

Who Enrolls in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking: A Record-Data Survey

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All of the figures referred to in the text are printed in the appendix at the end of the article.

Fundamentals of Public Speaking: A Data Survey

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the utilization of an academic course, the Fundamentals of Public Speaking, in a comprehensive regional mid-southern university. The study was undertaken because of some recent concerns about the course's value or role in higher education curricula and because departments offering the course oftentimes do not realize the scope of university service they perform. Final grade reports were surveyed for the 7 academic-year period 1979-80 through 1985-86, including summer quarters. The more salient findings included the following: (a) the average enrollment per academic year was 379, with sections ranging between 18 to 23 students; (b) enrollment increases paralleled University growth, reflecting 1%; (c) Winter quarters, earlier class-hours, and Monday-Wednesday-Friday sections were preferable to respective comparable periods; (d) there was a gender bias favoring females, which was attributable to curricula; (e) sophomores comprised slightly less than one third of the enrollment for this second-year course; and (f) grades were better than the University average. Implications are discussed.

Who Enrolls in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking:

A Record Data Survey

The public speaking course is traditionally the most important course in any department or unit area of speech communication. It is important for several reasons; reasons which are all too often forgotten, misunderstood, or lost in the academic versus professional perspectives of speech communication (Hillman, 1978, 1982; Osborn, Yeomans, Lowe, Filippo, & Quiggins, 1977; Paulson, 1980; Gouran, 1980).

First, the public speaking course fulfills a curriculum requirement at some level of the university (Gibson, Gruner, Hanna, Smythe, & Hayes, 1980). For this reason, the course should be valued and evaluated; as a service course, it represents an expectation on the part of academic units requiring the course. Second, it challenges the students because, in many instances, if not most, public speaking represents a course causing anxiety and/or frustration (Beaty & Andriate, 1985; Daly & Friedrich, 1981). For a caring, sensitive faculty, the challenge is to present the course in ways that denote and connote both scholarly and lifelong learning.

Third, according to Fischer (1975) and Nelson and Pearson (1984), a course like public speaking builds personal competence, promotes social development, and enhances professional growth. Fourth, it serves as a vehicle to interest and to entice students into the major or into upper division courses, as well as to introduce them to forensics and debate.

Fifth, the course serves as the initial teaching assignment for many graduate assistants. In this case, the course should be monitored to ensure academic continuity with accepted departmental standards and to ensure that new teaching assistants are supported in their instructional activities (e.g., see DeBoer, 1980; Gibson et al., 1980; Gibson, Hanna, & Huddleston, 1985). Sixth, and probably the most important consideration, the course represents the cornerstone of departments' ability to generate credit hours (Gibson et al., 1980; Gibson et al., 1985).

The latter point carries some important implications. The first implication involves departmental solvency and/or, more appropriately, supply and demand. In some institutions during the past decade or two, curricula have waned because of enrollment problems. These curricula, like our economy, starting in the mid-1970s through today, have been unstable (unexpanding). This problem has affected the employment security of our colleagues and the job outlook for our majors (e.g., see Clavier, Clevenger, Khair, & Khair, 1979; Delia, 1979; Hauser, 1979; Lancer, Buckley, & Deetz, 1984). More recently, however, Gibson et al. (1985) report more favorable data.

The second implication reflects the converse of the first. In this case, the department is expanding its discipline courses and decreasing the service course(s), depending on the departmental philosophy or the availability of

teaching assistants. The specific aspects of these implications within the field of speech communication are considered, in part, by Brooks (1982), Hillman (1978, 1982), and Osborn et al. (1977).

A review of the literature in speech communication for the past decade or so reveals a number of studies devoted to surveying or to understanding some aspect of communication. A representative selection of these more recent studies include teacher effectiveness (Applegate, 1980; Kearney, Plax, & Wendt-Wasco, 1985; Powell & Arthur, 1985), the elderly (Dreher, 1982; Nussbaum, 1985; Schuetz, 1980), human interactions (Baxter & Philpott, 1982; Cody, McLaughlin, & Schneider, 1981; Gudykunst, 1985; Snavely, 1981; Wheelless & Berry-Fink, 1985; Wheelless, Wheelless, & Howard, 1984), communication apprehension (Beaty & Andriate, 1985; Daly & Friedrich, 1981; Greene & Sparks, 1983; Lederman, 1983; McCrosky, Beaty, Kearney, & Plax, 1985; Parks, Dindia, Adams, Berlin, & Larson, 1980; Porter, 1982; Prisbell, 1982), course evaluations (Clevenger & Todd-Mancillias, 1982), and survey of speech communication (Dance, 1980; Eadie, 1979; Gibson et al., 1980; Lance et al., 1984; Hostettler, 1980; Marlier, 1980; Paulson, 1980). Each of these surveys, and others like them, has contributed to our understanding of speech communication.

The literature does not reveal, however, studies which survey specifically the demand for or the utilization of a fundamental public speaking course in curricula requirements. This assertion differs from those developed by Dedmon and Frandsen (1964), Gibson and his colleagues (1970, 1974, 1980, 1985), and Hillman (1981). These studies focused, primarily, on trends in course content and instructional patterns in basic speech courses. The present study differs from these studies in four ways. It considers (a) course outcomes rather than course content and instructional trends and (b) empirical data rather than questionnaire data. Further, this study is limited to (c) a single university environment rather than a national survey and (d) a basic public speaking course rather than basic first courses in speech.

In surveying demands for public speaking, departments offering the course are better able to service curricula requirements and to utilize personnel wisely. This present investigation overviews some selected aspects of this issue.

