involvement in this program that while graduate students are offered an education in rhetoric, undergraduates are not. This hole in the undergraduate curriculum struck me as being a disservice to students. Essentially, I believe, that students need to learn how to speak, how to articulate their thoughts in different situations. Students need to learn why rhetoric is important—where it came from, how the study of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery can be beneficial for their writing and their speaking skills. Why do musicians study theory—in order to understand their art better and be able to use their instruments more efficiently and effectively. The same is true for rhetoric and communication studies. Understanding the theory behind rhetoric and communication studies, enables students to use their instrument (thought and speech) more articulately. Through this course of study,

students can refine their thinking abilities—they can become better able to succeed not only in their collegiate studies but also in the world after their academic career.

But how can a college or university afford to set up a Speech Center Program? How can the public speaking classes already in place be adapted to work with the Speech Center? Would the Speech Center be linked to the English Department, the Mass Communication Department, the Theatre Department, or the university as a whole? Each college or university contemplating implementing a Speech Center has to answer these questions on its own—however, through my research on Speech Centers, I believe that one aspect should be a constant in all Speech Centers—the center, as the name would imply, should be at the core of a college or university.

In the following pages, I explain how through the study of rhetoric, students can learn to be articulate and to speak proficiently. I will depict the importance of classical rhetoric, highlight the basic facets of the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and a Speaking Across the Curriculum (SAC) programs, describe the basic facts about a Speech Center, illustrate the impact of a student-tutor bond, relate information on current practicing Speech Centers, and express a plan for implementation of a Speech Center at VCU. Perhaps through introducing a Speech Center, a place where not only English, Theatre or Mass Communication majors can hone their skills, but also a place where students throughout the university can come for meetings with Speech Consultants, to practice and learn basic speaking principles, overcome speaking anxiety, and hone already established articulateness.

CHAPTER 1

The Importance of a Rhetorical Education

Ben Johnson writes, “Talking and eloquence are not the same: to speak, and to speak well, are two things. A fool may talk, but a wise man speaks” (qtd. in Shachtman 1). Supporting Ben Johnson’s thoughts, Tom Shachtman in *The Inarticulate Society* notes, “At all educational levels, from kindergarten to graduate school, our institutions produce students who seem not to care about the words that emerge from their mouths or that they spill onto paper or computer screens” (1). The words that emit from our mouths and the fury of our typing hands during telephone calls, instant messenger conversations, emails, and for many people, presentations and papers are merely words—not much substance lies behind them. As technology continues to advance, information is accessible by merely clicking on a mouse—emails, text messaging, and instant messaging simplify conversations; they dumb-down dialogue. Speech and rhetoric, seemingly becomes unnecessary. According to Tom Shachtman, “the speech of too few people [today] achieves eloquence, and that of the vast majority does not even reach a tolerable level of articulate behavior” (5). Articulate behavior has not always been a rare characteristic; in fact, from antiquity through the mid-twentieth century (excluding the period of Peter Ramus’ influence), the study of rhetoric was privileged and considered necessary for a well-rounded education. If today’s society is truly inarticulate, then how can eloquence and articulateness be reintroduced as a staple of a successful person in today’s society? The answer is

easy—through the study of rhetoric. By briefly examining the study of rhetoric from antiquity to the present, I will demonstrate the need for a strong rhetorical education in order to reverse the downward spiral of eloquence in speech and in thinking—behind every inarticulate expression is an undeveloped thought.

Humans can name, praise, and make speeches—truth can be discovered through words, for through words thoughts are being created. Through words, we tell the story of the very existence of our being, which is why an education in rhetoric is so important. By speaking and writing well, we invent ideas, discuss plans, uncover emotions, and progress in our personal lives and as a society. Are speaking and writing, however, being effectively taught to students in modern colleges and universities? Particularly, are these institutions assuming that spoken eloquence and articulateness levels have been acquired by their students before their entrance into the higher education curriculum?

The *Criteria for Accreditation: Commission on Colleges* (1991 edition) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools sets forth strong and explicit requirements with respect to oral communication competence. The *Criteria* sets forth the following position with regard to graduation “completion requirements”: “Completion requirements for an associate or baccalaureate degree must include competence in reading, writing, oral communications and fundamental mathematical skills” (18). Also in the section on “Undergraduate Curriculum,” the *Criteria* indicates, “Undergraduate degree programs must contain a basic core of general education courses.... Within this core, or in addition to it, the institution must provide components designed to ensure competence in reading, writing, oral communication and fundamental mathematical skills” (19). In Michael Cronin and Phillip Glenn’s article entitled, “Oral Communication Across the Curriculum in Higher Education: The State of the Art,” they

state, “Except for students majoring in communication, most undergraduates take *at most* one course emphasizing oral communication skills; therefore, most non-speech majors have little or no opportunity for structured practice with competent evaluation to refine and reinforce their oral communication skills” (*Communication Education* 356). One means of providing undergraduate students with a rhetorical education without establishing an entirely new department designated for public address, is to start a Speech, or Communication Center. Referring back to the criteria derived by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, students not only need to be competent in writing but also in oral communication. Seemingly, by Cronin and Glenn’s observation, only the few that major in Speech or Communication Studies attain the skills needed to be articulate members of society in terms of their speaking abilities. Contrastingly, from antiquity to the mid-twentieth century, the study of rhetoric was pervasive throughout the schools and considered necessary for those who desired to be learned and function well in society.

Rhetoric is said to have begun in the democracy of Ancient Greece where the citizens were required to speak for themselves. Popular and necessary skills to learn, therefore, were the arts of speaking and persuading effectively in gatherings. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle writes, “[the function of rhetoric] is not to persuade but to see the available means of persuasion in each case” (1.2.1356a). By isolating the available means of persuasion for a given situation, rhetoricians were inventing arguments and forming ideas. Classical rhetoricians such as Aristotle and Quintilian delineated the methods, tools of persuasion, and theories that informed rhetorical discourse—including the five canons of invention, disposition, delivery, memory, and style. By studying these canons today, students can learn ways to be active participants in their own education rather than passively just taking classes. Students can gain insights into how to more

effectively present their ideas, how to arrange thoughts and arguments logically and resourcefully, how to use specific words to make more of a point, rather than haphazardly picking words out of a thesaurus in an attempt to sound smart. Essentially, students can learn how to become better thinkers in the process of becoming better communicators.

Classical rhetoricians placed emphasis on invention; it was the first subject studied by novice rhetoricians, and it achieved primary importance in the preparation for speaking. The canon of invention focuses on the art of coming up with things to say—whether in the discipline of writing, speaking, or both. In theory, invention seems rather simplistic. In practice, students seem to struggle to figure out how to put their thoughts down on paper or to present them orally. Ancient rhetorical theory suggests that coming up with what to say is all about asking the right questions, in the right order. As Aristotle pointed out in *Rhetoric*, that many rhetorical premises have to do with questions that are specifically political or ethical (1.4.1359b). Rhetors must invent good answers to questions like, ‘What is the best course of action in these circumstances?’, ‘How can we achieve this?’, and ‘What is expedient and honorable?’ In each class modern students take, papers, presentations, and analysis of text are required. Students need to learn in school, not just be able to pass through without thinking. Using the canon of invention, students can determine the best course of action in their papers, the best way to present a topic, and how to properly analyze texts required for class.

Invention remains important in composing and revision in both speeches and in papers. In an argument in need of details, a speech with no clear point, or a confused sense of audience or argument signals, for instance, the speaker should stop, step back for a moment, and reconsider the questions about the subject, audience, genre, and intention with which the whole process

began. Though the invention process focuses on the writing stage of the speech, the writing should fit the situation and needs of the spoken word.

First, though, before the first brainstorming session transpires, students must want to speak—and they must want to speak well. In today’s educational system, students seem to typically shy away from public speaking unless a teacher requires speeches for a grade. With class size growing seemingly exponentially, having each student speak in each class is such a time-consuming activity that few teachers take the time. In the ancient Greek democratic system, though, lack of a desire or time to teach for public speaking was not customary. The citizens had to speak for themselves in courts and legislatures—they represented themselves; public speaking was not a rarity. Speaking was a mode of learning and conducting business—speaking was a privileged skill. Therefore, the process of effectively communicating and persuading in gatherings was, necessarily, taught and studied. Through the establishment of rhetoric teachers, handbooks were written, copied, and sold indicating the beginning of "technical" rhetoric—a handbook tradition focused on practical civic discourse. The remains of this early tradition can be seen in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Conversely, current handbooks focus more on style than on any other rhetorical factor. Contemporary students need not study rhetoric for the sole purpose of representing themselves in court—they need to study rhetoric to be able to speak in various situations—in front of the classroom, to a future employer, and to fellow classmates. Students take speaking for granted. They think that if they have a command for the English language then they can speak well. Unfortunately, as Tom Shachtman can attest to, that is not the case. Students’ speech is so sloppy and lackadaisical that it can be defined as something less-than the *Rhetorica ad Herrenium*’s delineation of “plain-style” speaking.

How can students learn to speak in an appropriate style for a given situation? Aristotle specifically describes the qualities of good style in his book, *Rhetoric*. In Book III, Aristotle requires that a rhetor's style be both clear and appropriate (Chapter 2). To be clear, a rhetor must construct his sentences properly; they must not only be grammatically correct but also intermittent, possessing natural stopping points within themselves (Chapters 5 and 9). Words must be cautiously applied, avoiding excess use of adjectives, compound nouns, and metaphors, as these are figures of poetry, not prose (Chapter 3). To be pithy and cogent, a rhetor must choose his words carefully. The rhetor's diction must grasp the listeners' attention without appearing artificial and stifled, so the speaker must balance his level of speech between the commonplace and the strange (Chapter 2). When drawing from his audiences' emotions, his words and voice must reflect those salient emotions (Chapter 7). Though these instructions for good style were written in antiquity, they still are relevant for today's students. The style and the elocution of the speech needs to fit the occasion, the audience, and the subject. Students need to understand that the language and style they use talking to their best friend is not the same as the language and style they should use when in front of a classroom, or talking to a professor, or in a job interview.

In my opinion, merely relaying these rules to a student without explaining the history behind the methodology subtracts from their meaning. It is important that the student knows the background of rhetoric in order for them to truly appreciate and understand the art.

After Aristotle, Roman orators continued the Greek tradition of rhetoric, but they also continued the process of classification of style. The Romans, including the rhetorician Cicero, emphasized the rhetoric used by the sophists; additionally, they also made use of the Greek handbooks. Consequently, the subject instead of the audience determined a rhetor's style. The

Rhetorica ad Herrenium, written most likely by a contemporary of Cicero, separated style into three situations: the plain style for teaching, the middle style for pleasing, and the grand style for moving audiences (Covino and Jolliffe). Placing these three styles into contemporary society, the plain style can be attributed to casual conversations, dialogues, classroom discussions. In turn, the middle style of speaking can be found in classroom presentations, interviews, and speaking with clients, for example. Finally, the grand style can typically be found in commencement addresses, church sermons, and Presidential addresses. As Tom Shachtman notes in *The Inarticulate Society*, though, shoddy speaking skills even appear at such formal, grand occasions like when the President speaks. He notes, “When American politicians speak without a prepared text, they frequently babble and blunder, mangling the language in ways not only painful to endure but that frequently obscure the speaker’s quite reasonable intent and meaning” (5). Does a statement such as Shachtman’s imply merely that speakers should always practice and have at least an outline in front of them? Truly, both of those aspects would help contemporary speakers, especially practicing—however, what Shachtman is insinuating is that appropriate style, even appropriate uses of all the rhetorical canons, are being lost on even the highest, most esteemed officials in society. Not only are students not being taught how to speak well, but also the men and women we revere fail to be articulate, much less eloquent.

Where did this de-emphasis on style begin? Where did this emphasis on style, on being articulate, on striving for eloquence come from? While style was an important canon for Aristotle and with the Roman rhetoricians, in the sixteenth century, the French philosopher Peter Ramus deemed elocution and pronunciation as the only two offices proper to rhetoric. Elocution, or style, became the center of rhetorical theory, and in a Ramist perspective rhetoric, then, was almost solely concerned with figures of speech. Rhetoric is also said to have declined because of

a lack of teaching it and the departmentalization of disciplines in universities. For example, most English departments only teach literature and language, neglecting rhetoric. Consequently, it can be seen that style and rhetoric do not hold as coveted a place today as they did during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, ornate language in *ars dictaminis*, the art of letter writing, and the art of preaching were popular rhetorical devices. Rhetoric became associated with poetry and literature, rather than persuasion, philosophy, and language. After the Renaissance, the study of rhetoric merged with existentialism, psychology, and, in general, modernism. In the twentieth century, rhetoric was transforming, changing, and breaking new barriers through the works of rhetoricians like Kenneth Burke, I. A. Richards, and Stephen Toulmin. Rhetoric became prevalent with the establishment of departments of rhetoric and speech at academic institutions, as well as the formation of national and international professional organizations.

One of the initial objectives of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, or the CCCC, was “to unite teachers of college composition and communication” (“Constitution and Bylaws” 7). According to Diana George and John Trimbur, this objective was a response to the “communication movement” caused “in part a practical measure to deal with the massive influx of returning World War II veterans, in part the result of interest in General Semantics and mass communication theory” (683). The “communication movement” initiated classes instructing students in speaking and in writing. However, by 1963, Albert R. Kitzhaber remarks the “only major respect in which the freshman English scene differs from that fifteen years ago is that communication courses, which then were flourishing, now are nearly extinct” (136). With mass media creeping into every home, budget cuts, and an increased concern over communication and advertising, classical rhetoric became weaned out of major

curriculum, being replaced by English composition studies and mass communication departments. Essentially rhetoric came to be associated with presentation only, while the background explaining how rhetoric is defined, how it has developed throughout the centuries, and how it is important not only in public speaking, but also in writing and thinking, was absent in curricula.

While style, delivery, and the entire presentation of ideas are extremely important for students to learn, the importance of rhetoric rests not merely with those relatively superficial characteristics, rather the importance of rhetoric is found in what the study can teach us about others and ourselves—about how we think. Through the study of rhetoric, students learn not only about the outside world and how to relate, but also about themselves. This study of the self and of society was and is a part of the foundation of rhetoric.

