

**SPEAK.**  
**BE**  
**HEARD.**



*2024-2025*

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# 2024-2025 Team Roster

Lydia Aamodt	Morgan Mueller
Ashlyn Altman	John O'Brien
Brock Bruns	Sofia Panitzke
Logan Clarke	Pascal Pudasaini
Elayna Geiser	Amelia Reid
Allison Gelster	Evelyn Schumacher
James Gully	Kaitlyn Sharp
Lilli Guggisberg	Brenna Springborg
Nedoh Gyi	Brooke Struthers
Queen Kevwe	Katrina Timm
Ruqiyo Mohamed	Ashe Zilka

These are the students who have engaged with the coaching staff and used team resources to further the goals of SMSU Speech. As with many organizations, some members are more active than others.



# Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a permanent record of the activities and performances of the SMSU Speech Team during the 2024-2025 academic year. This report also serves as means of informing others of the program's activities throughout the year. The Speech Team serves SMSU students in a wide variety of ways. Specifically, the program has three developmental goal areas: academic, social, and personal.

Academically, Speech participation is a requirement of students pursuing the Communication Studies and Communication Education majors. Other students desire Speech activities on their transcript to show prospective employers that they have developed and honed their communication skills. Speech participation provides students with a rich educational experience that give individuals skills they can use for a lifetime.

Speech Team also fulfills a social function as it is a recognized SMSU student club/organization. Students come together to talk about new literature and/or public speaking topics that they are considering using in competition. They encourage one another for upcoming tournaments or congratulate each other on past tournament performances. Students also engage in community service projects and participate in local events. The students support each other and form friendships that can last a lifetime. Team members also have an opportunity to polish their leadership skills by serving as officers of the organization.

Organizational activities such as holiday parties, fundraisers, high school and collegiate tournaments, community service projects and showcase performances help to fulfill the social function of the Speech Team.



Personal developmental goals are also fulfilled through Speech involvement. The poise and confidence gained are irreplaceable, as are the reasoning, listening, researching, and speaking skills one acquires in Speech. An integration of these areas-academic, social, and personal-is a valuable goal of any club or organization. The SMSU Speech Team takes pride in knowing that members have the opportunity to make strides in each of these areas.

The Speech Team has goals, not only in educating the students of SMSU, but also in preparing them for the “real world.” Through the SMSU Speech program, students:

- (1) develop knowledge of logic and reasoning skills.
- (2) learn the skills required to deliver an effective presentation or speech.
- (3) learn to weigh two sides of an argument objectively and sensibly.
- (4) learn to build poise and confidence, especially in front of large groups.
- (5) become exposed to intercollegiate speech and debate tournaments.
- (6) overcome any communication obstacles.
- (7) share with others what they have in common-interest in communication.
- (8) learn to research topics in depth.
- (9) learn to listen critically.
- (10) learn to form personal opinions and logical conclusions more readily.
- (11) increase their efficiency in communication.

Students have the opportunity to become involved in all areas of competitive discourse: Debate, prose, poetry, program oral interpretation, drama, dramatic duo interpretation, persuasive speaking, extemporaneous speaking, impromptu speaking, communication analysis, after-dinner speaking, and informative speaking. Any SMSU student, regardless of previous experience, can take part in Speech activities. Students may receive academic credit.

The forensics program is funded by the Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC). These funds supplement the fundraising done by the team and are used to offset the cost of travel, registration fees, supplies and materials.



# Competition Events

**After Dinner Speaking:** An original humorous speech by the student, designed to exhibit sound speech composition, thematic coherence, direct communicative public speaking skills, and good taste. The speech should not resemble a night club act, an impersonation, or a comic monologue. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

**Communication Analysis:** An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a communication event, such as a speech, speaker, movement, poem, poster, campaign, etc., through the use of theatrical principles. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

**Duo Interpretation:** A cutting from one or more texts of literary merit, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. The material may be drawn from any genre of literature. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc, are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

**Dramatic Interpretation:** A cutting that represents one or more characters from a play or plays of literary merit. The focus of this event is on the development of characterization. This material may be drawn from stage, screen or radio. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

**Extemporaneous Speaking:** Contestants will be given three topics in the general area of current events, will choose one, and will have 30 minutes to prepare a speech. Maximum time limit for the speech is 7 minutes. Notes are permitted. Students will speak in listed order. Posting of topics will be staggered.