The present study emanates from a concern for the service aspects of speech communication curricula and the broader perspectives on core curricula, speech majors, and job markets and security (Brooks, 1982; Clavier et al., 1979). In addition, this study serves as a reminder that, oftentimes, a course like Fundamentals of Public Speaking is the backbone of the programmatic offering for the academic unit administering it.

This study presents data on a specific course in speech communication. The course is Fundamentals of Public Speaking. It is defined within the context of the University and in this study as the initial course in speech communication, designed for oral communication from speech germination and planning through delivery on the platform. The data exist as a consequence of course administration and outcome.

Method

The study was conducted at Tennessee Technological University (TTU) in Cookeville, Tennessee. This University is a predominantly white, regional, comprehensive, multipurpose university located in middle-Tennessee. Its headcount enrollment was 7,680 students (or a Full-Time Equivalency of 7,132) in the academic year 1985-86, during the time of the survey.

In a recent national survey, *U.S. News & World Report* (1985) found TTU to be one of the best American colleges. In addition, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) found that TTU had the highest percentage of academically talented students, defined by ACT scores of 24 and above (Sampley, 1985).

Departmental grade records were reviewed for the academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, including the summer quarters. This 7-year period reflected the decade of the 1980s to date. This data gathering period was chosen for its timeliness.

Data from the records included academic year, quarter, section, sex, class rank, grade, major, and college. Because of the confidentiality of records and because of professional sensitivity on the grading process, no other identifying information was tracked. Course sections, however, were not problematic because they did not correlate with specific professors.

Results

Population

The 7-year period for the academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86 revealed 2,656 students matriculated in Fundamentals of Public Speaking. From this data, the average number of students per academic year was 379.

Enrollment

Course. Figure 1 reflects the enrollment of students in Fundamentals of Public Speaking by academic year. Percentages are superimposed on this figure for convenience and readability.

Exception for the academic year 1982-82, reflecting an enrollment of 451 students or 17% of the total, the enrollment was relatively stable. The range was 318 to 398, reflecting respective percentages of 12.0 to 15.2%. This observation indicates that the service roll of public speaking has changed upwards over the 7-year period by approximately 1% per year overall, but in the immediate past three years not more than one half of 1%.

University. Figure 2 supports the findings in the previous figure. Figure 2 indicates the percentage of overall growth in the University's enrollment during the 7-year period, which was approximately 1%. For the immediate past three years, the growth rate, like for public speaking, is less than one half of 1%. The percentages for the years, which range from 4.1 to 5.7%, although redundant, are superimposed on the figure rather than the headcount figures. The enrollment of students in Fundamentals of Public Speaking is keeping pace with the overall University enrollment pattern.

Quarter. Figure 3 reflects the percentage of students enrolled in public speaking for each of the academic quarters across the 7-year period. The totals are superimposed on the figure. Figure 3 indicates a higher demand for public speaking in the Winter quarter than in the others, reflecting 879 students or 32.1%. The Fall quarter follows second with 817 students or 30.8%. Although the percentage difference between the two quarters is small, 2.3%, the difference in enrollment translates into 62 students or 2 to 3 course sections.

The enrollment for the Spring quarter, which was 732 students or 27.6%, was 5.5 to 3.2% less than the two previous ones. Although the Summer quarter reflected 228 students or 8.6% of the total enrollment, the demand was clear for this course during the summer.

Section. Figure 4 offers an orientation on the utilization of course sections across the 7-year period, and is viewed best in conjunction with Figure 1. In this figure, the superimposed numbers reflect the enrollment for the academic year. This approach allows one to know the maximum number of sections offered and the total course enrollment in a given year. However, this approach is also independent of the academic quarters and the frequency with which these section maximums occurred.

Figure 4 shows, for example, that the maximum number of sections offered was 8, with an enrollment of 392 students in the 1983-84 academic year. This maximum occurred in the 1983-84 academic year, one year after the maximum enrollment of 451. During the peak enrollment of the 1982-83 academic year, 7 sections were offered. It reveals also that the number of sections offered during the 7-year period was tri-modal. During the two successive academic years, 1979-80 and 1980-81, there were 5 sections. There were 7 sections offered in academic years 1982-83 and 1984-85 and 6 sections offered in 1981-82 and 1985-86. Generally, this pattern for the number of sections followed the enrollment pattern of the University.

Another orientation on the utilization of course sections can be seen in Figure 5. In this figure, the superimposed numbers reflect the enrollment total for each section across the investigation period. This approach allows one to know the sectional preference.

Across the study period, Section 01 accounted for 586 students or 22.1% of the enrollment. The remaining sections can be viewed similarly, ranging downward from 470 students or 17.7% to 13 students or 0.5%.

Figure 5 indicates that student demand was toward sections earlier than later in the day, since section numbers correlate roughly with time. Section 05 is consistent with this observation because it represented a Tuesday-Thursday period rather than a Monday-Wednesday-Friday one. In addition, following this same logic, one can infer (see) that Monday-Wednesday-Friday sections were in higher demand than Tuesday-Thursday sections, because the higher numbered sections occurred generally with the latter.

The design of the study could not differentiate student preference from curricula demands. This consideration is important because courses in the major or competing course times may have been a factor rather than student preference. Without pursuing this consideration, both dimensions were probably operable. In addition, the data in Figures 4 and 5 suggest that 6 sections are adequate to handle some additional enrollment growth.

Class Size. Figures 4 and 5 address, indirectly, class size. Because the number of sections does not change from quarter to quarter, except for the one section in the summer, the average class size per academic year can be computed with the aid of Figure 4. The range is 18 to 23; however, it is 20 to 23 for 6 of the 7 years. The recommended departmental maximum is 25.

College. Figure 6 displays student enrollment by college. The corresponding percentages for the enrollments are superimposed on the figure.