Rhetoric is useful in everyday affairs and those of legislative and forensic concern. It teaches, persuades, and leads towards knowledge. In the 4th Century B.C., Isocrates believed that oratory is good if it fits the occasion, has propriety of style, and originality of treatment (*The Rhetorical Tradition* 73). Isocrates, like his contemporary Plato, operated a school where the students came to him to learn. Unlike the sophistic nomadic teaching method of traveling from city-state to city-state, Isocrates students' had a stable educational experience. This prolonged exposure to Isocrates' system of thought may have instilled in his students a devotion to the pursuit of what is good and right that they would not have gotten from a roaming teacher. Through the study of great speeches, even historical figures such as Abraham Lincoln have learned the keys to effective speech making. Through reading Pericle's Funeral Oration, written and delivered following the Peloponnesian War, Lincoln similarly structured his Gettysburg Address. Stevenson in "Pericles' Influence on The Gettysburg Address," states "the most

compelling evidence that Lincoln's Address borrowed inspiration from the Funeral Oration is found in the remarkable parallels of ideas and diction that the two speeches exhibit" (342). One successful speech leads to another.

Isocrates also believed in teaching through imitation—students did not memorize rules for speaking, but rather studied great speeches themselves. He believed that the irrational elements of oratory cannot be learned from technical instruction. Isocrates believes that only good people can be good speakers—an idea that was believed also by Cicero and, later, Quintilian. James Murphy, in *A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric*, notes that a hallmark of Isocrates' approach was that he standardized the call for five aspects of educational intelligence: natural ability, educated training, extensive practice, instruction by the teacher, and “modeling” via teacher performance. Isocrates' curriculum assumed basic competencies in science and math, then taught writing, debate, classical prose and poetry (literature), philosophy, math, and history. Isocrates stressed the use of models in education. He promoted both the progymnasium—the analysis, practice, and delivery of a set of historical speeches, and declamatio, or a debate (*Isocrates*). Essentially, Isocrates constructed a liberal arts education for his students—a similar education to what college students today can attain. But where is rhetoric in the curriculum today? Where does one study the great speeches? Other than speaking up in class or giving group presentations, are students actually publicly speaking in colleges and universities? Seemingly, the answer is no.

Paralleling the old adage of “practice makes perfect,” a good speaker cannot rely on natural talent alone. Students need to practice. For Isocrates, effective speech making was a sign of good training, not the goal itself. The performance is not the issue—it merely represents something else, learning/knowledge, so it is not in itself the “real” thing. In an educational

system, the performance—the style, memory, and delivery—to most students, probably seems like the goal. It seems, sometimes, as if that is what students are graded on. However, the learning, the knowledge-making through the invention and arrangement process is what they are primarily being graded on—the delivery and style are just the icing on the cake. They are learned and honed traits as well, but the actual content and analysis of the content are the most important aspects. Isocrates educated the practical man toward graceful style, influential leadership, and issue-oriented analysis—preparation of a good citizen, not Platonic idealism. And is not the goal of American education today to educate the student to be a good citizen? If that is not the goal, then should it should be. A citizen that is active in society, knowledgeable, and can contribute with some sort of educated skill—that is what is desired. From Isocrates' time until the present, students were expected to develop into good citizens. Isocrates felt that through the study of rhetoric, the aforementioned could be achieved, and I agree with him.

The concept of moral edification through rhetoric is also discussed in the works of Quintilian—he, however, believed that a strong moral base was needed before one could be rhetor. According to Quintilian in the 1st century C. E., no man can be an orator unless he is a good man. A bad man says things differently from what he thinks, while a good man's words are as sincere as his thoughts. The object of all oratory is to state that which is just and true. Therefore, the orator must devote his attention to the formation of moral character, and must acquire a complete knowledge of all that is just and honorable. In Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, he writes:

Of *paedagogi* this further may be said, that they should either be men of acknowledged learning, which I should wish to be the first object, or that they should be conscious of their want of learning; for none are more pernicious than those who, having gone some

little beyond the first elements, clothe themselves in a mistaken persuasion of their own knowledge; since they disdain to yield to those who are skilled in teaching, and, growing imperious, and sometimes fierce, in a certain right, as it were, of exercising their authority (with which that sort of men are generally puffed up), they teach only their own folly. (1.8)

Quintilian also asserts that the knowledge of these subjects must be sought from the philosophers, the orator must study morality, and the orator also must acquire knowledge of civil law and of the custom and religion of the state in which he lives. The most important of all qualities to an orator are strength and presence of mind. Natural advantages, such as speech organs, vocal tone, and grace of motion, should be cultivated and improved by art, by practice. In modern universities and colleges, the natural speaking talent of some students is refined through rhetorical classes where students learn techniques, practice, and perform speeches. In some high education facilities, however, such classes are not available. Alternatively, or sometimes in conjunction with such classes, a Speech Center is available to students to develop and hone inventing and speaking skills. Natural talent is important in that it makes the process easier; however, as the classical rhetoricians state, practice does make nearly perfect. Like writing, developing speaking skills is a process—an ability that flourishes with work, study, and practice.

Does one, like Cronin and Glenn suggest, have to major in Speech or Communication Studies in order to become an effective communicator? Not necessarily—for a concept such as a speech, or communication, center can help develop communication skills even for students not directly involved in speech classes. Is the communication center or lab replacing the basic course in speech communication? According to Morreale et al, “The lab or center provides a supplement to course-work, but cannot replace credit-bearing courses” (4). The intention of a

communication lab, or center, is to help students prepare, practice and/or rehearse a speech or presentation. Colleges or universities with active communication centers have “experienced growing rather than shrinking enrollments in communication courses and increased support for communication courses in the curricula, presumably because the services provided highlight the importance of communication in a variety of settings” (4). By merely entering into a Speech Center, students can acquire basic skills and knowledge about the need for articulate speech, about classical rhetoric, and about the five canons of rhetoric that aid in the development and presentation of ideas.

At a Speech Center, dialogue on the canon of invention can last an entire consultation. Consultants should ask some derivation of Aristotle’s questions about the assignment, the subject, and the point the student desires to convey. Additionally, if a student signs up for a consultation and arrives without a speech, the consultant and the student can discuss modes of invention—they can brainstorm on how to construct an effective speech.

A consultant can introduce the process of formal invention into a Speech Center by using several methods of collaboration with the client. Establishing a dialogue about the speech—the purpose of the speech, the instructor’s assignment, and what the audience might learn from listening would not only help the consultant by understanding where the client is coming from, but also help the client in realizing the many factors needed to contrive a speech. Perhaps this might include a general discussion of invention to establish its importance and its place in the speaking, the rhetorical process. The student can be asked to experiment with different systems of invention (brainstorming, topical questions, Burke’s pentad, systems for audience analysis, etc.) to discover the particular power in each of them. To help the student understand the invention process, a consultant can draw a parallel between the invention processes of a speech

compared to that of a written paper. Students can remember how activities like mind mapping, clustering, outlining, and brainstorming have helped them come up with ideas and arguments for papers—and now, in turn, they can be useful in devising speeches.

The consultant, during a Speech Center consultation, analyzes the student's speech using the five rhetorical canons. Each forty-five minute consultation cannot be a mini lesson in classical rhetoric; however, through the analysis of the consultant and the creation of a dialogue with the student, not only can a rhetorical education be achieved but also an improvement of the student's speaking skills. At this point, the focus moves from the written speech to the spoken delivery of the speech. This is what makes a Speech Center different than that of a Writing Center—a Writing Center and Speech Center could converge at the beginning of the process, for they both concentrate on thinking and writing. The Speech Center, though, diverges from the Writing Center when the focus turns to the spoken delivery rather than the writing process.

If the consultant heard the speech, or even if the student could only briefly summarize what he/she wanted to say, then a discussion on how best to phrase the matter, if definitions should be used, if the student was speaking conversationally for the forum—in those ways, a dialogue can be conducted about the canon of style.

A Speech Center should not be concerned with merely making students speeches fit the requirements of the professor or another specific goal—a Speech Center must work on the individual needs to guarantee that the client's knowledge of rhetoric and public address is enhanced. Socrates, in Plato's *Phaedrus*, compares the virtues of written and spoken discourse—Socrates promotes the idea of the dialectic, the idea that speaking makes the thoughts memorable whereas writing conveniently serves as a reminder (84-85). He, overall, suggests that true wisdom and “immortality of an idea actually depend on carefully planted seeds of

knowledge by spoken means” (Hobgood, 11, 2000). Regarding the University of Richmond’s Speech Center’s purpose, Dean of Arts and Science, David Leary, states, “The goal, of course, is not simply speaking, nor even speaking and listening, but speaking and listening to good effect” (Hobgood, “To Good Effect” 4).

The consultant’s role is to assist with the rhetorical process as a whole. The consultant plays a role in the knowledge-making process—and through dialogue between the consultant and the client, knowledge can be further attained by both. Explaining the speaking process, encouraging more discourse about the speech, and commenting on the strengths and weaknesses of the speech, the tutor, perhaps, possesses the ability to further the student’s rhetorical ability. Showing how to develop an idea, how to construct a speech, and how to clearly establish a purpose, goal, and thesis are important concepts—yet, the modern textbooks, like Joseph A. DeVito’s *The Elements of Public Speaking*, fail to acknowledge the true importance of rhetoric because they neglect the classical history.

In Tom Shachtman’s *The Inarticulate Society: Eloquence and Culture in America*, he describes, “A trend toward convergence of the entertainment and news/information industries has made certain that the language practices of one sector largely reproduce the practices of the other, and both aim lower, with dire consequences for articulateness” (101). In the introductory texts for communication, it seems like the same development Shachtman observes in the entertainment and news industries extends to the production of college textbooks. By not addressing the classical aspect of communication, texts are aiming low—the authors aim at an inferior, less-educated, level of students and instructors. The texts do not challenge the student with abstract ideas, they merely present the information in a simple form. To truly appreciate

communication processes, students need to have an understanding of why, how, and when rhetoric and communication became important.

Learning is a process of composition, collation, and recollection. Knowledge, therefore, extends understanding not by adding more and more pieces, but because as we compose, our design becomes more capacious—it expands. At a Speech Center, it is necessary to combine the methods of both the past and the present—to show to the clients that the uses of invention, of arrangement, of memory, of delivery, and of style effectively serves a purpose, enhances a point, and constructs a more meaningful and memorable speech. While the sciences are wrought with the burden of discovering new theories, new medicines, and new solutions to problems—effectively studying rhetoric, mandates studying its classical roots. If Tom Shachtman is correct and the future has brought us to the state of inarticulate speech, then we need to back to classical times, back when to articulateness was prevalent and eloquence was strived for daily. Studying that period, perhaps, will not only instill the rudiments of classical rhetorical education but also might ignite a spark, a desire, for students to speak well now.

Essentially, the question is how can a student become a “good man speaking well?” How can a rhetorical education be constructed so that students care about what they are saying—they strive for articulateness and eloquence? The techniques, methods, and philosophies that rhetoricians use to enhance the speaking capabilities, mindfulness, and morality of their students supported a need for moral enlightenment and a gleaning of skills in order to create good citizens for future generations. Classical rhetoricians like Isocrates, Plato, Quintilian, and Cicero not only promoted the absolute studying of rhetoric but also the discipline of being a person of good moral character—making the focus of education on both technique, philosophy, and talent. With the contemporary world constantly striving to better its citizens, why not employ them with the

skills of rhetoric when they enter into a higher education facility? Students need to realize the power behind words—speaking and writing. If only students majoring in Communication Studies attain an education in rhetoric, then how do students interested in history, philosophy, business, and physics gain insights into the rhetorical world? Through a Speech Center, not only Rhetoric and Communication majors, not only humanities students but also all students can attain a rhetorical education.

CHAPTER 2

Why a University Needs Both a WAC and a SAC Program

Despite funding, despite the size of classrooms, despite locale, and despite the prestige of the school, each college or university should have the same goal for both the students and the teachers—for them to learn, to grow, and to leave the process, the experience, as well-rounded and educated human beings. Perhaps the goal that each school should strive for the Platonic dialectic style of learning is far-fetched, but at the very least, each school should want to, and be able to, equip students with basic skills and, simultaneously, enrich the skills of the faculty. Notice, though, that I wrote that a school *should* possess this goal. Unfortunately, what seems to be happening on higher education campuses can be analogized more as a shopper/buyer dyad rather than a symbiotic teacher/student dyad. Students desire the grade, the diploma, not the education. They want what they deem their tuition money should allot them. How, then, do schools change this dyad? How do schools excite both teachers and students so they are no longer passive about the process, and, instead, are excited and active about learning? While Writing Across the Curriculum and Speaking Across the Curriculum pedagogies may not be cures for all that ails modern education, perhaps these programs offer strategies to reignite a student's desire to discover knowledge.

Certain criteria determine what skills students should acquire before graduating from colleges and universities. For example, “one criterion for accreditation by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) emphasizes that ‘the institution must demonstrate that its graduates are competent in reading, writing, oral

communication, fundamental mathematical skills and the basic use of computers” (qtd. in Morello 99). To me, the necessity for students to acquire these skills is great; obviously, if we only have mediocre, or even poorly educated, students entering the work place, then only mediocre work will be done, leading to a mediocre society. Greatness, or excellence, perpetuates greatness. Criteria such as what SACS has set up can challenge students to become great. Having the goal to meet the said criteria, though, for higher education schools achieved, in my opinion, is not implausible. In order to achieve the objective, which I would like to term as having “articulate,” even potentially “eloquent,” graduates from college, schools, in some fashion, two programs are needed: Writing Across the Curriculum and Speaking Across the Curriculum.

What does it mean to say a speech or writing is articulate or eloquent? *Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* terms “articulate” as “intelligible; able to speak; expressing oneself readily, clearly, or effectively;” the dictionary also denotes “eloquent” as being “marked by forceful and fluent expression.” While I agree with the definition of articulate, I differ in that of eloquent—to me, eloquence is excellence; it is the highest form of speech, a state not necessary for “everyday” use, rather in those special occasions where this esteemed art is necessary, like public forums, formal papers, courtroom arguments, sermons, etc.

Combating the inarticulateness and lack of eloquence in writers is the Writing Across the Curriculum (“WAC”) pedagogy. Susan McLeod delineates the WAC pedagogy as having two facets: “writing to learn” and “writing to communicate” (*A Guide to Compositions Pedagogies* 150). Writing to learn occurs within the course, focusing on how writing makes knowledge. Stemming from process and expressive pedagogies, which Berlin defines as “writing as a

personal activity, as an expression of one's unique voice," this use of WAC encourages students to write reading journal entries, responses to class exercises—basically, to put thinking on paper (772). "Writing to Communicate," while also allowing students to put thinking on paper, focuses more on writing in other disciplines, not purely English courses. Students in subjects such as sociology, history, physics, and classical studies can potentially further their knowledge of said subjects through writing. Scantrons do not hold the answers about whether a student attained knowledge or not; rather they merely communicate whether a student can memorize or simply has good guessing skills. Assigned essays and blue books full of writing are excellent approaches not only for students to learn but also for teachers to understand whether they are making a difference. Writing, essentially, provides for learning.

