

**NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**  
**COMM 5308 – Spring 2016**

Instructor: Dr. Esther Rumsey  
Office: FAB 106  
Office Hours: 1-4 MWF

Telephone: 837-8211  
Email: erumsey@sulross.edu

**Text:** There is no required textbook for this course. Course reading materials will be posted on Blackboard.

Course materials will all be located in the content area of Blackboard and arranged by Unit. Course materials will include lectures, readings and links to video clips.

**Description**

This class provides an examination of the interaction between nonverbal communication and verbal communication channels in influencing outcomes in mass, interpersonal and professional communication contexts. Students will examine the research on nonverbal behaviors such as body movement, territory, and environmental design, touch, eye behavior, vocal attractiveness, time use, deception, and body alterations within social contexts such as work, school and relationships.

**Objectives**

The class aims to:

- (1) help students understand the impact of nonverbal communication on human relationships,
- (2) improve the ability to recognize and differentiate between various kinds of nonverbal cues,
- (3) become more able encoders and decoders of nonverbal messages, and
- (4) understand how nonverbal cues can be studied systematically.

**Grading**

Journal Articles	20%
Discussion Questions and Exercises	
Initial Response	30%
Interaction	20%
Unit Exams	30%

**JOURNAL ARTICLES**

For each major topic area you will provide a summary review of a research journal article related to the topic. The goal of your summary is to provide your classmate's with an understanding of the research results reported in the article and the implications of the results. The summary should be two pages in length. The first page will provide a brief description of the study conducted and what the researchers concluded based on the data they gathered. The second page will discuss how the research related to the topic under

discussion in the class and the implications of the research results. I will provide a sample summary attached to the first assignment.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS and EXERCISED

The goal of the discussion questions and exercises is for you to actively engage the material we are covering in the class and demonstrate your understanding of the concepts, theories and research presented. **This should be regarded as a discussion, not simply a single response to a question.** Your initial response to the discussion question prompt or exercise assignment is due by Wednesday each week and your replies, comments or questions about other's responses must be posted by Sunday. I would encourage you to respond early to your classmates to foster a true discussion.

### UNIT EXAMS

Exams will be posted the last Wednesday of each Unit and will be due by Sunday of that week. The exam will consist of vocabulary and essay questions related to the readings, lecture and discussions associated with the unit.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY (From the SRSU Student Handbook)**

The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. "Cheating" includes:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same.
2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a non-administered test.
5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.
6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about a non-administered test.
7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist.
8. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea in one's own written work offered for credit.
9. "Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.
10. "Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.
11. "Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.

All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean and eventually, to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be final. In the case of flagrant or repeated violations, the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs may refer the matter to the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action. No disciplinary action shall become effective against the student until the student has received procedural due process except as provided under Interim Disciplinary Action.

The detailed course schedule will be posted in Blackboard along with the materials for each unit and the lessons contained in the unit. Specific due dates of assignment will be listed in the content area as well.

The general course schedule is:

Course Introduction and Unit One: Historical Developments

January 19 – January 31

Unit Two: Media and Nonverbal

February 1 – February 21

Unit Three: Interpersonal Relationships and Nonverbal

February 22 – March 6

Unit Four: Nonverbal Communication at Work

March 7 – April 3

Unit Five: Nonverbal Communication in the Classroom

April 4 – May 5