Figure 6 reveals that the biggest utilization of public speaking was by the College of Education. It accounted for 1,097 students or 41.3% of the enrollment. The College of Business Administration was second with 708 students or 26.7% of the enrollment. Third and fourth place enrollments were held by the College of Agriculture and Home Economics and Arts and Sciences with 15.9 and 12.2%, respectively. The other colleges and a general category of special students labeled "Othr" can be viewed similarly. Together, they accounted for nearly 4% of the total enrollment.

This figure is valuable because it reveals what academic units utilize public speaking. It reveals that 68% of the demand for public speaking was in the Colleges of Education and Business Administration. Thus, the figure is clear in depicting the lack of public speaking in the curricula of the artistic, humanistic, scientific, and technological disciplines.

Gender. Figure 7 addresses enrollment by gender. It reveals that females and males constituted 60.2 and 39.3%

of the enrollment, respectively. The category of others, constituting less than 1%, represents those students who were not clearly discernible and/or verifiable by gender. The corresponding superimposed enrollment counts are 1,598; 1,044; and 14 for females, males, and unknowns, respectively. The figure indicates that 50% more females were enrolled in public speaking than males. The obvious question is, why? Are there more females than males at the University?

University by gender. Figure 8 addresses further the finding in Figure 7. It indicates that 43 versus 57% of the student body was female versus male across the 7-year period. These percentages indicate that there were approximately 33% more males than females enrolled in the University. University enrollment patterns for gender do not account for the finding in Figure 7. Like Figure 2, the percentages in Figure 8 are superimposed and redundant. Figure 8 does not, however, include data on gender for the two academic years 1979-80 and 1980-81, because data are not available.

From Figure 8, it is clear that the University enrollment relative to gender is nearly constant. The actual percentages for males and females were 56.7 and 43.3%, respectively, for the two academic years 1981-82 and 1982-83. The latter 3 years are shown accurately in the figure. In the Fall of 1973, the gender percentages were 60 and 40% for males and females, respectively. The reasons for these rather stable, somewhat unchanging, statistics are unexplainable and beyond the scope of the present study. The importance of the data is in their existence and in their availability for comparisons.

Resolution of the conflicting data in Figures 7 and 8 can be resolved, in part, by returning to Figure 6. Figure 6 indicates that the Colleges of Education and Business Administration accounted for 68% of the enrollment in public speaking. From this data, it can be inferred that any biasing factors relative to gender can be discernible by further analyses of college enrollment by gender.

Gender by college. Figure 9 reveals the enrollment pattern for gender by college. The superimposed percentages correspond to the numbers enrolled.

It shows that the female versus male enrollment was 778 versus 315, or 29.3 versus 11.9%, in the College of Education. These figures indicate a female-male ratio of 2.5:1. In the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Agriculture and Home Economics, and Business Administration, the female enrollment exceeded the male enrollment by approximately 2%. The gender ratio was much larger in the School of Nursing, 6.0:1, but this ratio involved only 12 females versus 2 males.

Figure 9 reveals a different pattern for the College of Engineering. It reveals a gender ratio of 0.1:1, or 10 times more males than females. This ratio is misleading somewhat, because it involved 8 females versus 78 males or 0.3 versus 2.9%. On the other hand, the ratio, relative to the others, leads one to understand the gender bias.

Figure 9 indicates that the gender bias for females was a function of curricula. This can be supported and seen better with the aid of Figure 10.

University by college. Figure 10 shows the number of students enrolled ($N = 7,494$) in the University by college during the 1984-85 academic year. Statistics for the University enrollments by college were not available for the other 6 years under study. There is no reason to assume, however, that these 6 years differed from the 1984-85 school year. This assertion is based on data contained in Figures 2 and 8. Again, for convenience and readability, the percentages are superimposed on the figure.

Figure 10 shows, for example, that the College of Education accounted for 10.5% of the University's total enrollment, while accounting for 41.3% of the public speaking enrollment (see Figure 6). The University enrollment percentages for majors in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Agriculture and Home Economics, Business Administration, Engineering, Nursing, and Other Programs were 19.3, 5.4, 20.1, 34.0, 4.4, and 6.3%, respectively. From Figures 6 and 9, their enrollments in public speaking were 12.2, 15.9, 26.7, 3.2, 0.5, and 0.2%, respectively.

In comparing Figures 9 and 10, one finds that education majors were enrolled in public speaking 4 times greater than their representation in the University, where the female enrollment was 2.5 times higher than males. Agriculture and home economics majors were seen in public speaking 3 times more often than their representation in the University, where the female population outnumbered the males by approximately 2%.

The School of Engineering was the biggest contributor to the female bias in public speaking. It accounted for 34% of the University enrollment, while enrolling 3.2% of its students in public speaking. Its University enrollment, therefore, was more than 10 times greater than its enrollment in public speaking. With their enrollment, although small, the males outnumbered the females by nearly 10 to 1. The School of Arts and Sciences also significantly contributed to the female bias. Its University enrollment (19.3%) was nearly 1.6 times greater than its enrollment in public speaking (12.2%), with an enrollment favoring females over males by slightly more than 1.5%. Although not as nearly great, the gender bias for the remaining colleges can be viewed similarly.

Class rank. Figure 11 shows the enrollment in Fundamentals of Public Speaking by class rank. The figure indicates little difference between the number of sophomores and seniors enrolled in the course; their numbers reflect 814 or 30.7% and 793 or 29.9%, respectively. Juniors accounted for 695 students or 26.2% of the enrollment, while 349 students were freshman or 13.1%. The category of others, labeled "Othr," included graduate or special students; it accounted for 0.2%.