According to David Fleming in "The End of Composition-Rhetoric," With WAC, writing is no longer a general, basic skill but is instead an infinite number of situated acts, each requiring immersion in a particular community. The teaching of writing, then, becomes inextricable integrated into the particularities of content and context. Rather than take a single first-year course about writing "with no content in particular," students learn about writing in multiple courses spread across their years in school, courses that are, in one way or another, tied to the "content" of other disciplines (121-122).

WAC appeared as a revision to the text, or the script in which composition/rhetoric departments taught their students. WAC seemed to be an answer to the question about how was the composition/rhetoric program to evolve with the times and bring back the luster of knowledge that rhetoric was equated to in antiquity. If WAC is both "Writing to Learn" and "Writing to Communicate", how do they strategically fit into a college or university setting? Christopher Thaiss writes in "The Future of Writing Across the Curriculum":

Many ideas fit under the WAC umbrella. At more and more schools, WAC means the writing intensive or writing-emphasis courses taught within a major. This can imply careful instruction in the phases of the writing process—discovery, revision, and editing—or it can merely mean increasing the required word count in a course. At many schools, including some of those with writing-emphasis courses, WAC means teachers in diverse fields using writing-to-learn techniques, such as journals, reading response logs, systematic note making, impromptu exercises, role playing, field studies, I-Search papers, collaborative research, informal and formal debates, process analyses, formative assessments, and so on (91).

Not only does the aforementioned fit the definition of WAC but also encompasses such concepts as the Writing Center, first year composition courses, and introductory courses termed as “Writing Intensive” can be, depending upon the institution, deemed as being WAC. If the concept that putting thinking on paper is an efficient way of learning, if the circumference of WAC extends into other disciplines, if WAC pertains to enforcing knowledge and thinking that students should be attaining throughout their years in higher education programs, and if students potentially are learning more through WAC-based programs, then where is the need for a Speaking Across the Curriculum or Communicating Across the Curriculum program? Would such a program not be just a replica of a WAC program? As noted in Chapter I, the need can be found succinctly stated in Michael Conin and Phillip Glenn’s article entitled, “Oral Communication Across the Curriculum in Higher Education: The State of the Art.” They state, “Except for students majoring in communication, most undergraduates take *at most* one course emphasizing oral communication skills; therefore, most non-speech majors have little or no opportunity for structured practice with competent evaluation to refine and reinforce their oral

communication skills” (*Communication Education* 356). Referring back to the criteria developed by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, students not only need to be competent in writing but also in oral communication. Seemingly, by Conin and Glenn’s observation, only the few that major in Speech or Communication Studies attain the skills needed to be articulate members of society in terms of their speaking abilities. Anne J. Herrington in “Writing to Learn: Writing Across the Disciplines” has found that the “writing as learning” approach suggests that students “have something to say and that the process of writing provides at once the way for them to discover and communicate it” (379). “To discover and communicate it” is the key phrase—students should possess the faculties to communicate their discoveries, their learning, through both writing and speaking, not just one or the other. Steinfatt wrote “the act of creating and communicating a message is at the heart of the educational experience,” meaning teachers should utilize such a process of public speaking among students; by shying away from lecture-based classes to holding classes where students are active leaders and participants, active learning transpires (Steinfatt 465).

If it is true that students need some sort of Communicating Across the Curriculum or Speaking Across the Curriculum programs (hereinafter both referred to and coupled as “SAC,”) then what are the differences and similarities in the speaking and writing pedagogies; in essence, why should they be separate entities? John T. Morello, while at Mary Washington College wrote an essay entitled, “Comparing Speaking Across the Curriculum and Writing Across the Curriculum Programs,” in which he demarcated what he termed as three key differences in the SAC and WAC programs. Morello believes WAC and SAC have institutional foundational course-work differences, meaning distinctions in whether there is an introductory class or not; he thinks WAC has a basic pedagogical statement and SAC lacks that aspect; finally, he views

WAC as being focused on the process of writing and SAC as being concerned with the end-product, ignoring the process of building a speech (99-113). I see the three “differences” more as points of comparisons because the two programs often overlap in theory and in practice. The points he states, though, serve an important role in explaining the two programs. WAC and SAC are not fundamentally different. In fact, SAC is built around the basic premises on which WAC was constructed. SAC does not need to be different from WAC, especially if WAC is successful in helping students and teachers become active learners. The key factor is that WAC focuses on writing while SAC concentrates on speaking—from both disciplines, a more well-rounded student will emerge. SAC should not be without WAC, nor WAC without SAC. However, in my opinion, they should not be subsumed into one program. Their separateness will make them stronger. Though they have similar objectives, a SAC program developed under the umbrella of a WAC program will compromise the integrity of the SAC program—how strong is a program that has to be supported by another? If both programs are housed together, one director will be in charge of the success of both programs—one person will do the job of two. While that is economically sound, this setup will only lead to one budget, one staff, one set of materials, and one ideology of the program. For the success of both programs, there needs to be two of everything.

Through further comparison of the WAC and SAC programs, important reasons for the necessary, but separate, availability on higher education campuses can be gleaned. WAC is a follow-up foundation experience to an introductory writing course while typically, school curricula do not host a mandatory introductory speech class nor do some colleges or universities even offer speech/communication classes at all. However, some universities offer a 101 class in English Composition, but students are allowed to “place out” of it if their advanced placement

test scores in high school were of a certain caliber. Surely, subsequent English classes offer instruction to some degree in writing, but mainly those classes would focus on literature or writing of a specific genre, not introductory writing skills. However, not all students take these classes and, in most schools, other disciplines while sometimes requiring essays as assignments, do not focus on the actual process of writing the essay. As noted, there are many different denotations of how WAC can have a presence on a campus—sometimes mere Writing Centers supplement the required first-year composition course. In turn, Speech Centers oftentimes fill the role of “speaking across the curriculum,” enabling faculty, staff, and students alike the opportunity to use the facilities, gain assistance in the “process” of speech writing and performance, and learn.

In terms of the respective program objectives, more commonalities exist, in my opinion, than differences. The WAC approach is as follows: “Writing and thinking are closely allied, that learning to write well involves learning particular discourse conventions, and that, as a result, writing belongs to the entire curriculum, not just in a course offered by the English department” (Morello 103). Whereas within the SAC program:

Communication is regarded as a mode of learning. The opportunities provided for students to speak (whether class discussion, small group work, one-on-one, or public speaking) help students achieve behavioral objectives and they help students learn the content of the course. SAC courses help students by giving them the opportunity to orally articulate ideas, by helping them discover how their communication functions in context, and by giving them a chance to further their thinking through continued articulation (Palmerton 7; also qtd. in Morello 103).

Not only do both programs assert a theory that can be termed as “communicating to learn”

(communication being both speaking and writing), but also the programs strongly claim that

students would become more active in their own education; WAC and SAC both make it nearly impossible for a student to be a passive learner.

Even though the following two aspects seem more like similarities than differences, it would be nearly impossible for faculty, staff, and peer-tutors to successfully establish and maintain a program that would encompass all aspects of both WAC and SAC. In a more intense examination of Morello's final "difference" concerning "approaches to process" it is evident that even a Writing Center and a Speech Center (using them as WAC and SAC respectively) should not be combined (107). Essentially, while the WAC program has focused on the work of Elbow and Murray, epitomizing writing as a process oriented activity, SAC focuses upon speaking, which typically is product-oriented—the process is important, but what matters most is the end-product, the speech, the outcome. In the composition pedagogies of process and expressivism, they "defined effective learning in terms of its relevance to the individual, rather than through the imposition of institutional goals, certainly not through learning particular genres" (*Visions and Revisions* 90). For SAC as well, that is a goal. In order for SAC to be more process oriented, more time can be spent working on the stage of invention, introductions, transitions, visual aids, audience-analysis, speech writing techniques, and all the different components of a strong speech. Just like an essay for a class, in the end, the presentation, the speech, will be what is graded; but focusing on the development of the speech as well is quite beneficial.

While in theory SAC is a new concept, the oldest on-going "communication across the curriculum program" is at Central College, Iowa which began this process in 1976. Between the time Cronin and Glenn researched Central College, Iowa in 1984 and Winter 2004, the basics behind their program have remained the same, as per their statement on the program in the Course Catalog. Central Colleges' program consists as follows: "Program leaders established speaking and writing centers for extracurricular assistance and faculty received summer workshop training in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The college provided catalog

designations for communication across the curriculum courses emphasizing one of these skills” (357). Cronin and Glenn cite a three-year study conducted in 1984 by C.V. Roberts in which 74% of students at Central College, Iowa indicated a “significant improvement in their communication skills” and “90% of students indicated moderate or intense desire for additional communication skills training,” as a result of the communication across the curriculum program (357). According to the *Memphis Business Journal*, when researchers surveyed 3,000 corporate managers about what they feared the most, 41% said that their greatest fear was speaking in front of a group. As indicated through the study at Central College, Iowa, though, “speaking across the curriculum” programs assuage this fear—students want more speaking, once they experience it. The love of learning is ignited.

Since the inaugural program at Central College, Iowa, quite a few schools have followed suit by setting up their own versions of “speaking across the curriculum” programs (a discussion of current Speech Centers can be found in Chapter 3). For example, the School of Management at Clarkson University created “communication modules” within their courses—“the modules addressed one or more of the following communication skills: basic oral presentation, listening, interpersonal communication in organizations, and applied persuasion” (Cronin and Glenn 358). Also, the University of New Mexico’s Arts and Sciences Participatory Seminar Program emphasized and trained faculty in stressing the “development of students’ critical thinking skills as reflected in their writing, speaking, and interaction” (Cronin and Glenn 358). Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in Indiana started up a three-stage program consisting of a “speaking lab with video and audio recorders, a series of seminars to train faculty in speech communication theory and applications to their courses, and the use of faculty trained in these seminars to conduct speech-emphasis courses across the curriculum” (358). In a final example, Hamline University

in Minnesota holds a policy where students must complete two “speaking intensive” courses in disciplines other than speech/communication. According to Patricia Palmerton at Hamline University, 90% of the students felt that their own oral communication skills and those of other students improved through participation in these S-1 courses (Palmerton 7). The format of Hamline’s SAC program allowed students to “learn by giving them the opportunity to orally articulate ideas, by helping them discover how their communication functions in context, and by giving them a chance to further their thinking through continued articulation” (Palmerton 7). Other schools, such as Radford University, University of Richmond, Mary Washington College, Pepperdine University, Butler University, and DePauw University, to name just a few, have formed programs that either require students to take “speech intensive” classes in disciplines other than speech, to take speech classes within a communication department, and/or to visit the Speech Center for assistance in presentations, group projects, or English skills for ESL students.

According to Susan McLeod and Elaine Maimon in “Clearing the Air: WAC Myths and Realities,”

It is possible to run a WAC program without such an entity [writing center, learning center, or writing fellows program], our experience is that to sustain a WAC program, a writing center is crucial. Students need audiences other than their peers in the classroom or their teacher to respond to their writing, and faculty need the assurance that when they assign writing in their classes, there will be a place on campus where knowledgeable tutors can respond to drafts of their students’ writing. The most successful writing centers work with faculty in the disciplines, asking for copies of assignments and helping faculty refine them so that they get the kind of responses they want (581).

In this light, I think it is important to examine both Writing Centers and Speech Centers, their effect on students and faculty, and the successes or failures they have when they stand alone or coupled with a WAC or SAC program? In my opinion, a combination of a Writing Center and a Speech Center with WAC and SAC allows for development of strong writing and speaking

skills not only in the classroom, guided by professors, but also in small tutorials guided by a peer, someone who can relate more directly to the student who has come in for assistance.

If WAC and SAC programs are so effective, then why are there post-secondary schools that do not have one or both—why are there some, that have neither? Robert Weiss in his article, “Sustaining Speaking Across the Curriculum Programs,” lists a number of “hazards” each program faces: financial exigencies, leader dependence, insufficient institutionalization, and academic ideologies. In essence, what Weiss is saying is that sometimes funds run-out, grants end, government funds are withdrawn; sometimes the leader of the program retires, leaves, burns-out and if there is no one, or no group, left to take his/her place, then the program folds; sometimes these programs are used as “add-ons” and never become part of the curriculum, in that case, they are easy to dismantle; and sometimes the idea of a “general studies” program fails to sit well with those faculty members who like to be part of an elite group that specialize in one field or another (Weiss 7-10). However, despite all of these “hazards” some programs prevail. Perhaps as research continues about the benefits of programs such as WAC and SAC, both pedagogies can be implemented in schools of higher education.

During my undergraduate career at the University of Richmond, I not only worked as a Writing Fellow and Consultant, but also as a Rhetoric Fellow and Speech Consultant—I was involved with both the Writing Center and the Speech Center. Dr. Joseph Essid was the director of the Writing Center and Linda Hobgood ran the Speech Center. Both centers pay the undergraduates that work as tutors and consultants; however, both centers require no fee for their use—they are not-for-profit; they merely supplemented the academic community of the University of Richmond.

The Speech Center was housed in rooms in the same building as the Rhetoric and Communication Studies department, but the Writing Center was located in offices next door to the main campus library, Boatwright Memorial Library. Each center relied on undergraduate students as their staff. Each center trained the staff through a semester-long class focused on pedagogy. The Writing Center class was English 376: Introduction to Composition Theory and Pedagogy. The Speech Center's class was Rhetoric and Communication Studies 315: Theory and Pedagogy. Both classes required students to read pedagogical works of lead thinkers and researchers in the field. In terms of the Writing Center, we read works from Stephen North, James Berlin, Peter Elbow, etc. In the Speech Center class, we reviewed Craig Smith's introduction on rhetoric, and Stanley Fish, for example. Both classes required us to "shadow" existing consultants and tutors for a set number of hours, report on such tutorials, and develop a paper focusing on suggestions to better the respective center.

While the Writing Center encouraged us to primarily ask questions of the students, writings in the margins of their papers, to encourage them to delve deeper and more analytically into the subject, to promote writing and revising to flush out thinking throughout the paper, and not to correct mere grammatical or spelling errors, but to perhaps point them out once and encourage the student to figure out the necessary correction and other errors themselves, the Writing Center tutorial focused on the process. While we cared about the end-result, the final paper—we cared more about how the student reached that point. Our jobs were not to help the student get an "A" for just this one paper, but to assist them in acquiring skills that would enable them to write successful papers consistently. Primarily freshmen used the Writing Center. Most CORE classes, a required class for both first and second semester freshmen, hired a Writing Fellow—an undergraduate Writing Tutor that was assigned only to work and concentrate on that

one class. As word about the success of the Writing Center spread, more professors used a Writing Fellow. I personally worked with a U.S. History course, an upper level psychology course, and an English 103 introductory course.

At the Speech Center, we guided the students through the five canons of rhetoric, allowing the ancient texts of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian to guide us in our suggestions. We used Steve Toulmin to help us help students create effective arguments and debates. Just like students, though, who wait until the night before a paper is due to bring it to the Writing Center, many students waited until the night before they would have to deliver a speech before visiting the Speech Center. At this point, the consultant could only hope that the student knew and had already significantly begun working on their topic and speech. In both situations, at the Writing Center and at the Speech Center, only so much can be accomplished by a consultation less than twenty-four hours before the assignment is due. What both consultations can desire to achieve is instilling confidence in the student, fixing prominent holes, errors, and flaws in an argument, and successfully showing the benefits of a consultation so that the student comes to the center well in advance of the due date next time.

According to Toby Fulwiler, “WAC programs by their very nature are extremely complex, multifaceted, and idiosyncratic—characteristics that make evaluation most difficult” (Strengthening Programs 62). So are too the SAC programs. But as C. H. Knoblauch and Lil Brannon wrote in “Writing as Learning Through the Curriculum,” “In the revised model of writing-to-learn-across-the-curriculum, the teacher’s concern changes from dispensing knowledge to stimulating conceptual involvement and investigation in order to encourage the growth of students’ intellectual capacities” (471). The key for both WAC and SAC is to have them ignite the desire to learn in students and assist them in the learning process. Perhaps if

money failed to be an issue, if endowments and grants were not necessary, if teachers were not overloaded, and if students comprehended just how indispensable the skills of articulate writing and speaking are, then more programs would flourish. Until that time, those who have experienced the wonderful learning experience that both a WAC and a SAC program can provide, should focus on spreading the knowledge of what can happen if students and teachers alike become active participants in education.

CHAPTER 3

The Basics of the Speech Center

What exactly can a Speech Center provide for an institution—how can such an endeavor reap benefits for an academic community? According to Morreale, et al. “A Communication Center or Lab typically provides services or support of oral communication activities in students’ course work at a college or university. Many centers also provide services to other clientele such as faculty, staff and administration, alumni, or even outside groups. The center, thus, is the place for providing resources and assistance to its campus for a variety of communication needs. Such assistance includes, for example, tutoring for students’ preparing oral presentations or for participation in group activities, interviews, discussions, or debates. A center frequently provides assistance for faculty wishing to incorporate oral communication into their teaching or, to perhaps develop and refine their own presentational or other communication skills. Some centers also assist outside clients, perhaps as part of a service-learning program or on a fee-for-services basis. Centers often provide services to students through peer tutors, variously referred to as coaches, consultants, tutors, associates, or mentors, under the direction of staff, faculty, or both. Faculty, staff directors, or coordinators may provide services for faculty, staff, alumni, or other client groups.

A Speech Center may also provide reference resources and materials to assist students and others in preparing oral presentations or for effective participation in other communication activities. Additionally, resources and materials may also be provided to assist in the design,

preparation, and assessment of oral communication assignments in a variety of courses.

Speech centers are variously housed in department of communication, academic services, student services, or specially designated centers or programs.

What are the differences or similarities between Speech Centers that primarily serve a communication curriculum and those that also serve the campus, and perhaps community, as a whole? Why would a school choose one role for the center over another? Different models reflect differing campus environments, regulations, and traditions. Some centers are restricted to only serve students or campus clients—especially if tuition fees, or other institutional funds, are a primary form of support (Morreale 6). Some models, however, allow for serving external constituencies; those facilities who serve external clients “may follow two models: one that supports service-learning or volunteer activities (non-fee basis), and one that operates on a fee-for service basis, becoming a sort of ‘profit-center’ itself (6). Essentially, “the overall mission of the college or university and the mandate of the department or unit operating the center or lab often determine or restrict the nature of these activities” (6). Personally, I believe that a not-for-profit venture would best suit my graduate alma mater, Virginia Commonwealth University—it is my belief that if students have to pay for what they might regard as “tutoring” then they will not frequent the center; some would only go if in dire need. Setting up a Speech, or Communication Center under the guise of a pure academic environment, with the primary goal of teaching and helping others, allow both the consultant and the student to engage dialogically, learning from one another.

A potential struggle of a Speech Center is to be seen not as merely a place to obtain remedial help. In order to avoid this stereotype, a center should present itself as a place to practice, enhance, and hone already existing communication skills. Perhaps it is inevitable that

students who lack experience or background in communication studies will come to the center seeking help in completing a communication assignment; in that way, the center's work could potentially be seen as "remedial". Essentially, the instructors within the rhetoric, or communication, department or instructors throughout the college or university hold the responsibility of referring all of their students, rather than merely the students who are not as advanced as others. With all students frequenting a speech center, all students can better their communication skills by participating in the peer-tutor, dialogic practice.

According to Morreale, et al, the guiding principles for a speech center are the following: A communication center/lab reinforces ethical communication, recognizing the integrity of the theoretical foundations of the discipline; a communication center/lab empowers participants through the development of transferable oral skills, to effectively participate in the democratic process; a communication center/lab clearly reflects the institution's mission, structure, and culture in terms of students' learning needs and communication competencies; a successful communication center/lab requires an appropriately qualified Director who has adequate time to administer the Lab, and establish ongoing, nurturing relationships with faculty, alumni, and students; and a communication center/lab provides a safe, supportive, and engaging environment (9). "

At the base of the endeavor of constructing a speech center, university support needs to be attained. For this to ensue, a need for a communication lab to support learning and teaching by emphasizing the importance of oral communication in core or educational mission needs to be demonstrated. In specific curricula or programs, like English, Mass Communication, and Business, the importance of oral proficiency needs to be emphasized so that communication assignments and exercises can be integrated in communication courses throughout the institution. Not only should the improvement of communication skills be in the forefront of a student's education but it also should be central in faculty development. As previously mentioned, faculty can be reminded that the speech center is not just for student use—faculty can refine their communication skills, enabling them to engage their students better through their own lectures. By using peer tutors, the institution can save money; additionally, these peer tutors can attain an

educational dialectic experience. While outside funding for a speech center is possible, internal funding is more likely. In order to attain internal funding, the speech center can be tied into faculty development across the institution, with academic and students services, and with other departments and programs. In terms of outside funding, local development offices or grants officers may be a good starting point for developing potential supporters for a given institution.

The lab would primarily serve the undergraduate community. Probably the most frequent clientele would come from basic course students. Other disciplines might use the resources of the lab during times of presentations. The faculty can mandate that a visit to the lab is voluntary or required—requiring at least one session per student, though, would provide students a taste of what they could learn and accomplish by using the center regularly. If a student feels as if the center helped provide insight, creative ideas, or a surge in confidence before a presentation, then the student will be more inclined to return so that positive results continue to be seen. The center, or lab, is also a resource for faculty members—for help with the delivery of lectures to the presentation of a paper at a conference. Faculty participation, however, would be kept private—no record of the visit would be maintained. The visit would be purely for the benefit of the faculty member.

According to Linda Hobgood in “A Pursuit of Speaking Proficiency: A Voluntary Approach,” “A full-time director is necessary to coordinate the overall effort. Primary responsibilities include: information-gathering and needs assessment, faculty training and support, and training of student staff if they are to assist in the operation of the communication lab” (340). A substantial commitment of funds is needed for the purpose of launching an effective program.

Logistically, a basic Speech Center set-up would not be terribly burdensome to accommodate. But, as Hobgood notes, “If a site for the practice facility has not been pre-determined, locating a suitable space becomes key in the early stages” (340). Morreale, et al notes that three rooms are optimal; however, it is feasible to effectively be in business with one room. One room could be used for practice or review of speeches (space needed for student to stand, move, and gesture); the second (perhaps larger) room to be used for group presentations; and the third (small) room would be used for consultant/director scheduling, conferencing, planning work. In terms of equipment, each practice room would need a video camera with playback equipment, tables with chairs; a computer with online access for research and, perhaps, scheduling uses; and PowerPoint equipment.

The position of the director would typically be filled by a member of the speech communication faculty, if such a department exists within the university. In the case of VCU, however, no such department is present. The question arises whether the director would come from the Mass Communication department, the Theatre department, or the English Rhetoric and Composition Program. According to Hobgood, a speech center director “already familiar with the institution implementing a speaking-intensive effort enjoys a range of advantages that accrue to the benefit of the new program” (340). Whether the director is taken from a department within the university or whether she comes from outside the university community, is a moot point when discussing the course load for which the director should be responsible. As Hobgood notes, “The expectation that a faculty member can simultaneously teach a full course-load and carry out the responsibilities of a speaking center is flawed. The diminished quality and effectiveness of either and probably both is all but assured” (341).

In order to attract clientele, it is necessary to visit classes to promote lab services; require lab visits for courses with oral presentation components; and attend department meetings to explain services of the center. The idea behind a Speech Center is not for it to be on the edge of the campus, serving merely as place for remedial help in public speaking. Rather, the Speech Center should be the center of campus. A point and stage for academic dialogue—a place where lessons are not merely taught, but where peer tutors and clients are learning dialogically together. The communication lab is a “point of excellence” for the institution.

CHAPTER 4

The Student-Consultant/Tutor Component

Damon and Phelps define peer tutoring as "an approach in which one [student] instructs another [student] in material on which the first is an expert and the second is a novice" (1989a, 11). In my experience at the University of Richmond, the Writing Center termed the undergraduates that worked specifically at the center and not directly with a specific class, tutors. Whereas, at the Speech Center, the students who were working with students, clients, within the center, were called consultants. For the purposes of the following section, both terms, consultants and tutors, will be synonymous, meaning a graduate or undergraduate student, trained to work with fellow students in a specific rhetorical discipline being either writing or speech.

Students are sometimes skeptical that another student, a peer, can help them with their writing or their speaking—they see seeking help from tutors as an admittance of failure, incompetence, or being remedial in a subject. Peer-tutoring, however, is effective. Perhaps the reason is there is less pressure and more common ground between two students than between a teacher and a student. As Damon and Phelps put it:

Unlike adult-child instruction, [in] peer tutoring the expert party is not very far removed from the novice party in authority or knowledge; nor has the expert party any special claims to instructional competence. Such differences affect the nature of discourse between tutor and tutee, because they place the tutee in a less passive role than does the adult/child instructional relation. Being closer in knowledge and status, the tutee in a peer relation feels freer to express opinions, ask questions, and risk untested solutions. The interaction between instructor and pupil is more balanced and more lively. This is why conversations between peer tutors and their tutees are high in mutuality even though the relationship is not exactly equal in status (138).

Students can gain more insight and clarification through a peer-tutor than through a teacher, for the level of comfort between the two is typically much higher. Students do not have to worry about receiving a grade from a peer-tutor.

According to Christina Murphy in, “Freud in the Writing Center: The Psychoanalytics of Tutoring Well,” “Tutors must form a bond of trust with students, who, in coming to the writing center for help, make themselves vulnerable...to understanding or misunderstanding, judgment, acceptance, approval or disapproval” (43). When a student walks through the Speech Center’s door, his or her personal feelings, motivation to speak, and confidence in speaking perhaps have declined due to frustration with the assignment, teacher comments, feelings of inadequacy, or sheer stress about everything.

Murphy notes that the student-tutor bond, “often is primarily supportive and affective, secondarily instructional, and always directed to each student as an individual in a unique one-to-one interpersonal relationship.” Every student that schedules an appointment at the Speech Center will differ in some ways—no one student’s needs, response to the tutor, or all speeches will be exactly the same. With that in mind, the consultant must base his or her actions primarily on those of the individual speaker. In order to enhance the speaker’s ability and allow for the tutorial to be “as painless as possible,” the tutor, essentially, must approach each student as a unique case—the consultant needs not bestow false encouragement to the student, but grant compliments where appropriate and criticize constructively, perhaps even with humor involved.

In Donald Jones’ article, “A Pragmatist Approach to Academic Discourse: Teaching the Conflict over ‘Stuffy B.S.,’” he advocates a pragmatist approach to teaching the composition of academic discourse. His suggested pedagogical method involves the examination of academic discourse in general, and the procedure of having each student investigate the discursive

practices of his or her particular major and/or assignment. Through his analysis, he concludes, “that the primary concern of students was what they perceived as the implied submissiveness of the audience to academic discourse, engaging students in the conflict encouraged them to confront and understand the difficulties they felt; and through their engagement in and representation of this conflict, students were taught to utilize and participate in academic discourse” (14). Sometimes students happen to overwhelm themselves with the need for sounding “academic.” In this case, the tutor needs to encourage the student to use his/her own voice in speaking, instead of talking about something they are not passionate about. The student needs to choose a topic that is educational but also interesting to her—by speaking on a topic she has enjoyed learning about, her own voice will emerge through the speech rather than jargon the student considers “appropriate” for a speech.

In my experience, many students believe that consultations were beneficial experiences because they could discuss the assignment, ideas, and concepts without the professor around to hear them. Students seem to be much more willing to put themselves out on a limb so to speak, and to talk without fear of being evaluated for a grade. On the other hand, some students tended to sign-up for consultations with their friends, sorority sisters, or fraternity brothers—they felt comfortable with them as a tutor, but they also privileged the camaraderie they offered during their consultations. This overly friendly rapport could, possibly, be detrimental though—serious guidance and insight cannot be given if the focus of the consultation is focused on friendly social banter. Maintaining a friendly rapport is necessary to engage and put at ease the client—but too friendly can merely cause nothing to be accomplished in the session.

On the other hand, clients should not expect the consultant to be a “mini-professor”. The concept of peer-tutoring, that the consultant is on, or near, the level of the client, is a very

important factor for the success of a consultation. The consultant, however, should not be arrogant about their position. The consultant should just be credible—they must back up their position as a Speech Consultant by being both rhetorical and eloquent.

Professors must understand that the Speech Center seeks to improve a speaker's skills through collaboration—not authoritative and degrading remarks. While this may be the approach of some teachers, these comments definitely do not aid in the process of improvement through collaboration. If a client disagrees with a professor regarding his or her comments about a student's speech, it would be best for the tutor to continue with the Speech Center methodology and address the professor's comments separately. If the rhetor has questions regarding his teacher's comments, it would be in the best interests of the client to refer the student to schedule an appointment with the teacher. Through this approach, the client neither is disrespecting the faculty member nor violating the principles of the Speech Center.

