

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
COMM 1311 Intro to Speech Communication

Section 003
FALL 2015
9:30 – 10:45am Tues/Thurs
BAB 304

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Office Hours: M/W 12-1, T/TH 11-12
Or by appointment

Required Text: Pearson, J., Nelson, P., Titsworth, S., & Harter, L. (2013). Human communication (5th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.



Introduction

Communication is largely unavoidable in our everyday lives. Generally, humans send and receive messages both verbally and nonverbally every day. As humans, it is practically impossible for us to not communicate. Understanding human communication can be useful to everyone no matter what field they intend to study. The knowledge and skills you acquire in this course have the potential for developing and assisting you in numerous ways. Throughout this course you may become a more critical receiver of messages, you may gain insight on how to improve your relationships, you may become a better citizen, and you may increase your confidence.

This course is designed to introduce you to the major areas and skills of the broad discipline of communication. As your instructor, I will assist you in increasing your knowledge about and skills in employing verbal and nonverbal messages in a variety of settings (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, and public contexts). By studying the processes of communication and

applying communication theory and principles to diverse real-life situations, you will have an opportunity to practice and analyze communication skills in various contexts.

In addition, this course is designed to compel you to enter the discipline of communication studies. For those of you who decide not to enroll in any further communication courses, this course will provide you with a thorough foundation in research, theory, and skills of this essential social science. For those of you who will take advanced courses in communication and possibly begin a major in communication, this course will provide the essential foundation for more advanced and specialized study.

Section I. Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grading

Assignment	Points Possible	Grading Scale
Exam One	50	A: 1000-900
Exam Two	50	B: 899-800
Peer Evaluation (informative)	50	C: 799-700
Peer Evaluation (persuasive)	50	D: 699-600
Interview Speech	25	F: 599-0
Oral Reading	50	
Impromptu Speech	25	
Informative Speech	150	
Informative Speech Outline	100	
Persuasive Speech	300	
Persuasive Speech Outline	100	
Final Exam	50	
Possible Points	1000	

Exams. There will be two exams in this course. Exams cover assigned reading and lecture material. The exams likely will include a mix of matching, multiple-choice, and short-answer items.

Peer Evaluation. It is my view that people often improve their public speaking skills when given appropriate and immediate feedback. You will find that the most important feedback (in life) is from that of your audience. Before you present both your informative and persuasive speeches, you will have the opportunity to practice your speech during class for an audience of around two other students. While one student listens to you and provides eye contact, the other will fill out a peer evaluation form. Each of you will take turns practicing, being the captive audience, and writing feedback on a peer evaluation form.

Interview Speech. One important function of this course is to build your confidence when speaking publicly. This speech is designed to build your confidence by giving you an opportunity to practice in front of an audience; however, you won't be alone. For this

assignment, you and a partner will interview each other according to a set of questions that I will give you to guide your interview. The two of you will then be able to go to the front of the room together and introduce each other.

Oral Reading. You will need to select a piece of literature, poem, sonnet, song (within reason), or a selection from a speech. What I am looking for is for you to bring something to read in front of the class. The purpose of this assignment is to further acclimate you to the world of communicating with others. Your selection, when read, must not exceed three minutes and must be at least one minute in length.

Impromptu Speech. There are three different types of public speaking: 1) extemporaneous, 2) manuscript, and 3) impromptu. Impromptu speeches involve little or no preparation. For this speech, you will likely choose a topic from a hat and have about 5 minutes or less to prepare. Your speech must be persuasive.

Informative Speech. This will be your first of two major speeches. For this speech your specific purpose will be to inform the audience on a particular topic. You will be required to speak for at least 4 minutes, but no longer than 7. For every 30 seconds you speak over 7:30 minutes (e.g., I give a 30-second pad on the back end), I will deduct 10 points from your grade. For every 30 seconds you go under 4 minutes, I will deduct 10 points from your grade. This rule applies to both major speeches. You are required to verbally cite a minimum of three credible sources.

Persuasive Speech. This will be your second and final major speech. For this speech your specific purpose will be to persuade the audience on a particular topic. You will be required to speak for at least 4 minutes, but no longer than 7. You are required to verbally cite a minimum of 5 credible sources.

Final Exam. The final exam is quasi-comprehensive. It will largely cover the chapters not tested for in the previous exams; however, it will also cover chapters throughout the semester.

Section II. Policies

Attendance. I expect you to be in class. You are responsible for everything that goes on, including announcements, lecture material, assignments and modifications to the course schedule – *this includes required reading in subsequent class meetings*. Arrange with someone in the class wherein you will notify each other of relevant items in the event that one of you must be absent.

Attendance is essential to your success in this class; therefore, excessive absences will be reflected in your grade. All students are expected to attend all classes. Absences will reduce your score since you will be actively participating in activities (e.g. giving presentations, being an audience member, etc.) during every class session. Attendance will be recorded at **the beginning** of every class session. Fifty points will be taken away from your final grade for every

unexcused absence after ONE unexcused absence has been recorded. For example, if you record four unexcused absences, your grade will be reduced by 150 points (essentially a letter grade). “Excused absences” are those that have approved documentation (e.g. certified doctor’s excuses that specifically cite the class date, time, and reason for the missed day).

Classroom Demeanor. Show respect. Don’t talk. Don’t text. Turn off your ringer, or better yet, turn your phone off entirely.

Academic Integrity. I expect you’ll conduct yourselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Sul Ross State University reserves the right, through due process, to place on probation, suspend or expel any student who violates academic integrity and regulations by *plagiarism, classroom misdemeanor, or academic dishonesty*. Plagiarism includes doing and/or taking credit for someone else’s work, presenting the ideas and work of others as your own, and not citing your sources if you utilize the ideas of others. Classroom misdemeanor includes cheating, allowing others to cheat, and interfering with others’ ability to succeed in the course. Academic dishonesty includes procuring examination materials illegally, doing unauthorized group work, and handing in your own work for which you have already received academic credit (see Student Handbook, p. 66).

Grading. Different assignments require different grading procedures. Exams and quizzes are not curved.

Missed Exams. Don’t do it. You know the dates. I don’t offer makeups. Missed? It’s a zero.

Late Work. *You are responsible for handing in assignments when they are due.*

Section III. Notes on University Programs and Policies

ADA. It is Sul Ross University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA coordinator for Program Accessibility located in BAB 206 or call 837-8203.

Section IV. Course Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to

- To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
- To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.
- To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression (i.e. descriptive, expository, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive) in written, visual, and oral communication.
- To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.

- To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.
- To develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or to give an oral presentation.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

Program Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to meet one or more of the program learning outcomes applied to all Communication majors.

1. Competency in public presentations, including the use of presentation technology such as presentation software, video, and audio.
2. The ability to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claims, warrants, data, etc.
3. Competency in appropriate discipline specific written communication.
4. The ability to apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations appropriate to each degree specialization.
5. Competency in the application of media technology including video, audio, and internet-based technology.
- 6.

THIS CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE
AT THE INSTRUCTOR'S DISCRETION

DATE	TOPIC	CHPT	ACTIVITY
8/25	INTRO TO COURSE / SYLLABUS REVIEW	N/A	INTRODUCTIONS
8/27			Interview Speech
9/1	Intro to Human Communication	1	
9/3	Perception, self, and communication	2	
9/8	Language and Meaning	3	
9/10			ORAL READING
9/15	Nonverbal Communication	4	
9/17	EXAM ONE		
9/22	Listening and Critical Thinking	5	Review Exam One
9/24	Informative Presentations	14	
9/29	Informative Presentations	14	
10/1	Topic Selection and Audience	10	
10/6	Source Credibility and Evidence	11	
10/8	Organizing your presentation	12	
10/13	Library Class	13	MEET AT LIBRARY
10/15	EXAM TWO		
10/20	RESEARCH DAY – Class does not meet.		
10/22	More on Delivery		Review Exam Two
10/27			Peer Evaluation
10/29			Peer Evaluation
11/3			Informative Speeches
11/5			Informative Speeches
11/10	The Persuasive Speech	15	
11/12	The Persuasive Speech	15	
11/17			Peer Evaluation
11/19			Peer Evaluation
11/24	RESEARCH DAY – Class does not meet		
11/26	THANKSGIVING – Class does not meet. Everybody eat.		
12/1			Persuasive Speeches
12/1	DEAD DAY – REHEARSE YOUR SPEECHES!		
12/8	FINAL EXAM 8AM-10AM BAB 304		Persuasive Speeches Cont'd