Because public speaking is designated as a sophomore level course, one would speculate that the enrollment would reflect a precipitous downward trend. This reasoning is not supported by the data, which indicated that slightly less than one third of the students were sophomores.

Two reasons are possible for this contradictory finding. First, curricula requirements dictate a different sequence. Second, communication apprehension is a factor. From observations, based on class rolls and on student solicited information, the latter observation is clearly operable. How much the former one is operable is unclear. The exploration of these factors is beyond the scope of the present investigation and is not germane to the reality of enrollment.

Grade. Figure 12 reveals the grade distribution for public speaking. This figure reveals that the grades of A, B, and C were awarded to 602; 1,406; and 381 students, respectively. The corresponding, superimposed percentages are 22.7, 52.9, and 14.3%. All other grades, including a general administrative category, labeled "OT" (e.g., incompletes, (un)satisfactories, absences or lack of attendance, withdrawals, etc.), account for approximately 10%.

The figure indicates that the grade of B was awarded more than 2 and 3 times more often than the grades of A and C, respectively. There is no apparent reason for this grade distribution. It is not inconsistent, however, with the overall scholastic achievement of the student body. This assertion can be viewed from the University's perspective, reflected in Figure 13.

University grade distribution. Figure 13 shows the average distribution of grades in percent for the University's student enrollment during the academic years 1982-83 through 1985-86, including the summer quarters. Data are not available for the three earlier years. Like Figures 2 and 7, the percentages are superimposed and redundant for this figure. Figure 13 shows the percentages for the grades A, B, and C were 29.6, 31.2, and 23.6%, respectively. The other two grades account for nearly 16% of the distribution. These statistics are unlike those in Figure 12, for earned grades in public speaking.

Excluding the administrative grades, labeled "OT," in Figure 12, the grading distribution would have been higher, even more unlike those for the University. On the one hand, there is no reason to assume or expect each course within the University to mirror the University grade distribution. On the other hand, the enrollment favors upper division students, juniors and seniors (representing 56% of the enrollment, who may be better adept at studying. It is more likely, however, that grades favor the performance rather than the academic orientation of the course, since, generally, more weight is given to speech grades than to examination grades (e.g., see Gibson et al., 1980).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to gather administrative data on the Fundamentals of Public Speaking, a course offered at a middle-Tennessee university. This study was undertaken with no formal hypotheses, but with general notions in mind. These general notions were that (a) public speaking is a valuable service course, (b) knowledge of who enrolls in such a course is a direct indicator of its importance, and (c) marketing strategies can be developed to adjust the course offering, based on the data.

As indicated in the Introduction, one finds a number of studies conducted in speech communication. None of these studies considers course administration and academic outcomes. The present study did so.

The reliability of the results can be tested, in part, against selected areas in closely related studies. These studies include Gibson and his colleagues (1970, 1974, 1980, 1985). But, because the data in this study were purposefully limited to the 1980s, the latter two citations are more germane to the results herein.

Class rank. With reference to the student population, Gibson et al. (1985) reported the enrollment in the speech basic course for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors at 28, 29, 22, and 20%, respectively. These figures differ from the 13, 31, 26, and 30, respectively, in the present study. The principal differences lie in the freshman and senior classes across these studies.

In addition, the majority of the population were below the junior rank, 57%, in the former study and above the sophomore rank, 56%, in this study. This comparison reflects reverse trends. The majority of the enrollees were lower classpersons in Gibson et al., and were upper classpersons in the present study. The results in this study could not discern and Gibson et al. did not discuss whether curricula and/or communication apprehension affected the results. More importantly, Gibson et al. defined the basic course to include other communication courses in addition to public speaking, and 46% of their respondents enrolled in these other courses. The present study considered only public speaking as the basic course. These factors can account for the differences in findings.

Enrollment trends. Gibson et al. (1985) indicated that 62% of the responding institutions showed enrollment increases in speech courses corresponding to institutional growth. This study revealed the same finding. Specifically, the overall growth was 1% for the public speaking course and for the University. The growth rate for each of the last three years was less than one half of 1%.

Sections. Gibson et al. reported that 10 sections or fewer were being offered in any given term by the large majority of the respondents, and that the average class size ranged from 18 to 30 students. This was consistent with the findings in the present study where 8 sections was the maximum. The range for the average class size was

17 to 23. However, 5 of the 7 years revealed average sizes from 21 to 23 students. The departmental maximum was 25.

Implications

There are several implications for this study. First, it allows academic units (i.e., departments, colleges, schools, etc.) responsible for the administration of the course to see how well they interface with other curricula. The lack of involvement by other academic units reflects their perception of the importance of public speaking.

For example, Figure 6 indicates that very few engineering, nursing, and other undesignated majors enrolled in public speaking. This study did not attempt to seek the reasons for their lack of enrollment. It is generally recognized, however, that engineering and nursing majors follow a highly structured curricula because of accreditation obligations. Their curricular structure may be a contributory factor in their low representation. With engineering majors, there may be another plausible explanation. The language of engineering is mostly mathematical. Engineers may assume that English grammar, both spoken and written, can naturally be understood by peers (McLeod, 1986). This belief could, in part, account for the low enrollment in this study.

But, the counterargument is that public speaking benefits engineers and nurses, especially considering the complexity and precision of concepts required in their professions.

Similarly, the finding in Arts and Sciences presents a valuable orientation, which may be indigenous to TTU, but worth mentioning in the context of this study. First, the data suggest that more females are majoring in disciplines in Arts and Sciences. Second, the disciplines in Arts and Sciences do not support the Fundamentals of Public Speaking, which is also a course administered within this College.

The inference is that this course is not considered important by these disciplines, thus supporting the engineering and nursing orientations. Pursuit of this inference is beyond the scope of the present study.

Knowing that various majors have low enrollments in Public Speaking reveals potential growth markets for teaching speech communication. Generally, when academic units are convinced of the importance of public speaking they include it in their curricula. For example, engineering majors should understand the need for public speaking in terms of being better prepared or more knowledgeable in techniques for presenting difficult concepts. Similarly, nursing majors are frontline individuals in the delivery of health-care services. A large portion of this service is communication, explaining problems and issues to their patients and their families.

A third implication is in terms of supply and demand. Once enrollment sets the demand, the problem becomes to supply teaching personnel. By analyzing enrollment demands, departments are better able to plan and to utilize their personnel resources for teaching purposes.

Although beyond the scope of the present investigation, two subareas are worth mentioning. First, the academic status of those teaching Fundamentals of Public Speaking can affect enrollment. Students prefer full time rather than part-time faculty or graduate-teaching assistants.

The fourth implication is in the generalization of the method used in this study. The data presented in this study may not be generalizable to other institutions offering a basic course in public speaking. What is generalizable, however, is the method of analyses. The generalization of the method does not preclude the inclusion of other variables, which may have been overlooked or unavailable.

For example, it would be valuable to know how many students were unable to enroll in the course or their preferred choice of sections. This information on course demand would allow for more accurate course expansion. In the context of this University, course expansion could mean offering multiple sections at a given hour, at earlier hours, or on preferred days. This particular strategy would be consistent with the data presented in Figures 4 and 5.

Summary of Results

The following section summarizes the more salient findings presented above and capsulizes those findings worthy of further study.

Population. During the 7-year period, 1979-80 through 1985-86, a total of 2,656 students enrolled in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking. The average enrollment per academic year was 379, including the summer quarter. The enrollment range was 318 (1979-80) to 451 (1982-83). (Figure 1 refers.)

Paralleling the enrollment in public speaking was the enrollment in the University. As the enrollment of the University increased, the enrollment in the number of students taking public speaking correspondingly increased. The overall growth was 1% for both, with the peak University enrollment paralleling the peak public speaking enrollment. (Figures 1 and 2 refer.)

Quarter. The enrollment in public speaking was not distributed equally across quarters. There was a higher demand in the Winter quarter than in other quarters, followed somewhat closely by the Fall quarter. The difference can be equated to either 2 or 3 sections. The course demand in the Spring quarter was 5.5 to 3.2% less than in the Winter and in the Fall quarters. Approximately 8.6% of the total enrollment was for the Summer

quarter. (Figure 3 refers.)

Section. The number of course sections was tri-modal; the modes were 5, 7, and 6. In one year, however, there were 8 sections. The number of sections offered correlated closely with the growth in public speaking and in the University. (Figure 4 and 5 refer.)

In addition, earlier hour sections were more in demand than later hour sections. Further, there was greater demand for Monday-Wednesday-Friday sections than for Tuesday-Thursday sections. (Figure 5 refers.)

Class Size. The average class size ranged from 18 to 23 students. The more representative average range was 20 to 23 students, reflecting 6 years.

College. The demand for public speaking can be ranked by college. The largest user was Education (41.3%), followed by Business Administration (26.7%). These two colleges accounted for 69% of the enrollment. Third and fourth place demands were made by Agriculture and Home Economics (15.9%) and Arts and Sciences (12.2%). The other colleges accounted for approximately 4% of the total. (Figure 6 refers.)

Gender. The enrollment for gender favored females by 50%. The figures were 60 versus 40% for females versus males. In the University, males were favored by 33%. The figures were 57 versus 43% for males versus females (Figures 7 and 8 refer.)

The gender bias was a function of curricula, with curricula favoring females in the College of Education and males in the College of Engineering, indicating traditional enrollments for males and females. (Figures 9 and 10 refer.)

Class rank. Class rank revealed sophomores and seniors comprised 30.7 and 29.9% of the enrollment, respectively. This was followed by juniors, comprising 26.2%, and freshman last, comprising 13.1%. (Figure 11 refers.)

Grade. Grades earned in public speaking differed from those earned in the University. The most frequent grade in public speaking was B, reflecting 53.2%; followed by A, reflecting 23.4%; and then C, reflecting 14.4%. The grade distribution across the University for these same respective grades was 31.2, 29.6, and 23.6%. (Figures 12 and 13 refer.)

Precis

Although the literature is limited, it is believed that public speaking should be a part of the liberal arts and/or university-core curricula. It is further believed that all persons can benefit from such a course, as argued in the introduction to this study.

The number of university curricula requiring enrollment or of students enrolling in a course in public speaking course indicates the importance of the course from a curricula perspective. This study addressed the latter consideration and provided some insights about the former.

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Figure Captions

Figure 1. Number of students enrolled (N = 2,651) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking for each of the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding percentages superimposed.

Figure 2. Percentage of TTU enrollment enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking for each of the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with the redundant percentages superimposed for readability.

Figure 3. Percentage of students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking for each academic quarter across the entire 7-year period 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding numbers superimposed.

Figure 4. Maximum number of sections offered in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking for each of the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with the total course enrollment (N = 2,656) for each year superimposed.

Figure 5. Percentage of students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking for each course section across the entire seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding total enrollment for each section superimposed.

Figure 6. Number of students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking by academic college across the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding percentages superimposed.

Figure 7. Percentage of students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking by gender across the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding numbers superimposed.

Figure 8. Percentage of TTU enrollment by gender for each of the five academic years 1981-82 through 1985-86, with the redundant percentages superimposed for readability.

Figure 9. Number of students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking for gender by academic college for the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding percentages superimposed.