How are the tutors, or consultants, chosen for this task, though? Who are the consultants that work to increase speaking proficiency? According to Linda Hobgood and Kyle Love, “the unhindered imaginations of the students who serve as speech center consultants are a center's most valuable resource” (1). At the University of Richmond, an undergraduate student might be interested in becoming a consultant possibly because the credit they would receive for the training course counts toward the major or minor, the position is salaried, and the experience is assumed to look good on a resume. The successful applicant to be a speech consultant must have “exceptional ability, sustainable interest, and level of commitment needed to perform consulting tasks” (Hobgood and Love 15). Selection of the Speech Center staff requires interested students to provide a faculty recommendation, formal application, essay, and an interview. These are required for freshman, sophomore, or junior year students who meet the requisite qualification of

having successfully completed the introductory course in Rhetoric and Communication Studies. During the interview, both Linda Hobgood, the Speech Center director, and an existing speech consultant ask the applicant thirteen questions, designed to complement the written application and demonstrate the student's interest in articulate speech, coaching and listening effectiveness, a sense of responsibility and task commitment, and an awareness of personal strengths. Selection is conducted in the fall and within a week of the final interview, students are notified as to whether their applications were successful or not. This notification occurs before spring registration occurs, so that the students can sign up to be in the Theory and Pedagogy class that meets each spring semester.

At Columbia College, the Pearce Communication Lab, the selection process for their communication lab commences before the applicant even officially applies. All students are required to take COMM 100, Introduction to Public Speaking—most complete this course during their first year at Columbia. Due to this requirement, the Communication and Theatre faculty have the opportunity “to cull the freshman class for promising peer advisors” (16). Upon identifying students exemplifying strong skills in public speaking, writing, and group work, the students are encouraged to enroll in COMM 210, Advanced Public Speaking, for which COMM 100 is a prerequisite.

While students are in COMM 210, professors take note of those who stand out—along with those students who are prominent leaders in the department's theatrical productions and student organizations. At both schools, University of Richmond and Columbia College, the current speech consultants, or peer advisors, play an instrumental role in identifying potential peer advisors. The students who consistently excel in the Communication and Theatre Department and/or are also identified by peers as exceptional students, are encouraged to

formally apply for the position—this application inquires about their academic record, coursework requiring speaking, writing and/or research, work experience, campus involvement, faculty and staff recommendations, and an explanation from the student about why they desire to become a peer advisor and what they believe they can offer other students.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, at the University of Richmond, the training course for speech consultants is entitled “Theory and Pedagogy,” and it is offered every spring semester. According to Linda Hobgood, the course’s “extensive reading, quizzes, papers, a major project, memorization and recitation exercises, shadowing stints in the lab and required attendance are made worse by the early hour three days per week when the course is scheduled to convene” (Hobgood and Love 17). While the official title of “speech consultant” is only given to a student upon successful completion of the course with a minimum grade of a B—in Hobgood’s nine years of teaching this course, only one student has dropped it.

The essential framework of the Theory and Pedagogy course includes a unit on each the history of rhetoric, the history of pedagogy as applied to the teaching of rhetoric, and a comparison and evaluation of current pedagogical approaches practiced at the Speech Center. Linda Hobgood’s stated objective is to teach “in a way that engages beyond the moment such a keen interest in the subject matter that these consultants-in-training can hardly wait to become full-fledged members of our staff, equipped to impart a body of knowledge they have come to enjoy and appreciate” (Hobgood and Love 18). During my participation in the Theory and Pedagogy class, we had to research and write a five to seven page paper on each of Aristotle’s five rhetorical canons—we were required to research not only the historical, classical, components of each canon, but also how the respective canon has been taught throughout the history of education and also how each canon is handled in modern public

speaking/communication/rhetoric textbooks typically used in the basic rhetoric and communication classroom. Additionally, we were quizzed and tested on our knowledge and application of classical and modern rhetorical theory. A key component of our education was the “shadowing” requirement—we had to shadow existing consultants during their consultations. Shadowing entailed each Theory and Pedagogy student sitting in on consultations students were having with present speech consultants. We would observe the consultations. We could not shadow the same consultant more than twice, nor could we just shadow individual sessions. We also had to witness what a group consultation consisted of; this way we were more prepared when different types of assignments were presented to us. Finally, we were required to design a final project regarding something that we would like to see changed in the Theory and Pedagogy class or in how the Speech Center is run. Projects included making the sign-up process online rather than at the Speech Center office, requiring consultants to be aware of gendered speech, revising our critique sheets so that professors could read our remarks easier, and how to handle a demoralized speaker. While my official education and preparation to be a speech consultant lasted a mere semester, my development as a speech consultant was an ongoing process—one that I believe continues today as I work on my own speeches and strive to ensure that future students experience a strong rhetorical and communicative education.

CHAPTER 5

Established Speech Centers

According to “Taking Aim at Student Incoherence,” Alison Schneider writes, “When the National Association of Colleges and Employers asked 480 companies what qualities mattered the most to them, communication topped the list” (3). Tamara L. Burk, founder of the oral-communication program at William and Mary, states that these programs are not about “‘how to handle yourself at a party’...they’re about communication as a transaction and contextual process. We don’t just speak; we also listen” (3). The goal of the Speech Center is to encourage a dialogic learning experience between a peer-tutor and the client. By speaking and listening, this can be achieved.

Victor N. Shaw states in “Reading, Presentation, and Writing Skills in Content Courses,” “Presentation and oral communications are the most widely used skills in human interactions, yet they are not adequately taught in many courses other than speech classes...letting students speak on academic topics not only raises their presentation consciousness and skills but also reinforces their mastery of material” (2). If the goal of us as educators is to ensure that the students who take our classes have a firm grasp on the material, then I believe that the students need to use their oral communication skills in order to be good thinkers about the subject at hand.

Before a Speech Center should open for business, the director should be familiar with the mission of the school, the curriculum (whether it is speaking-intensive or writing-intensive), and what typically transpires within the closed-doors of the classroom. The director should know what role oral communication plays within the curriculum—is it an afterthought or a primary

mode of learning? The director of the Speech Center has to ask questions such as: are the goals of the center to be supplemental to the overall curriculum, or is it to be a stand-alone unit with more of a teaching focus?

Colleges and universities have enlisted peer tutors to help engage and enforce materials and to learn more about the subject themselves all the while working with other students. The beauty behind peer tutoring is that both students, the tutor and the tutee, learn and grow. As I mentioned before, at the University of Richmond, students wishing to become speech consultants have to pass a semester-long course entitled Theory and Pedagogy. The Theory and Pedagogy course provides students with advanced training in public speaking techniques. Future speech consultants are trained to be able to listen and critique student speeches and presentations, and possess the ability to make the appropriate suggestions for improvement. Speech Consultants are considered suitably trained to help clients at the Speech Center develop their presentation skills, the content of their speeches, as well as their overall persuasiveness in the classroom. The overall successful development of the Speech Center has led to its expansion into the classroom in the form of the Speech and Rhetoric Fellow programs at the University of Richmond. The Speech Fellow program enables a class, for example Business and Professional Speaking, to have access to one speech consultant throughout the entire semester so that the consultant and the students can become comfortable with each other, the consultant can be fully aware of the class syllabus and goals, and the students progression within the course. Starting in 2000, the University of Richmond's Rhetoric and Communication Studies department instituted a four-credit 101 course, instead of the typical three-credit course. With this change, an undergraduate student, trained as a Speech Consultant with at least nine credit hours within the department, was employed by the University of Richmond to "teach" the fourth hour—to be a peer teacher,

encouraging fellow students to learn and love the subject material as much as he or she does.

Before the year 2000, there was no such thing as a Rhetoric Fellow—but, in existence at the University of Richmond, was the Speech Center where Speech Fellows and Speech Consultants worked. Consultants are of varied age, sophomore to senior, and each possesses different amounts of experience at the Speech Center.

While researching programs at other colleges and universities that resemble University of Richmond's Speech Center, I stumbled upon a Yahoo Group Message Board pertaining to Communication Centers. On this particular board, Paul Sandin, posted a forwarded letter by Dr. Jim Gaudino, the Executive Director of the National Communication Association. Dr. Gaudino first addresses why the "communication center" is becoming progressively more important for the field of communication. He states, "Our society is becoming increasingly more keenly aware of the importance of communication as a field. For example, the Boyer Commission and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching have called a link between communication skills and coursework (Dannels, 2001; Schneider, 1999). Also lay newspaper and journal articles have recently lamented over the problem of "mallspeak" and student incoherence, and have called for institutions of higher education to take measures to rectify this social problem (Schneider, 1999)."

What are institutions of higher education doing to combat incoherence and promote communication skills? I communicated with professors at other universities and institutions that are involved in academic departments, similar to the Rhetoric and Communication Department at the University of Richmond. When researching these institutions, I found an array of answers.

For example, John Murphy, Associate Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Georgia, replied to an email I sent him about his program (see Appendix A the email template):

There are two basic courses here at UGA: SPCM 1100, Public Speaking and SPCM 1500 Interpersonal Communication. We are a Research I university with an active, large graduate program. Most of the time, graduate teaching assistants teach these two courses—and they do teach. We treat them like other classes—the GTA's are the teachers of record, they control their individual 22 person sections, they run the class and grade the speeches/assignments. There is a common book across all public speaking and interpersonal communication courses—The Art of Public Speaking by Stephen E. Lucas is used for the public speaking classes. All of the graduate students teaching the basic public speaking class have a common set of policies in regards to attendance, grade appeal, and academic honesty. The same workload is also required in every section (e.g., five speeches). The graduate teaching assistants retain the ability to create specific assignments and each teaching assistant gives his or her own tests.

Murphy also stated, “We have not used, I don't believe, undergraduates as teaching assistants, although they have served as research assistants. I think, if we made a proposal based on undergraduate learning, that that could well be possible, but we have so many grad students it simply hasn't occurred to anyone.”

At Mount Holyoke College, Dr. Susan M. Pliner, the Acting Director of the Speaking, Arguing, and Writing Program at the Weissman Center for Leadership responded to my questions inquiring about whether or not they have a Speech Center program. I started off asking her, “What sort of programs are set up at Mount Holyoke College and are undergraduates involved in the teaching of other undergraduates?” She responded by stating, “I am the Acting Director of the Speaking, Arguing, & Writing Program and we have a program where undergraduate students are trained to be mentors or assistants. They work with other students to enhance their speaking and writing skills.” In response to the question, “Also, we are looking to see how other 101 (or introductory level) professors are collaborating in the make-up of the course?” she stated, “There are several instances of 100 level courses being team taught by

faculty.” When asked if there is a division between public speaking and rhetorical theory—are there two separate courses or are they combined?” she responded with, “We do not have introductory level courses specifically on public speaking or rhetorical theory. [The] MHC approach is to integrate speaking components into the curriculum across disciplines. So, we have courses that are speaking intensive within specific disciplines.” Lastly, I inquired if there are undergraduates assisting in the teaching of other undergraduates, who trains them, are they paid, and what is their job description? Dr. Pliner trains them in a 2-credit course, Peer Mentoring: Theory & Practice. All staff participate in ongoing training after completing the course. They are paid for the work they do and the job description is on their website. The website she directed me to is <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/programs/wcl>. On it, I found the description of the Mentors. The following describes their work and training:

Mentors operate in the context of a specific course. They serve as resident facilitators, and actively work to enhance the classroom experience by offering individual and group guidance to students, and feedback to faculty. They are generally students who have previously taken the course and/or are majors in the department through which the course is offered. Like assistants, all mentors are trained to provide basic evaluation of speaking and writing projects. However, their specific responsibilities depend largely on the needs and plans of the course instructor. They are generally expected to attend the course regularly, and to contribute during in-class writing or speaking exercises. In addition, they should be available for individual and/or group help sessions outside of class.

In addition to these responsibilities, all student staff members are expected to attend staff meetings, keep detailed and accurate records of job activities, and maintain a friendly, approachable, and professional demeanor when representing SAW. Additional opportunities will be available to be involved in delivering student workshops and conferences, conducting research, and developing new and innovative ways to assist faculty and augment the Mount Holyoke curriculum. What can be concluded from these descriptions is that the equivalent of the Writing Center and the Speech Center at Mount Holyoke College is their SAW program.

Jason Becker, a student at DePauw University and an employee of the Speaking and Learning Center there, responded to my inquiry about their Rhetoric and Communication program. He first provided me with background information on the different programs where students participate in the “teaching process” that are available at DePauw University. He informed me that there are only a handful of TA, teaching assistant, positions on the DePauw campus. These positions were typically in the Computer Science department, the Biology department, and the Math department. The bulk of the students who are "teaching" other students are found under the umbrella of the Academic Resource Center. Within this center there are writing, quantitative reasoning, and speaking and listening tutors. Because the Speaking and Listening Center has a focus on Communication Studies, Jason Becker focused specifically on that aspect of DePauw.

Students who participate in the training to become a Speaking and Learning consultant have either demonstrated outstanding speaking skills in their classes or have come recommended by an already active consultant. The students go through a full semester course in which they do various readings pertaining to tutoring effectively within the communication discipline. The future consultants participate in a shadow program where they work directly with a veteran consultant to acquire actual experience in the tutoring process. Upon the satisfactory completion of this course, they can be extended an offer to join the “S&L consulting group”. This job description includes listening to presentations of all kinds, ranging from Biology to Financial Accounting presentations, and evaluating the presentations and giving the presenters constructive criticism and feedback. The DePauw “S&L’s” are not assigned to certain areas of expertise—they act as an “open office”, having regular operating hours in which any student can come and receive consulting.

In terms of the behind-the-scenes works of the DePauw Speaking and Learning program, Susan Wilson, the director of the Center stated that the center was funded through the university. The “across-the-curriculum” movement for speech spawned the start of their center. About fifteen paid consultants work at the center each year and DePauw’s program has been in service for over twenty years.

At West Arizona State University, the source of funding for the speech center was initially the Board of Regents grant; since then they have used a combination of student fees, funding from the Dean’s office, and some external contracts. The speech center was established “to improve our capacity to help students learn public speaking in various courses, including large sections where individualized instruction is difficult.” The center has been in operation for about two years. The consultants are unpaid volunteers; they have approximately six per semester, serving about two hundred students per year out of about 57,543 enrolled graduate and undergraduate students. Their website delineates the CALL Services: They provide students with assistance in speech development for both verbal and written skills; provide instructional resources online and in print to serve students in developing refined speaking and speech writing skills; provide students with numerous types of sample speeches to assist them in developing well-written presentations; provide students with both one-on-one and group oral speaking instructional sessions; provide students with practice presentation sessions, including video-taped rehearsals, to improve oral speaking skills; provide students with written and verbal feedback on their speech presentations via evaluation and assessment forms. provide students with training in both video and audio equipment as well as computer program technical expertise; provide the university with various instructional and informative workshops to develop students' oral communication skills.

At Concordia College in Moorehead, Minnesota, Dr. Stephanie Ahlfeldt, Assistant Professor in the Communication Studies and Theatre Art Department and Oral Communication Director, stated that the source of funding for the speech center was the university. The school hosts about 2,775 undergraduate students, and they have about a 14:1 student/faculty ration. The Oral Communication Center was established “to help out students in the public speaking process” and the program has been active since the fall of 2004. With about five paid consultants, they serve about fifty to one hundred students a semester.

Kyle Love is the director at the Pearce Communication Lab within Columbia College, a private arts college for women in Columbia, South Carolina. The Pearce Lab is part of the oral component of the Pearce Communication Center, which focuses on the development of oral and written communication skills. The Pearce Communication Lab and the Department of Communication and Theatre, are less than five years old. According to Kyle Love, the Pearce Communication Lab is designed to serve the entire Columbia College community; in its nascent stage, the primary clients have been from the Department of Communication and Theatre.

At San Jose State University, the center has been in operation for over eighteen years with about twenty-four volunteer consultants, serving 300 to 400 enrolled students with a total of 800 to 900 people per semester. Dr. Beth Von Till states that the funding for their speech center is “not a line item on a budget. Students enroll in a one unit course to either be a tutor or participate in the Lab for academic credit as a student client. That allows us to appoint a director and assistant director as part of their teaching load. Copy and paper costs are absorbed by the department. Furnishings and equipment for the rooms have come piecemeal from grants, or as other areas upgrade equipment.” San Jose State University hosts about 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students, with the average class size of twenty-six students and the student to faculty

ration being 18:1 The speech center was neither founded for accreditation nor “across-the-curriculum” purposes; rather, it was founded to support the basic oral communication classes, then later to support all communication courses and finally to allow all students to continue to work on oral communication skills throughout their academic career.

Dr. Candace Todd, Communication Lab Director and Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Lynchburg College states the following:

We are not funded at this time. The directors of tutoring and writing, language labs and I have been working to develop a consortium, ultimately with an independent budget that can be more independently administered, (and fairly distributed). But that is a campus political development I have been trying to push since I am the one with the most need.

My tutors are interns who get class credit for their allotted hours. We share the space of the Math Lab--they use the space during the day and we during the evening. I believe any small costs (like telephone) comes out of the budget of the School of Communication & the Arts. I do all my work for free as a gift to my department and students. I work to make sure that my tutors gain some insight and experience in the differences between student and professional conduct, but I am less than satisfied with my efforts. I have informed the Dean of the School that I will no longer direct the Lab unless and until there is funding for tutors and for me.

Lynchburg College’s speech center began the research to determine if there was a need for such a Lab, (student and faculty surveys etc.) in Fall 2000. They opened in the Spring of 2001. The goals of the center first began with a need to assist students taking the new required general education course (begun in Fall 1999) called Argumentation and Practical Reasoning, which is a hybrid argumentation/public speaking course. Dr. Todd states, “The long-term goals envision our own lab space (in a building to be opened in the next few months) where we can conduct tutoring and research (focus groups etc.) as well as plan workshops for campus and community citizens related to public speaking, professional presentation, leadership, community development etc”. She generally has about six consultants each semester. When asked how many students the center serves, Dr. Todd stated, “Our beginning numbers of visitors were sadly small—we were located in a dorm room”. In Fall 2003 they had forty visitors; in the Spring of

2004 they had a little over sixty visitors. She believes they had about forty to forty-five visitors in the Fall of 2004 and as of April 1, 2005 they had thirty-eight visitors. They are also offering a workshop on PowerPoint for the first time this semester. Dr. Todd strongly asserted “Research, business plans, annual contracts and tutor manuals, as well as visitor assessments and semester/annual reports all help to: legitimate the lab (thus gain credibility, financing etc.), evolve the Lab so it develops into a better contribution, and enhance the Lab in terms of its presence on campus. Dr. Todd states:

I strongly advise that the Lab—tutors and director—work to make known the need for and contributions of the Lab not only to students but also to faculty. I would very much like to be able to connect more with faculty, maybe even offer workshops, that help them develop better speech assignments in their classes and also to enhance their respect for my contribution. Too many faculty think that anyone can do a speech assignment/speech and that the field, including its scholarship, is light. I also will never again take on such a challenge without the full support of my colleagues. Being the Lone Ranger gets rather tiresome.

At Butler University the total enrollment, for both fulltime and part time, undergraduate and graduate is 6,033. At their Speech Center, tutors are paid hourly wages and receive academic credit. In the 2002-2003 academic year, over 2,300 students were served. In the fall of 2004, they centralized their operations; the center now occupies five rooms in the Richard M. Fairbanks Center for Communication and Technology. Butler University Speakers Lab is one of the pre-eminent communication labs in America; they have partnerships with the faculty of the College of Business Administration and the entire campus. In 1996, Butler University received a grant from the Lilly Endowment to begin a Communicating Across the Curriculum program. The purpose of this program was to promote, export, and integrate communication skills throughout the university, and not just in the Communication Studies department. Paul Sandin was hired to direct both the Communicating Across the Curriculum program and the Butler University Speakers Lab.

The Speakers Lab was erected in the fall of 1996 to provide students in all disciplines with the opportunity to practice, research, organize, and review oral presentations. Four tutors, representing four different majors, were recruited by faculty to handle the job of working with students who came to Lab for assistance. In the first semester of operations (Spring 1997) Speakers Lab saw 84 students; most of the students were from the core public speaking course. In the 2002-2003 academic year, fifteen peer tutors saw over 2,300 students, representing all schools at Butler.

The University of Richmond has “communication across the curriculum aim without the sanction of an across-the-curriculum requirement.” About twenty-two paid consultants work in teams of two for each hour consultation. Although communication courses are not required for graduation, the university maintains that the pursuit of excellence in speech is “critical to our students’ futures, their relationships, their civic participation, and to the intellectual quality of their lives. The Speech Center is utilized for faculty development to foster among faculty an appreciation for oral communication competence and the ways it can enhance student learning; to assist faculty members who wish to incorporate communication components in their coursework through one-to-one meetings, training workshops, resources, feedback forms, pedagogical information-sharing, and student staff assistance; to encourage each department to offer one or more speech-intensive course annually; and to facilitate faculty, staff, and administrative use of the Speech Center for their own professional purposes so as to promote continually high standards for articulate behavior throughout the University community.

Other schools that house centers are the Hampden-Sydney College Speaking Center; Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Speaker’s Lab; the University of Central Arkansas Speech Communication Active Learning and Assistance Center, the University of

Colorado at Colorado Springs Project Excel, the University of North Texas Communication Apprehension Lab, the University of Pennsylvania Communication within the Curriculum (GSA's receive a stipend of \$1,000 per semester of work at the lab), University of Pittsburgh Communication Lab, the University of Wyoming Oral Communication Lab, and the Virginia Tech CommLab.

The mission of the University of Mary Washington's Speaking Center is to support the objective of the Speaking Intensive Program, which in turn supports the liberal arts goals of the University of Mary Washington. The center is committed to aiding development of oral communication skills aimed towards effectively communicating a diversity of views. Essentially, the goal is to provide individualized consultation sessions and printed, audio-visual, and web resources to assist the university community in achieving its liberal arts education goals. The Center houses a collection of instructional resources (books, handouts, videotapes and equipment) which address a variety of topics ranging from public speaking anxiety to constructing effective visual aids. Consultants are available to videotape practice presentations and to provide feedback. The Center adheres strictly to the university's Honor Code: consultants will neither compose any portion of a presentation for a student nor will they do research for a student's presentation. Consultants are also prepared to offer advice on special types of oral communication activities such as speeches, group presentations, debates or interviews.

According to the VCU 1994-1995 Undergraduate Bulletin, "The University...contributes its intellectual and creative expertise in the development of innovative approaches to meet the changing needs of our society. The goals of VCU in carrying out its mission are to provide undergraduate education that includes a broad and rigorous foundation in the arts, sciences, and humanities, and explores the ideas and values of humankind" (2-3). In today's society,

communication skills are essential; however, VCU merely offers two classes: SPCH 121:

Effective Speaking and SPCH 321: Effective Speech to satisfy the undergraduate student

community's need for a rhetorical and communicative education. I feel that is not nearly enough.

As seen through examining oral communication disciplines at other colleges and universities, it

is necessary to offer more than two classes to a select group of students to combat the decline in

articulateness and eloquence in speaking and the lack of in-depth thinking needed for articulate

speech.

While a Speech Center benefits students and increases enrollment in communication courses, I believe there are two facets that a Speech Center needs in order to succeed. Faculty, staff, and administrators, throughout the university, need to aid and support the Speech Center. A Speech Center should be an integral part of the campus—a part of the university that works collaboratively with all other departments. Additionally, a Speech Center needs the technology that will enable those using the center to optimize their consultation time. Necessary components of a Speech Center are computers for power point presentations, a video camera to record the presentation, a television monitor to review the presentation, and a library of resources for the consultants and the client to use. With support and technology, a Speech Center can flourish. Unfortunately, without those two elements, a Speech Center can be a frustrating endeavor for the director, the staff, and the clients.

CHAPTER 6

A Proposal for a VCU Speech Center

Virginia Commonwealth University is home to over 104 academic majors. Within the university, VCU has a Mass Communications Department, a Theatre Department, and an English Department—all of which offer some sort of rhetoric, communication, or public speaking course. The Mass Communications department offers classes in advertising, communication technology, etc. The English Department has two undergraduate courses that teach rhetoric and composition: ENGL 101 Writing and Rhetoric Workshop I, a semester course “leading students through rhetorical practices and various stages of academic writing, with emphases on critical thinking, a variety of forms and genres, and the process of revision.” After English 101, students take ENGL 200 Writing and Rhetoric Workshop II with Research, which includes an “intensive study of the rhetorical principles and writing conventions of research-based argumentation. Emphasis [is placed on] methods and criteria for finding, analyzing, evaluating and documenting information from a variety of print and electronic sources.” While the writing and rhetoric workshops do discuss rhetorical strategies, they are taught in the context of writing, not speaking. Students might speak in discussions and in activities such as reading their papers aloud; however, that is not how learning to speak articulately and eloquently occurs.

In the Theatre Department, two classes on public speaking are offered for undergraduate students—SPCH 121: Effective Speaking and SPCH 321: Effective Speech. In order to find out more about the program I spoke with Megan Brown, 2005-2006 VCU Speech Coordinator and

graduate teaching-assistant in the Theatre Department. She said that, while taught by Theatre graduate students and housed in the Theatre department, the speech classes are typically not for theatre students. "Theatre students are not all required to take the class—theatre ed and tech students are, I think, but performance majors are not (they used to be, though). The classes are open to all undergraduates." There are two speech classes—SPCH 121 (Effective Speaking) and SPCH 321 (Speech for business and professions). People usually take one or the other, depending on their department's requirement. Some departments require only one or the other but do not specify which one is required. It is rare that someone will take both, although not unheard of. While there is not a "standard syllabus" for these classes, there are sample syllabi that all the graduate teaching assistants look at in making their own syllabi, but each professor makes his or her own syllabus. When I inquired whether there is a practicum or sessions for students to practice their speeches before they deliver them for a grade, Megan Brown responded that it depends on the teacher. She does not personally do this as she views practice as an individual responsibility of each student, but there are usually several smaller speeches for smaller grades to allow students to get accustomed to speaking in front of the class before a speech for a major grade is presented and assessed. Students are typically graded primarily on improvement. In terms of how integrated the study of rhetoric is with the study of public speaking in these classes, Megan Brown noted that this, again, depends on the professor. In her classes, she usually gives organization and forming a cogent argument equal weight to delivery. She believes that most students enrolled in these two classes are there fulfilling a requirement. In her experience, it has been about eighty percent filling a requirement, ten percent thinking it will be an easy elective, and ten percent who solely want to improve in public speaking. While she has been with the program, the concept of a Speech Center has never arisen for discussion.

In Appendices B and C, I have included syllabi, critique sheets, and examples of assignments for the Effective Speaking class and the Speech for Business and Professions that Megan Brown allowed me access to through the Speech Forum on Blackboard. As one can see by reviewing these documents, while the courses offer exercises in public speaking and suggestions on invention, organization, memorization, delivery, and style, the classes seem not to delve far into theory, pedagogy, or history about communication or rhetoric. The students merely receive an education on “what sounds good” rather than why, how, and what is behind “the art of speaking well”.

Rather than having merely two speech classes that students, though taking them to fulfill a requirement, view as an “easy A,” I believe VCU has two options in order to ensure that students are presented with opportunities to learn and understand rhetoric and communication. In both options, VCU needs a Speech Center. Speaking and writing are present in every discipline—no matter whether one is studying an art or a science. By placing public speaking classes in an art department, Theatre, I feel the university is stating that the skill of public speaking is necessary only for those interested in art. Instead, speaking, like writing, needs to become a more central component of a student’s collegiate career. By establishing a Speech Center on the VCU campus, learning articulate behavior will be easier, more accessible, for all students. One does not have to learn “effective speech” by fulfilling a requirement or taking an extra class. Instead, showing up for free sessions with a speech consultant to work on a presentation, group projects, or job interview skills will improve the speaking and thinking abilities of students.

In addition to starting a Speech Center, I feel that VCU needs to revamp the public speaking classes. While I believe that the graduate teaching assistants in the Theatre Department

are both bright and talented, should not the professor of a public speaking class be a rhetorician, a communication scholar, not an actor? My basis for asking that question is that more theory, more substance, needs to be added to the effective speaking classes to, in fact, make them effective. Students should not regard a class as an “easy A”—being challenged and learning from those challenges are two key components of a successful college career. We owe it to the students to give them just that—a challenge.

How can VCU do this? Or rather, how can VCU afford not to do this? Monetarily speaking, VCU can meet the expense of this endeavor through grants, outside funding, and creating an extra budget line in the 2006-2007 budget proposal. Schools all across Virginia, public and private; schools throughout the United States, are starting, using, and succeeding with Speech Centers. As I stated in Chapter IV, what VCU needs is a director, willing undergraduates and/or graduate students, two to three rooms, a bit of technology, and a drive to succeed and teach rhetoric, communication, and public speaking in a way that would make the classical rhetoricians proud. In the following section, I have included a grant proposal, suggesting a Speech Center based on my strong belief that such an endeavor will increase student engagement. Essentially, the person who initiates the Speech Center needs to be someone who has thoroughly researched and knows comprehensively rhetoric and communication studies, other speech and communication centers, and the environment at VCU. An important feature of this job will be to bring the many academic departments together, forming a bond with the purpose of strong communication skills. After all, do we not aspire to graduate “good men [and women] speaking well?”

