



**COMM 1320.001 –Business & Professional Communication  
SUMMER-I 2017  
Course Syllabus**

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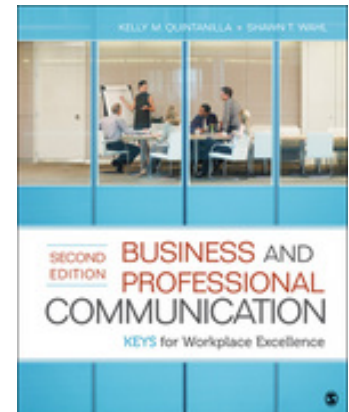
**Professor:** Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.  
**Office Hours:** *by appointment or immediately following class*  
**Office Location:** FAB 206B  
**Telephone:** 837-8370  
**Email Address:** [jvelasco@sulross.edu](mailto:jvelasco@sulross.edu)  
**Class Schedule:** 11:40 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Monday through Friday  
**Classroom Location:** MAB 302  
**Required Text:** Quintanilla, K. M., & Wahl, S. T. (2014). Business and professional communication: Keys for workplace excellence (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Sage.

*Always bring applicable reading material to class with you.*

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### **Introduction**

Corporate employers demand effective communication and presentation skills. As a future professional, you will not only be expected to be a confident speaker, but also to organize and prepare clear, concise, and interesting presentations. This course will prepare you for the future by developing speaking and delivery skills, as well as critical thinking and analytic skills that focus on how to organize a presentation, solve problems, build arguments, and use your creativity. This course is designed to help you become a confident presenter, as well as a savvy presentation writer. Further, this course is designed to develop communication skills within multiple interpersonal business contexts.



Put more simply, this course is designed to help students become more attractive to employers throughout their professional lives, equipping students with skills and knowledge needed in maintaining professional positions/relationships, engaging students in an important dialogue about finding balance in their personal and professional lives, thereby considering their career goals in association with their overall happiness, well-being, and much, much more.

### **Section I. Program Learning Outcomes**

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

The graduating student will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Competently deliver public presentations, including the use of presentation technology such as presentation software, video, and audio.

2. Analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claims, warrants, data, etc.
3. Complete appropriate discipline specific writing assignments.
4. Apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations appropriate to each degree specialization.
5. Demonstrate competent use of media technology including video, audio, and internet-based technology.

## Section II. Course Learning Objectives

The general objectives for this course are to *enhance your competence and knowledge of business and professional communication*. As a student, your learning objectives are to:

1. Recognize cultural differences that impact members of an organization
2. Enact a critical awareness of cultural diversity in the workplace.
3. Understand how to build positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace.
4. Plan and conduct an interview in both interviewee and interviewer roles.
5. Recall communication factors that influence the effective development of teams.
6. Identify and overcome common obstacles in group meetings.
7. Create and deliver a business presentation using technology.
8. Write an effective résumé and cover-letter
9. Become familiar with effectively composing several types of professional written communication (i.e., recommendation letters, press releases, emails, etc.)

## Section III. Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grading

Assignment	Points Possible	<b>Grade Description (Points)</b>
Reading and Contributions	300	
Résumé	100	
Cover-letter	100	
Mock Interview	100	
Final (Duo) Presentation	300	
Duo Presentation Outline	100	
Total	1000	

***Readings and Contributions.*** In this course **reading and discussion are critical**. As with most any course, learning is greatly enhanced when students internalize the material and engage it with others. I will keep track of who is demonstrating that they are keeping up with the reading. Further, I will keep track of who is contributing to the course and moving us forward. *Everyone starts the course with 300 points*. Unexcused absences, disengaging from discussions, and demonstrating that you have not read are the usual reasons why this grade may drop.

**Résumé/Cover-letter.** For this assignment, you will find a job announcement and create a résumé and cover-letter as if you are applying for this position. Submit a copy of the job announcement along with this assignment.

**Mock Interview.** For this assignment, you will find a job announcement that is ideal for you presently or possibly in the future. You will use this announcement to prepare to hypothetically interview for this position. I expect you to prepare responses to a list of typical interview questions. In class, I will interview you in front of the class. Some questions will not be known by you, but such questions will be discussed in class and/or covered in our text. Your prepared responses will be typed and submitted on the day that you are interviewed in front of the class. Although you will have responses typed-out, you will not be able to interview with this material in front of you. You will be graded on how well you prepare your responses in writing as well as how you handle the live interview.

**Duo Presentation.** The Duo Presentation asks you and a partner to use your persuasive and creative skills to sell an idea or proposal. Through brainstorming and other creative strategies, you and your partner will develop a marketing proposal to pitch to the class. The persuasive power and creativity of your proposal is key. To that end, you will develop a compelling and unique pitch and convince us in your 10-15 minute presentation that it is the best choice. You and your partner receive the same grade on this assignment, worth a total of 200 points.

#### **Section IV. 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. Having more than two unexcused absences may result in a lower grade.

**Classroom Demeanor.** I expect the environment during class meetings to be conducive to learning. I have little tolerance for students talking among themselves when they should be listening to someone else speak. It is particularly disturbing when students talk among themselves when one of their classmates is presenting a speech, giving a report, making a comment, or observing or asking a question. I understand that some comments pertain to class material; I encourage you to share these comments with the class as a whole. Also, I would rather that cell phones, pagers, etc. **not** disrupt class – make sure your communications technology is **shut down** when class begins.

**Academic Integrity.** I expect and assume that as students you 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. 39-40).

***Late Work.*** *You are responsible for handing in assignments when they are due.* While I am willing to “hear you out” when unforeseen and/or difficult circumstances impede with your course work, I do not generally accept late work, *and especially* if you have not notified me that you’re having problems before the due date arrives. If you miss a due date, you will be given full credit *only* if the assignment was missed because of a University-excused absence – which includes hospitalization or a *serious* medical condition, a family or personal *emergency*, or a University-sponsored activity. In order to be able to make up the assignment, you must notify me beforehand *and* have supporting documentation from a relevant authority that the situation or event occurred. *NOTE: There is nothing in this syllabus that requires me to accept late work; if you submit work late, then receiving credit depends on my allowing you to turn it in. If I do accept late work, it will likely be at half-credit.*

### **Section V. 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 FH 112 or call 837-8691.

Calendar  
(This calendar is subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Chapter	Assignment/Activity
One	May 31	Excellence at Work	1	Introductions & Lecture
	June 1	Verbal & Nonverbal	2	
	June 2	Personality Assessments		<b>Location: UC 211 B</b>
Two	June 5	Listening	3	Résumé & Cover Letter
	June 6	Résumés & Interviews	4	
	June 7	Professional Writing	9	
	June 8	Professional Writing		<b>Location: UC 211B</b>
	June 9			Interview peer eval.
Three	June 12			Interviews
	June 13	Diversity in the Workplace	5	
	June 14	Work Relationships	6	
	June 15	Groups, Teams, & Meetings	7	
	June 16	<i>Library Workshop</i>		Research & Personality
Four	June 19	Hiring & InterviewING	10	
	June 20	Informing & Persuading	11	
	June 21	(Cont'd)	11	
	June 22	Designing a Speech	12	
	June 23	(Cont'd)	12	
Five	June 26	Professional Delivery	13	
	June 27	Technology and Professionalism	8	
	June 28	Surveillance & Time Mgt	8	
	June 29	Finding Balance	14	
	June 30			Duo Speeches
Six	July 3	Final Exam		Duo Speeches
	July 4	NO CLASS! HAPPY 4 <sup>th</sup> OF JULY!		

The Final Exam is scheduled for July 3<sup>th</sup> at 11:40am – 1:15pm