Figure 10. Number of students enrolled (N = 7,494) at TTU by college for the academic year 1984-85, with their corresponding percentages superimposed.

Figure 11. Number of students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking by class rank across the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding percentages superimposed.

Figure 12. Number of grades earned by students enrolled (N = 2,656) in the Fundamentals of Public Speaking across the seven academic years 1979-80 through 1985-86, with their corresponding percentages superimposed.

Figure 13. Percentages of grades earned for students enrolled at TTU across the five academic years 1981-82 through 1985-86, with their redundant percentages superimposed for readability.

Figure 1

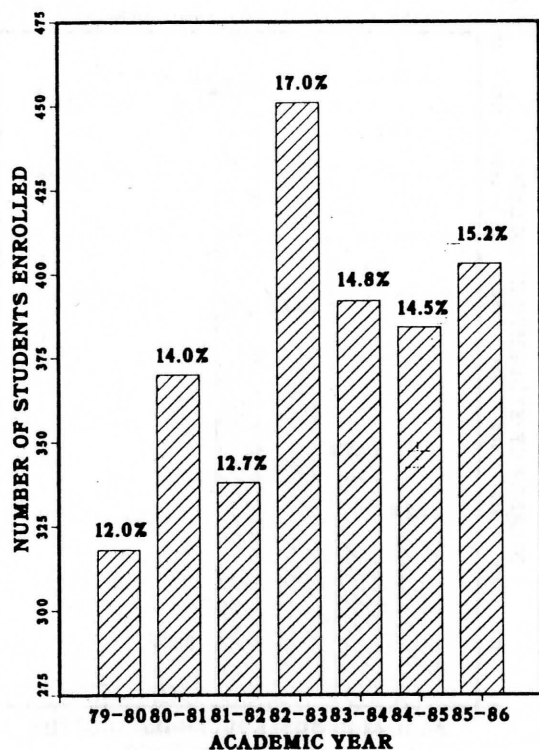


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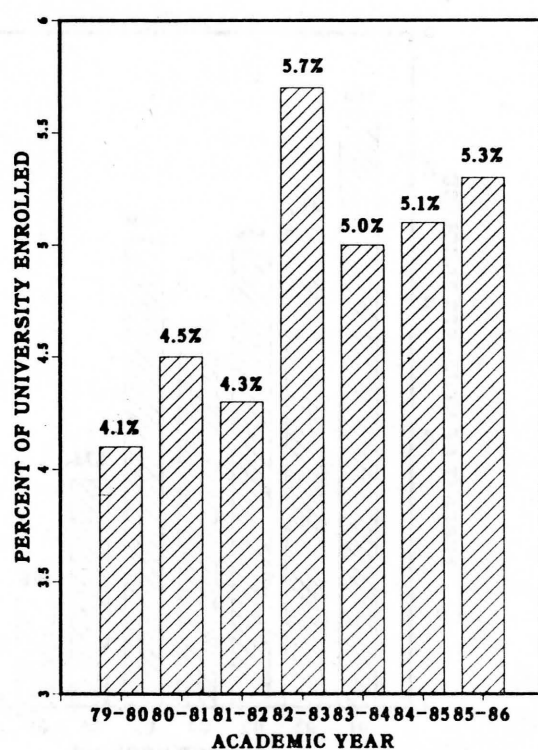


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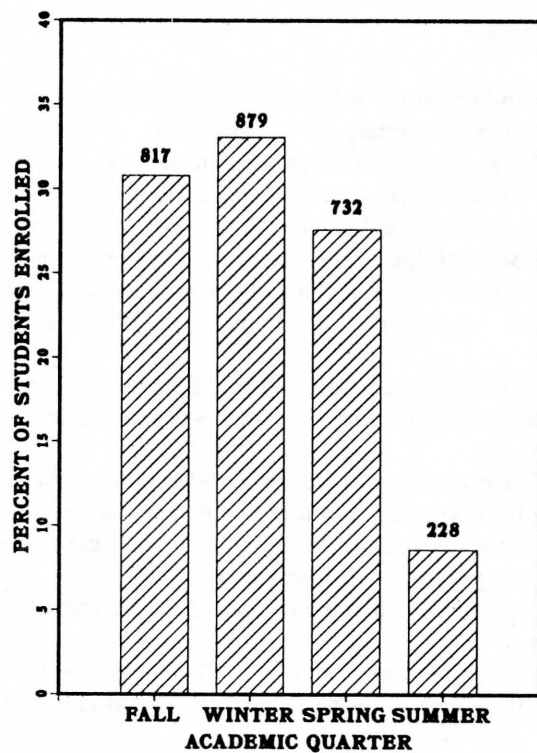


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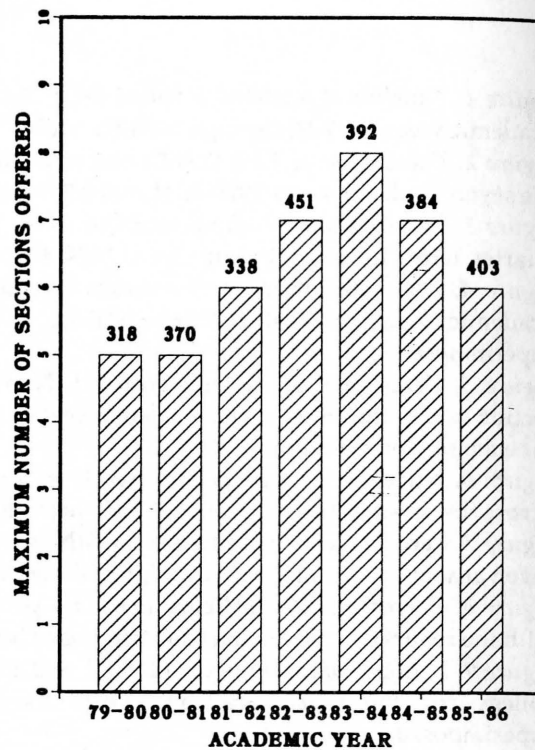