According to Ernest Boyer in *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*:

The foundation for a successful undergraduate experience is proficiency in the written and spoken word. Students need language to grasp and express effectively feelings and ideas. To succeed in college, students should be able to write and speak with clarity, and to read and listen with comprehension. Language and thought are inextricably connected and as undergraduates develop their linguistic skills, they hone the quality of their thinking and become intellectually and socially empowered. As mentioned before, VCU has, within the English Department, two undergraduate courses that teach rhetoric and composition: ENGL 101 Writing and Rhetoric Workshop I and ENGL 200 Writing and Rhetoric Workshop II with Research, in order to allow students to be proficient in the written word. In terms of the oral component, VCU offers two speech courses, within the Theatre Department, SPCH 121: Effective Speech and SPCH 321: Speech for Business and Professions—and, not all students are required to take either, or both, of these classes. These two speech classes are supposed to ensure oral competency, but I believe that while they do serve a purpose in teaching basic public speaking skills the university needs to offer a class that is more challenging and pedagogically sound.

The emphasis of SPCH 121 and SPCH 321 are on the level of what Plato would term, “sophistry”. While delivery and style are important components to rhetoric and communication studies, they are not merely what it is about. Rhetorical history, the canons of invention, arrangement, and memory, and syllogistic lines of reasoning are also some aspects of rhetoric that should be mentioned. I feel that SPCH 121 and SPCH 321 fail to educate students on the background of rhetoric and communication—the goal is more to encourage students to say interesting things and overcome the fear of public speaking.

What I propose to do is to revamp the SPCH 121 and SPCH 321 course in order to include more rhetorical theory and pedagogy, increase the length of some of the speeches in order for the thinking required to be more thoroughly developed and articulated, and require a text for each section. A text that I would suggest would be Craig Smith’s *Rhetoric and Human*

Consciousness: A History as the primary text required for all students who enroll in either class—this text serves as an excellent introduction to rhetoric and how the use and study of this discipline has evolved from the time of Aristotle until present day. While the purpose of the classes should remain the same—to teach undergraduates effective speaking—the class should live up to its title and be very effective rather than a mere “easy A”.

Additionally, I believe VCU should establish a Speech Center. In Virginia alone many schools have already set-up such a program. For example, as I previously mentioned, the University of Richmond, Lynchburg College, Virginia Tech, William and Mary, Mary Washington, and Hampton-Sydney all have Speech Centers that further students liberal arts education. Through a Speech Center students will become more engaged in their own learning. A Speech Center will encourage students to recognize the importance of speaking and listening articulately and comprehensively across the disciplines—and, such a center will assist students to meet VCU’s general education objectives for oral proficiency. A Speech Center will also support students to the extent possible, or permissible, in their oral communication assignments and opportunities and it will emphasize the value of developing self-assessment abilities that will serve the students the rest of their lives.

As I have stated previously in Chapter III: The Basics of a Speech Center, but will reiterate here for the purpose of this grant proposal, is that a Speech Center provides assistance and support of oral communication activities in students’ course work at a college or university. Many Speech Centers also provide services to other clientele such as faculty, staff and administration, and alumni. The center, thus, is the place for providing resources and assistance to its campus for a variety of communication needs. Such assistance includes, for example, tutoring for students’ preparing oral presentations or for participation in group activities,

interviews, discussions, or debates. A center frequently provides assistance for faculty wishing to incorporate oral communication into their teaching or, to perhaps develop and refine their own presentational or other communication skills. A Speech Center may also provide reference resources and materials to assist students and others in preparing oral presentations or for effective participation in other communication activities. Additionally, resources and materials may also be provided to assist in the design, preparation, and assessment of oral communication assignments in a variety of courses.

I believe that a not-for-profit venture would best suit Virginia Commonwealth University—it is my belief that if students have to pay for what they might regard as “tutoring” then they will not frequent the center; some would only go if in dire need. Setting up a Speech, or Communication Center under the guise of a pure academic environment, with the primary goal of teaching and helping others, both the consultant and the student engage dialogically, learning from one another.

As previously mentioned, quite a few schools in Virginia and all across the nation have already established Speech Centers. At the University of Richmond, Linda Hobgood, Director of the Speech Center, estimates that they are serving 1800 to 2000 clients per year. And students are not leaving the Speech Center without results. In “To Good Effect: Speech Center Information and Guidelines for Faculty 2003-2004,” Linda Hobgood quotes colleagues responses to the Speech Center. Darrell Walden, Assistant Professor of Accounting, writes, “The Speech Center has to date exceeded my expectations. It was an important part of my Accounting Information Systems course. I could not have succeeded without the Speech Center. My students have communicated positively about their experiences at the Speech Center...” (20). Anne Miller, Instructor in Speech Communication notes, “Once again, let me thank you for the wonderful

resource that the Speech Center and all of the speech consultants have been to my 101 classes. I have seen dramatic improvement in several students over the past two semesters following visits there” (20). The Speech Center is viewed as an important asset and resource not only to the Rhetoric and Communication Department at the University of Richmond, but also to the collegiate community as a whole.

VCU can assess the rise in engagement in students through observing the quality of speeches and class discussions throughout the disciplines, not just in SPCH 121 and SPCH 321. Additionally, I believe that students themselves will report positively on the experiences they encounter at the Speech Center. While some students may not be thrilled with the idea of extra practice and more time spent learning the material, college is about being challenged and working hard to produce good thinking.

While this grant allots for, at most, \$10,000, I believe that the entirety of that sum can be utilized to establish a Speech Center at VCU and revise the syllabi in the SPCH 121 and SPCH 321 classes. More specifically, the money will be used to purchase video-recording systems in order to tape each session, in an effort to engage the student in a self-critiquing process. Also, paper used for critiques, a laptop with PowerPoint and a screen where the PowerPoint can be displayed, a podium, a table with chairs to seat a group, and bookshelves filled with materials and textbooks to aid the director, the consultants, and the students. The Speech Center will require at least two rooms and at most three rooms—these rooms shall be used solely by the director, consultants, and students. Finally, a director of the Speech Center will need to be hired. Of course the grant of \$10,000 cannot begin to compensate the director, thus, an adjustment to the budget should be made in order to provide an adequate salary of no less than \$36,000.

The hiring, location of space, and purchasing (acquiring) of materials can all be accomplished in the Spring of 2006. The Speech Center director can begin recruiting students at the end of Spring 2006, train them in Fall 2006, and the doors to the Speech Center can be opened to all students commencing in Spring 2007. A class on theory and pedagogy will have to be taught once every year so that a steady, prepared, and knowledgeable staff of speech consultants are available to the university community.

While establishing a Speech Center seems like a lofty goal, can the university really afford to continue not to have one? As Bruce E. Heilman, former Chancellor of the University of Richmond once said, “I have come to realize that the ability to communicate clearly is the key to success in anything you may choose to do” (“To Good Effect” 4). Students need the opportunity to attain that key to success—through a Speech Center, this is possible.

Conclusion

A Speech Center enhances student learning by serving as a resource for all students, regardless of what discipline they are in, who need individual assistance with any communication, or rhetoric, skill or problem. According to Sherywn Morreale, “students using a [speech center] can reduce communication anxiety and experience an increase in self-confidence and marketability in the workplace...it acts as a campus home for undergraduates and a training ground for graduate teaching assistants” (4). Should not that be a goal for all college communities?

Throughout the previous pages, I have examined how there is a need for a sound rhetorical education in order to reverse the downward spiral of eloquence in speech and in thinking. Rhetorical education, for merely teaching students how to stand in front of a group and deliver a rehearsed thought, is not enough—students need to understand the history behind the methodology of rhetoric and communication. In order for students to truly appreciate and respect oral communication, it is important for them to know the background of rhetoric. One way that many schools have been championing the need for articulate speech is through Speaking Across the Curriculum, SAC, programs. Similar to their Writing Across the Curriculum, WAC, counterpart, which encourages students to write to learn, SAC focuses on the concept of “communicating to learn”. In many colleges and universities throughout the United States, from San Jose State to Hampton-Sydney College, a type of SAC program has been established—a Speech Center. Through the process of a Speech Center, students are the tutor/consultants, trained in rhetorical pedagogy, guiding other students in the thinking,

practicing, and performing aspects of oral communication. Not only do students use the resource of a Speech Center, but in quite a few colleges and universities, faculty and staff often seek out this resource as well. Having students be the consultants accomplishes a two-fold academic purpose—not only are they assisting other students to learn, but they are learning themselves. A Speech Center is truly a dialogic learning community.

While the basics of a Speech Center are simple, the effects of such a resource are complex and profound—students will become more engaged in their classes and more aware of their own learning and thinking processes. A Speech Center will go beyond the performance aspect of VCU's SPCH 121: Effective Speaking and SPCH 321: Speech for Business and Professions. Students would be enlightened with pedagogy and theory of rhetoric and communication, not mere delivery and catchy introduction techniques.

Establishing a Speech Center on the Virginia Commonwealth University campus, should not be seen as an economic, financial burden; rather, it should be viewed as a challenge—a challenge that, once overcome, will make VCU a more competitive school in Virginia. A challenge to ensure that upon graduation, students at VCU will have had the opportunity to hone not only their writing skills, but also their speaking skills. Linda Hobgood believes, “The very presence of such a practice facility on a college campus invites faculty, staff, and students to determine for themselves whether their public communication matters” (Communication Education 349). In my opinion, Virginia Commonwealth University students, faculty, and staff also deserve this opportunity—I challenge VCU to prove that articulate speech, that eloquence, and that communication as a whole, matter.

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APPENDIX A

EMAIL PROTOTYPE

Dear Dr. [Professor's Name],

My name is Julie Irvin and I am a Master's of English in Rhetoric and Writing student at Virginia Commonwealth University. Presently, I am researching Speech Centers in hopes of constructing a paper that can be used to start a Speech Center at VCU. My interest in this started with being a student, speech center consultant, and rhetoric fellow at the University of Richmond under the direction of Mrs. Linda Hobgood.

In regards to my current project, I was wondering if you would be able to answer the following questions:

-What was, or is, your source of funding for the Speech Center?
Was it federal, state, university?

-Why did you establish a speech center? Was it because of the "across-the-curriculum" movement or needed criteria for accreditation?

-How long has the center been in operation?

-Do the consultants volunteer or get paid?

-How many consultants?

-Approximately, how many students do you serve?

-Also, if there is any other information, insights, or resources that you wish to share, please let me know.

Thank you so much for your time and I hope to learn more about your Speech Center soon!
Thanks,

Julie Irvin

APPENDIX B

SYLLABI AND COURSE MATERIALS FOR SPCH 121

SPEECH 121, Section 010
Effective Speech
Fall 2004

Instructor: Brandon Becker
beckerbe@mail2.vcu.edu

Office: Shafer 307
Hours: Tues. 3-4pm
or by appointment

Class Time/Location: TR, 9:30-10:45am, BUS 1108

Optional Texts: The Challenge of Effective Speaking: Twelfth Edition – Rudolph
F. Verderber & Kathleen S. Verderber
Student Workbook for the Challenge of Effective Speaking

Required Materials: Notecards
Binder
Pencil/Pen

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE

To allow the student a safe environment in which to learn the basic components of public speaking and be able to practice, rehearse and improve them.
To give students practical speaking tools to use in the future.
To empower the student and make them more comfortable with speaking in front of others.
To make learning public speaking an enjoyable experience – while also preparing you for any speech ‘activity’ that you may be called upon to do in the future.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

To fulfill all class assignments (both written and oral).

* Please only call this number in an emergency.

To support your fellow classmates.
 To learn how to create an outline for a speech.
 To have fun and be open to new things.
 To try.

You must inform the instructor of an absence for a religious holiday by the second week of classes.

SCHOOL POLICY

No food, drink, or gum in class! I will deduct points from your grade if you continue to chew gum after three warnings. Water in a non-spillable container is acceptable and encouraged.

VCU HONOR POLICY

The VCU Honor policy now includes a promise to not bring weapons on campus, and to turn off cell phones in class. Please review the policy on-line or in the VCU bulletin.

Always adhere to the VCU Honor Policy. I will be checking your sources for speeches so don't be tempted to cheat or plagiarize – the consequences are not pretty (dismissal from class or the University).

SYLLABUS

The syllabus outline should be easy to follow. Each class is broken down by day. The topic for that day follows and the corresponding chapter numbers (for those who want to reinforce the information by reading it!). Anything in bold is what is due that day or what should have been read before that class (in other words if you see it make sure you have read it by that day!). The two tests are in bold as well, as are the days when each group gives their speech. When it says Round 1 or 2 the groupings will be given to the class by me the day before they occur – the order of speeches within Groups A, B, & C will be by luck of the draw the morning the speech occurs.

Thursday, Aug 26

Review Syllabus

Introductions Due

Turn in Opening Day Survey

Tuesday, Aug 30

Box Presentations

Thursday, Sep 2

Interview Speech

Special Guest

Public Speaking (Chapter 1)

Analyzing your audience (Chapter 4)

Read pages 30-34 from Chapter 2

E-mailed Statement of Syllabus Comprehension Due by 12am (midnight)

Tuesday, Sep 7

Listening (Chapter 3)

Short description of story for Personal Narrative Due

Thursday, Sep 9

Coping with Nerves (Chapter 2)

Wear comfortable clothes you don't mind getting dirty and bring a towel/sheet

Name Test

Tuesday, Sep 14

Personal Narrative

Thursday, Sep 16

Brainstorming

Speech Goals (Chapter 4)

Read pages 238-249 in Chapter 12 and Chapter 7 & 8

Tuesday, Sep 21

Outlining (Chapter 7) - Thesis & Main Points

Activity 4.1 - Brainstorming Topics Due

Specific Topic & Speech Goal for Expository Speech Due

Introduction & Conclusions (Chapter 8)

Thursday, Sep 23

Researching Information (Chapter 6)

Using Notecards

Impromptu #1

Expository Speech Practice Outline Due

How to Practice (Chapter 11 pgs. 198-213)

How to Reach Your Audience (Chapter 5)

Communicating Effectively (Chapter 10)

Tuesday, Sep 28

Expository/Definition Speech: Group B (audience analysis/final outline/rehearsal sheet due)

Thursday, Sep 30

Expository/Definition Speech: Group A (audience analysis/final outline/rehearsal sheet due)

Tuesday, Oct 5

Impromptu # 2

Outlining Practice Test

Thursday, Oct 7

Impromptu #2 continued

Outlining Test

Tuesday, Oct 12

Job Interview – Round 1

Thursday, Oct 14

Job Interview – Round 2

Tuesday, Oct 19

Visual Aids (Chapter 9)

Read Chapter 9 & pg. 232-237 in Chapter 12

Thursday, Oct 21

READING DAY – NO CLASS!!!

