**My Reflection on my Honors Public Speaking class – Spring 2015**

 I began my Public Speaking class incredibly anxious about speaking in front of others. Through six total speeches and one debate, I have harnessed skills this semester that I hope to use in my future career. Some of the things I have learned are the importance of building confidence, making use every opportunity, and standing up for what I believe in.
 It can be hard to be confident when getting up to speak in front of people. I have learned that everyone experiences some anxiety when speaking in public, and even the most talented speakers still feel nervous. This provided me some comfort in knowing I was not alone. My classmates (and fellow Honors students) helped to give me confidence and applauded my efforts, making it easier for me to speak each time. I have learned that being confident and believing in what I speak about helps to ease anxiety.
 I also learned how to speak in a career-setting, making every moment matter. One of my favorite speeches was the Elevator speech. For this speech, we attempted to provide a brief resume with the premise of earning a dream job from it. The skill of selling ourselves in seconds is an incredibly useful one—since our world is always moving, it is important to make use of every single moment we are given. In a short few moments, we can establish a career or personal connection that can better our lives forever. It is both a life and a professional goal to make each moment count, and this speech helped us learn to do just that. A few seconds can be a great opportunity to better our lives and reach our dreams.
 Lastly, I have learned to stand up for what I believe in. One of our assignments was a persuasive speech in which I spoke of the importance of pet rescue and adoption. As a subject near to my heart, it was very important to me to speak up for these animals that need our help. My family has rescued the majority of the animals we have lived with, and I personally have two rescued dogs and one cat—I found extreme value in standing up for this issue in front of my classmates. In addition, we ended the semester with a debate in which my group debated the pros and cons of the death penalty. This debate taught me not only to speak up for what I personally believed was the right thing to do but also to see the other side of the issue with an open mind. It is a significant quality to be able to believe in something while still being sensitive to other people’s point-of-views.
 In conclusion, I thoroughly enjoyed my Honors Public Speaking class. My professor, Pat Breslin, helped us to have an enjoyable and enriching environment to allow our speaking skills to thrive. My classmates helped to make the class a comforting one in which I could overcome my anxiety. Last, the assignments themselves taught valuable skills for my future career and for networking in general. I thank everyone involved with this course, and I highly recommend it to anyone considering taking it.