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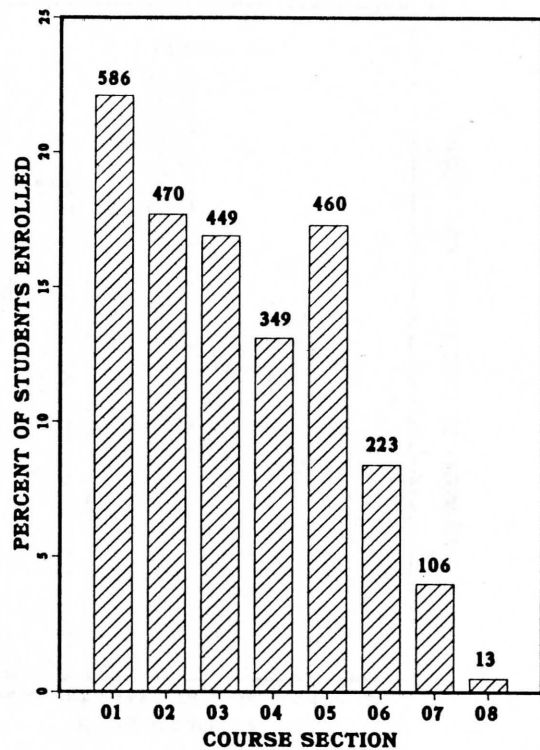


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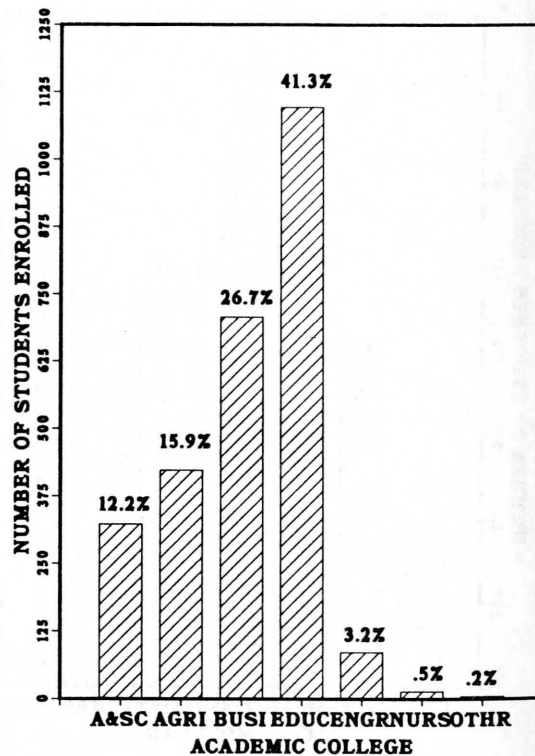


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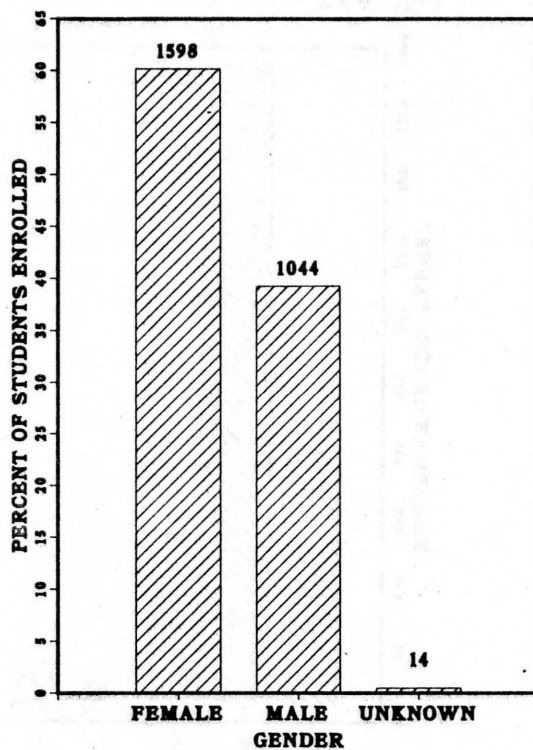


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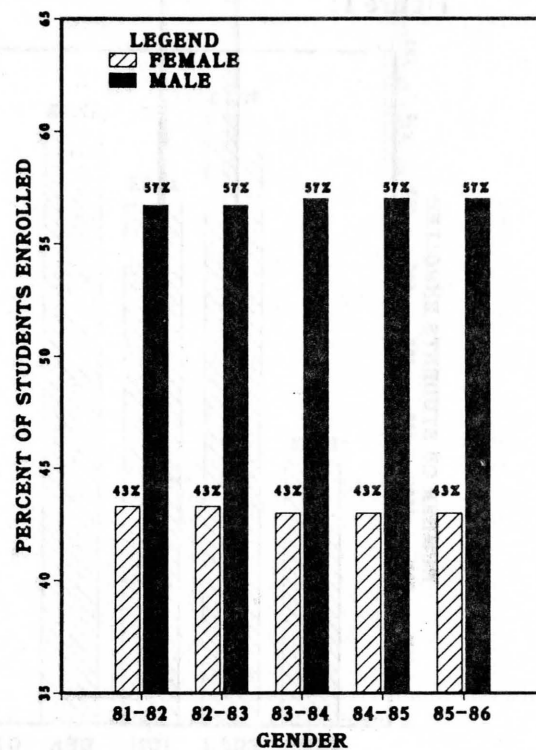


Figure 9

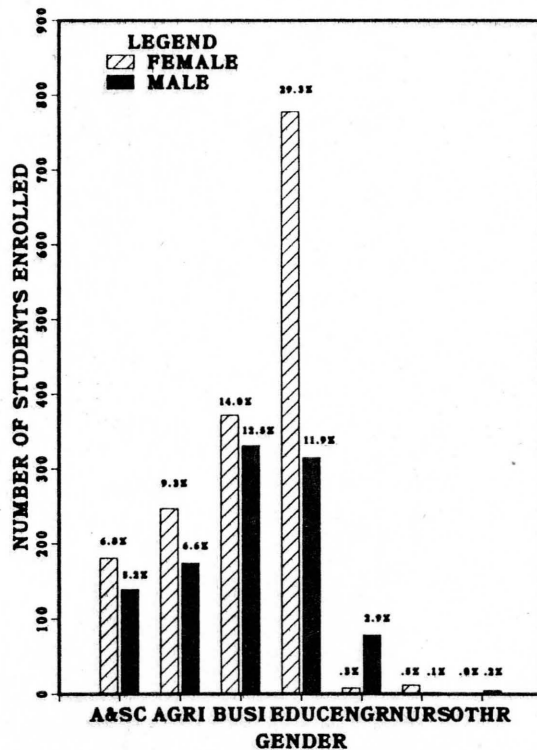


Figure 10

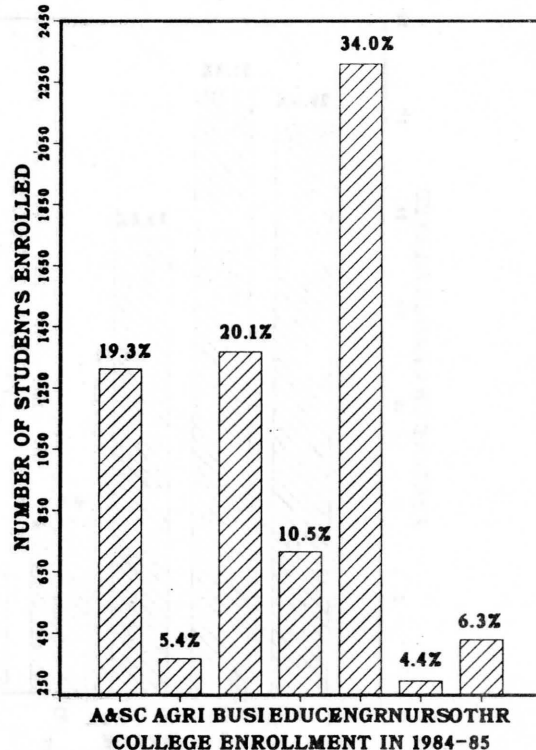


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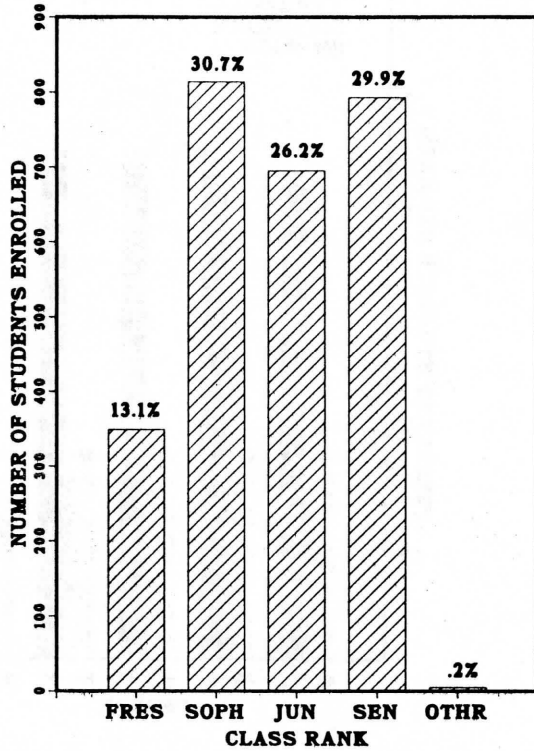


Figure 12

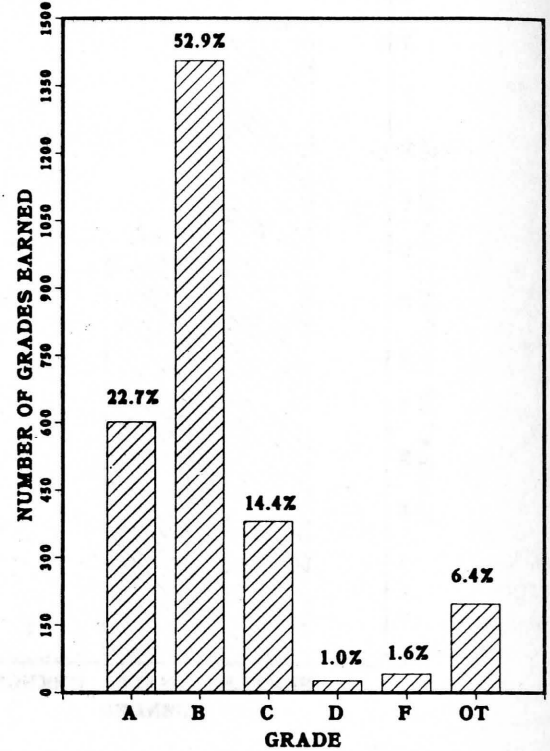


Figure 13