Tuesday, Oct 26

Demonstration/Process Explanation Speech– (rehearsal sheet/outline due)

Thursday, Oct 28

Persuasive Speaking (Chapter 13) – Organizational Patterns

Tactic

Read pages 264-267 in Chapter 13

Tuesday, Nov 2

Persuasive Speaking continued – Ways to Argue

Read 282-290 in Chapter 14

Persuasive Speech Topic & Pattern Due

Thursday, Nov 4

Defend the Indefensible

Tuesday, Nov 9

Persuasive Speech Pitfalls

Definitions Test

Persuasive Speech Practice Outline Due

Thursday, Nov 11

Persuasive Impromptu

Feedback on outlines

Tuesday, Nov 16

Persuasive Speech: Group A (audience analysis/final outline/rehearsal sheet due)

Thursday, Nov 18

Persuasive Speech: Group B (audience analysis/final outline/rehearsal sheet due)

Tuesday, Nov 23

Persuasive Speech: overflow

Debate and Rebuttal

Read pages 304-308 in Chapter 14

Defend Your Choice

Thursday, Nov 25

THANKSGIVING BREAK!!!

Tuesday, Nov 30

Debate - Round 1

Thursday, Dec 2

Debate - Round 2

Speech Journals Due

Tuesday, Dec 7

Summary of Course/ Class Evaluations

Banquet Assignments Given

Read Chapter 15

Extra Credit Due & Observation Papers Due

Thursday, Dec 9

Final Breakfast Banquet (REREAD CHAPTER 15 in PREPARATION!) and
LAST DAY OF CLASS!

Speech 121
Mr. Becker

THE LAST BIG SPEECH

The last really big speech that you are required to do is the Persuasive Speech. The following tells you what is required from you besides the actual giving of the speech.

- #1 TURN IN Your Speech Goal/Topic on Tuesday, November 2. It should be in this format TYPED:

PERSUASIVE SPEECH GOAL:
ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN:

- #2 Research and begin to outline your speech using what you have learned in class and in the book. See below for minimum research requirements.

- #3 TYPE up tentative outline to TURN in on Tuesday, November 9 (earlier is fine too).

- #4 Your speech must be 6-8 minutes long.
It must have at least 4 cited sources in it (only 1 can be an Internet source) – but more is always welcomed!

- #5 ON THE DAY of your speech you must turn-in
COMPLETE OUTLINE (2 copies – one for you one for me), typed of course.

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS - A separate typed piece of paper that answers these questions:

What do you think the audience's opinion of your goal will be?
How does this affect your speech?
What are the reasons you will use to support your goal?
What organizational pattern are you using?
How will you establish credibility?
How will you motivate the audience through their emotions?

REHEARSAL SHEET – with a minimum of four rehearsals (you can always notate additional ones on the back too!)

DRESS NICELY!

(Don't forget to review your critique sheet from the last speech so that you can make those changes for this one!)

APPENDIX C

SYLLABI AND COURSE MATERIALS FOR SPCH 321

SPCH 321-002 – Effective Speech

Fall 2005 – Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45

BUSN 2107

Call # 17581

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Susan Hayes

E-mail: hayessg@vcu.edu

Office: SS-304

Office Hours: By Appointment Only

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Text – The Art of Public Speaking by Stephen E. Lucas – Available in VCU Bookstore
Pen and paper at all times. Please come prepared and do not have to borrow from other students.

A stapler. I do not accept unstapled papers, especially if you expect to get them back. The Swingline Tot stapler is available at most office supply store, grocery stores, and drug stores for less than \$3.

CLASS OBJECTIVES

To learn to prepare and deliver several different types of speeches, including the outline and delivery processes.

To learn to reduce the stress of speaking through exposure to speaking, practice, and stress-reducing tactics.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a necessary and important component of this class. Most of the grades for this class are given for work done while in class, such as participation and impromptu speeches. You may be absent one time with no penalty, but you cannot make up grades from work done in class. The only exception is that late in the semester, you will have the opportunity to make up ONE impromptu speech. Two lates equal one absence.

After one absence or two lates you will lose 50 of the points you have earned from the total 1000 for each additional absence or late.

Severe circumstances (illness, death in the family, car accidents, etc.) will be considered on a case-by-case basis with proper documentation.

IF YOU ARE AN ATHLETE AND ANTICIPATE BEING ABSENT, PLEASE LET ME KNOW IMMEDIATELY. I will need written notice for all absences.

DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities must inform the instructor immediately in order to make appropriate arrangements.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment will result in a 0 for the assignment, possible dismissal from the class, and students found cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to University rules on cheating and plagiarism as described in your student handbook. Remember that you signed the University Honor Code before attending classes.

Plagiarizing consists of but is not limited to:

Failure to properly cite sources in outlines

Failure to properly cite sources in speeches

Failure to provide a works cited page for work submitted containing research OR

failure to provide accurate and complete information on the works cited page

Failure to include quotation marks around a direct quote

Using others' ideas (published or unpublished) as your own, or failing to cite that they were not your own ideas

SOURCES

For the Informative Speech and both Persuasive Speeches, you will be required to include 4 research sources. Only one may be an internet source. Sources that are also print sources (i.e. New York Times online or journals from Infotrac) do not count as internet sources.

CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR

E-mail is my preferred method of communication. If you e-mail me, I am happy to e-mail you back or telephone you. You may also leave a written note in my campus mailbox or call the theatre office 828-1514 and leave a message. I will be glad to make an appointment to speak with you about class matters whenever necessary.

EXPECTATIONS OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to behave as professional adults at all times. Use your best judgment to determine what this means beyond the stated guidelines.

No cellular phones, pagers, PDA's that ring or beep, or any such electronic distraction are allowed to be ON or USED during class.

Controversial topics

Controversial topics are acceptable for speech material. However, the speaker must be sensitive to the audience. Avoid offensive language and avoid offending your audience. Since feedback is an important part of learning public speaking, remember that if you

offend your audience, they may not be able to give positive feedback or even be able to listen fully to your message.

The listener must understand that they will probably disagree with some of the various speakers' points of view. Remember that their opinion is valid as an opinion and not an attack on you or your beliefs. You are certainly allowed to disagree, but your feedback should be regarding the speaker's speaking abilities and not their opinions. If the topic of the speech is discussed by the class, please keep comments on the level of the issue. Personal attacks will result in a 0 for the day's participation grade and the student will be asked to leave class, resulting in a counted absence.

No student may enter or exit during any speech except in the case of a real emergency. Participation and attitude are 1/10 of your grade. Participation each day means that you are attentive and participate in class discussions. Since this is a public speaking class, you are expected to speak and make a meaningful contribution to this class. You should make an effort to participate in class discussions. Attitude means that you are respectful in your participation and interactions with other students and the instructor. It also means that you operate in this class with a level of professionalism appropriate to a college class. Sleeping, whining, having side-conversations, chronic lateness, entering/exiting during someone's speech, and such behaviors are determinants of reductions in your attitude grade.

GRADING

There are 1000 possible points to earn in this class. To earn all the points, a student must completely fulfill the requirements of participation and assignments. A breakdown of the grading and the description of the assignments' requirements are attached so that you may keep up with your grade throughout the semester.

No late assignments will be accepted. If you must miss class on the date that an assignment is due, you must have it in by e-mail or in my mailbox before the beginning of class. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted if you are in class. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Missed assignments cannot be made up. Missed speeches cannot be made up unless the student gives proof of a severe circumstance, which must be approved by the instructor. Missed speeches will receive a reduced grade. You are expected to be in class on the day the speeches are due. Severe circumstances are evaluated on a case by case basis. Unless you are gravely ill (if you are not sure if your illness constitutes grave illness, you are probably not ill enough to miss class), are hospitalized, or have a REAL emergency, you are expected to be in class on the day of speech presentations. Should you not come to class and fail to provide me documentation of why you were absent, you will not be allowed to give your speech on subsequent speech days. You will still be responsible for your outlines and critiques.

Outlines are required for the final three speeches. Drafts will be graded for completion and meaningfulness. Final outlines will be graded for completion, meaningfulness, accuracy, use of research sources, and relevance to the speech. Spelling counts. Use your spell check.

You will also be required to have a separate speaking outline from the research outline. Speaking outlines may not contain more than 60 words.

You are required to submit your topics by the dates delineated in the syllabus. Failure to turn in a topic on time will result in the loss of ½ of the credit of the outline draft. You may change your topic if need be, but you **MUST** clear it with me first.

Speeches will be graded based on specific criteria required for each speech. The evaluation criteria of each speech assignment is included with the assignment description. If you go over the maximum allotted time, you will not be stopped, but your grade will be reduced. When you have 60 seconds remaining, a sheet saying “Time” will be held up to warn you to wrap it up. .

Don’t panic when you look at the schedule. It’s not nearly as bad as it looks. There is no reason why any student who turns in all the assignments and has good attendance should not get at least a B in this class. I expect you to do the work assigned to you, but the major criterion for grading in this class is improvement. All you have to do is work at it.

The dates, policies, and assignments in the class are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. However, any changes will be discussed with the class before being implemented.

CLASS SCHEDULE – Subject to change

REVISED 10/18/05

DATE	CLASS PLAN	ASSIGNMENT DUE
8/25	Impromptu 1 Review Syllabus	
8/30	Impromptu 2 Receive assignment for first three speeches	Return signed Syllabus Agreement
9/1	2 Minute Speech 1	
9/6	Impromptu 3 Discussion: Outlining Break into groups for presentations	
9/8	Prepare for presentations	
9/13	Group presentations and discuss	

9/15	Group presentations and discuss	
9/20	Group presentations an discuss	Topic Due for Informative Speech
9/22	Impromptu 4	
9/27	Impromptu 5 Discuss outlines	
9/29	Prepare for and Discuss Informative Speech	Outline Draft Due for Informative Speech
10/4	Prepare for and Discuss Informative Speech(must have visual aid for this speech)	
10/6	Informative Speech	Final outline due for those speaking
10/11	Informative Speech Receive Assignment for Persuasive 1	Final outline due for those speaking
10/13	Informative Speech	
10/18	Imp #6 Receive Assignment for Persuasive 1 Receive Assignment for Impromptu #7	Self-evaluation 1 Due E-MAIL PERSUASIVE TOPIC
10/20	No Class	
10/25	Impromptu 7 Receive Critique Sheets and Assignment for Job Interview and Resume	
10/27	Discuss Persuasive Speech Impromptu 8 Go over critique sheets	Outline Draft Due for Persuasive 1
11/1	Impromptu 9 Receive assignment for Persuasive 2	
11/3	Persuasive Speech 1	Final outline due for those speaking
11/8	Persuasive Speech 1	Critiques from 11/3 Due Final outline due for those speaking

11/10	Practice Questions for Job Interview with groups	Resume due Critiques from 11/8 due
11/15	Practice Questions for Job Interview with groups Receive assignment for outside observation paper	Topics due for Persuasive #2
11/17	Job Interview	
11/22	Job Interview	Critiques from 11/17 due Outline Draft Due for Pers. #2
11/24	No class	
11/29	Impromptu 10	Self-evaluation 2 due Critiques from 11/22 due
12/1	Persuasive Speech 2	
12/6	Persuasive Speech 2	
12/8	Persuasive Speech 2/wrap up Last day of class – Outside observation paper due in my mailbox no later than 12/13	Final Outline for Persuasive 2 Due

Assignment: Informative Speech

Length: 3-5 minutes

Outline word limit: 60 words

(remember a direct quote counts as 1 and a citation counts as 1).

Sources required: 4

Pick a topic that is interesting to you, that you think will interest your audience, and that your audience knows little about.

Be sure that you are informing your audience, not persuading them. You will have 2 opportunities to do persuasive speeches later this semester.

Reminder: you must research this topic, and have at least 2 sources in your bibliography (1 may be internet source).

Possible topics for informative speeches

Remember, this is just a set of suggestions, there are about a million things that you could do this speech on.

Your name _____
critiqued: _____

Name of person

Persuasive critique sheet

Introduction:

Attention getter:

Overview of main points:

Prepared audience for topic:

Identifiable thesis?

Body:

Organization:

Transitions:

Clear/understandable:

Level of persuasion:

Credibility:

Established:

Maintained:

Use of sources:

Delivery:

Eye contact:

Posture/body language:

Volume:

Rate/pace:

Articulation/pronunciation:

Related to audience:

Extemporaneous speaking:

Use of outline:

Conclusion:

Prepared audience for ending:

Feeling of completion:

Summarized points:

Other Comments:

VITA

Julie C. Irvin

Born: August 14, 1980
Richmond, Virginia; United States

EDUCATION:

MA in English with specialization in Rhetoric and Writing, Virginia Commonwealth University, VA, December 2005; GPA: 4.0.

Bachelor of Arts degree, *Magna Cum Laude*, University of Richmond, VA, May 2003; Double Major in Rhetoric and Communication Studies, GPA: 3.83, and Sociology, GPA: 3.9; Cumulative GPA: 3.68

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Substitute Teacher, Collegiate School, North Mooreland Road, Richmond, VA 23229:
September 2005-Present

Paralegal, The Irvin Law Firm, 10436 Lakeridge Parkway, Ashland, VA 23005: May 2003-Present

Rhetoric Fellow, Department of Rhetoric and Communication Studies, University of Richmond:
Spring 2001 – Spring 2003

Speech Consultant, Department of Rhetoric and Communication Studies, University of Richmond:
Fall 2001 – Spring 2003

Summer College RA, Writing Fellow, Speech Consultant/Fellow: Summers 2001, 2002

Speech Center Assistant to Linda B. Hobgood, Director of the Speech Center, University of Richmond: Summer 2002

Writing Fellow, CORE University of Richmond: Fall 2000 – Summer 2002

LEADERSHIP, HONORS and ACTIVITIES:

Presented Paper: A Neo-Aristotelian Analysis of Pericles' Funeral Oration, to the Undergraduate Honors Conference with the Southern States Communication Association, Birmingham, AL, 2003.

Secretary & Member, Westhampton College Class Cabinet 2003: 1999 – Spring 2002

Celebration Committee Member, Westhampton College: 2000, 2001

Student Speaker, Westhampton College Tree-Planting Ceremony: 2000

Member, Phi Eta Sigma, Freshman Honor Society

Member, Alpha Kappa Delta, Sociology Honor Society

Member, Lambda Pi Eta, National Communications Honor Society

Departmental Honors in Rhetoric and Communication Studies

Member, Golden Key National Honor Society

Dean's List recognition, Spring 2000; Spring 2001 – Spring 2003 (6 out of 8 semesters with overall GPA 3.6 or higher)

Virginia Baptist Scholar, Fall 1999 – Spring 2003

OTHER PERTINENT EXPERIENCE:

President, Monacan High School Forensic Team 1997-1999

Placed in the Top 5 at VHSL State Championships for Extemporaneous Speaking, 1996-1999

Competed in the Catholic Forensic Team National Tournament, 1996, 1998-1999 (3 Years)