**Impromptu Speaking:** An impromptu speech, serious in nature, with topic selection varied round by round, section by section. Topics will be of a proverb nature. Speakers will have a total of 7 minutes and may use the time at their own discretion. Notes are permitted. Each speaker in a given section will have the same topic.

**Informative Speaking:** An original, factual speech by the student on a realistic subject to fulfill the general aim to inform the audience. Visuals may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

**Parliamentary Debate:** Parliamentary Debate is a formal contest of advocacy which theoretically occurs in a House of Parliament. Participants are the Government and Opposition teams, and the moderator is Madam or Mister Speaker of the House. A motion or resolution is a sentence or phrase which provides the subject of debate. The Government Team has a limited

amount of time, usually fifteen minutes, to prepare a case centered around this topic. Published materials, or other resources for the debater's use in the round, may not be brought into the debating chambers.

**Persuasive Speaking:** An original speech by the student designed to inspire, reinforce, or change the beliefs, attitudes, values, or actions of the audience. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

**Poetry Interpretation:** A selection or selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Play cuttings and prose works are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

**Program Oral Interpretation:** A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from two or three recognized genres of competitive interpretation (prose/poetry/drama). A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme through the use of narrative/story, language, and/or characterization. A substantial portion of the total time must be devoted to each of the genres used in the program. Different genre means the material must appear in separate pieces of literature (e.g., A poem included in a short story that appears only in that short story does not constitute a poetry genre). Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

**Prose Interpretation:** An original or selections of prose material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. Focus of this event is on the development of the narrative/story. Play cuttings and poetry are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.



# Coaches

The Speech Team is coached and managed by the Director of Forensics Ben Walker. This was Professor Ben Walker's 9<sup>th</sup> year as Director of Forensics. This year, the Assistant Director, Julie Walker, was on sabbatical so there were two assistant coaches for the year that helped fill in on a limited part-time basis:

**Cadi Kadlecek**

Fall Semester



**David Brennan**

Spring Semester



As coaches, they work with students individually to prepare for intercollegiate competitions and travel with the team to contests. While at contests, in addition to supervising students on the team, they serve as adjudicators of competitors from other schools. The coaching staff is also responsible for managing the travel arrangements of the team, accounts, team activities, hosting tournaments, fundraisers and the co-curricular aspects of the team.



# Season Highlights

The competitive season for college speech runs the entire academic year, with competitions starting in early October and finishing in March. SMSU Forensics had *another* fantastic year. Here are some of the competitive highlights from the season:

- **At the Minnesota State Championship (@ Concordia College)...**
  - Senior Nedoh Gyi is named to the Minnesota All-State Forensics Team
- **Students who qualified for the AFA National Speech Tournament (in Charlotte, NC)...**
  - Nedoh Gyi, Amelia Reid, Katrina Timm, John O'Brien, Mallory Bingen, Brenna Springborg, Ashe Zilke, Queen Kevwe, Morgan Mueller, Kaitlyn Sharp
- **At the Asynchronous Speech Championship...**
  - SMSU Speech places 10<sup>th</sup> in the Limited Entry Team Sweepstakes



# Campus and Community Events

This year was difficult without our second coach (Julie) but we were still able to do some things beyond our usual preparing to speak:

- **Mustangs Vote**  
The team helped this campus initiative by handing out flyers to get students to vote in November 2024.
- **Poetry Out Loud**  
The team provided space and judges for the regional Poetry Out Loud competition in February 2025.
- **Night Before Nationals**  
Students performed for the public some of the speeches that qualified for nationals in late March 2025.
- **Individual Student Projects**  
Our team has resources that many students turn to for help. Several students this year borrowed team equipment for their own use on personal projects including: clip on microphones, presentation clickers, visual aid stands, camera tripods, and our wheelchair.

