

Senior Capstone
COMM 4310:001
Spring 2017

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Course Description: The senior capstone is the culminating course in the Communication major sequence. Capstone experiences allow each student to demonstrate the capacity to bring information, skills, and ideas acquired from the major to bear on one significant research project. It is aimed at providing students with the opportunity to integrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired as communication majors.

Course Requirements: You and I will see each other at least once every two weeks throughout the term. We begin by choosing a topic, developing an outline, improving your information retrieval skills, brushing up on your research, reading, and writing skills, and then moving into your final paper writing, one chapter at a time. To successfully complete this course you will need to utilize the library to access previous communication research related to your topic and gather data to test your hypothesis or address your research questions.

Grading: 40% of your grade will be based on effort, minor writing assignments (such as topic proposal, literature review draft, and description of research methods), quality of first completed draft of your research project, and attendance of scheduled meetings. The other 60% will be based on the grade you will receive for the completed research paper.

Procrastination: You need to start working on this class right away and to keep going, week after week, even if your final draft is due months and months from now. A major research project is not the kind of thing that can be done at the last possible moment; it requires steady progress. For example, by the first week, you need to come close to finalizing your topic. By the second week, a rough outline is due, and so on. Another way of putting this: for the duration of this class, you and I are pen-pals who need to see each other, or write to each other, at least once every two weeks. If you vanish for three months, you cheat yourself out of a major life accomplishment.

Academic Honesty: All students are expected to comply with the student handbook guidelines for academic honesty. This means that students will turn in original work (not work completed by another student or purchased for submission), utilize appropriate citations to avoid plagiarism, and refrain from collusion (“the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit”.) Failure to comply with these standards will result in an F for the course.

Course Deadlines:

– February 11, 2016 Topic Statement (one page description of the communication situation of event that you are interested in investigating, including specific research questions you will be addressing with your original research)

- February 18, 2016 Annotated bibliography (reference page with short description of each paper, minimum of 5 research articles included on bibliography)
- March 4, 2016 Literature review outline
 - March 21, 2016, Draft of literature review to support your research questions
 - March 21, 2016 Description of research methods to be employed in your study
- April 1, 2016 Complete collection of data
- April 15, 2016 Rough draft of completed paper
- May 4, 2016 Final draft of paper

Student Learning Outcomes

The graduating student will demonstrate:

1. competency for appropriate oral communication in public presentations.
2. competency for appropriate use of presentation software – specifically power point.
3. the ability to analyze arguments including identification of the major elements of the argument such as claims, warrants, data and backing
4. competency in appropriate discipline specific written communication.
5. the ability to apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations.
6. competency in the use of media technology including video, audio and web technologies.
7. general knowledge of communication concepts and terminology

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M.Ed, L.P.C. in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, TX 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu.