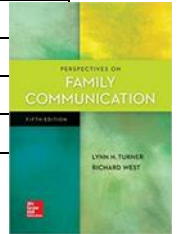


**COMM 3309.001 – Family Communication (Service-learning Option)**  
**Spring 2019**  
**Course Syllabus**



<b>Professor:</b>	Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesday & Thursday, 3:30-5pm, or <i>by appointment</i>
<b>Office Location:</b>	FAB 206B
<b>Telephone:</b>	432-837-8370
<b>Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:jvelasco@sulross.edu">jvelasco@sulross.edu</a>
<b>Class Schedule:</b>	12:30-1:45 pm MW
<b>Classroom Location:</b>	MAB 301
<b>Required Text:</b>	Turner, L. H., & West, R. (2013). <i>Perspectives on family communication</i> (5 <sup>th</sup> ed.). McGraw-Hill: New York.



*“We are born into a family, we are socialized and acculturated within a family, we mature from a family using information and behaviors learned from a family, and, when we die, we diminish a family. Families surround us, shape us, and contribute to our destiny.”* (Judy Goldberg, family therapist)

Communication is learned and much of what we learn is learned within family contexts. We communicate to meet and interact with other people and to improve all types of relationships. Across the varying dynamics of family, friends, romances, lifestyles, cultures, and interpersonal relationships, communication defines and shapes the interaction as we seek to strengthen bonds. This course is grounded in communication research centered on family interaction and multiple communicative/relational issues implicating family as the core communicative context.

This course is designed as an introduction to communication phenomena in the setting of the family. The overall goal is to help you understand how we develop, maintain, enhance, or disturb family relationships through communication. You will learn verbal and nonverbal skills which can help promote healthy family communication.

Finally, this course also provides an option for service-learning, which is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

## Section I. Course Objectives

The general objectives for this course are to *further enhance your competence and knowledge of human communication within family contexts*. As a student, your learning objectives are to:

1. Develop a communication perspective on the family.
2. Identify and explain various theories in family communication.
3. Comprehend various concepts and discuss them in an intellectual manner.
4. Discuss complex concepts of human relationships in light of your own personal experience(s).
5. Analyze your communication and the communication of others.
6. Demonstrate proficiency with synthesizing concepts from multiple readings in conversation with other students.
7. Develop proficiency with writing which demonstrates the exploration and development of an academic *voice*.
8. Contribute to a collection of academic journal article reviews, thereby constructing a community of scholars amongst your course colleagues.

## Section II. Student Learning Outcomes

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

**SLO 1:** Students will be able to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claim, warrants, and data.

**SLO 2:** Students will be able to effectively construct messages appropriate to audience, purpose, and context; including electronic media technologies.

**SLO 3:** Students will be able to apply Communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts to the analysis of communication situations.

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

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>	<b>Grade Description (Points)</b> A = 900-1000 B = 800-899 C = 700-799 D = 600-699 F = < 600
Attendance & Preparation	300	
Article Summaries (3)	300	
Literature Review Draft	100	
Final - Literature Review	300	
<i>Service Learning Option</i>	<b>200*</b>	
Total	1000	

**Attendance & Preparation.** Ten percent of your grade is dependent upon you attending class and being prepared. I will keep attendance records and note trends of your preparation for class as evidenced through participation and by being equipped with course materials.

**Article Summaries.** You are required to search the online database (provided by the library) and find three scholarly journal articles that both interest you AND relate to the field of family communication and come from a peer-reviewed Communication journal. You will then write a one-page summary of each article and **submit one on the designated days in your course calendar.** Please bring a one-page copy of your summary for each of your class colleagues. Basically, you will have to teach the class about the content of the article, informing us of any key concepts, the methods employed, the findings, and discuss the implications of the study. In addition, you will need to prepare two discussion questions to pose to the class concerning your topic. All of this should be included in your handout.

**Literature Review (and draft).** You will choose a topic that interests you and can be understood from a family communication perspective. You will then survey the relevant literature written about your topic (primarily in the discipline of Communication Studies and its journals) and then organize it thematically. As you review your literature and themes emerge, you should be thinking about what gaps exist and where you might go in your research. On **Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>**, you will submit a draft on Blackboard (saved as a Word document) of your literature review so that I can give you feedback a month in advance of the due date. The draft is worth 100 points. **Your literature review is due on Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> by 5pm.** **Additional guidelines will be provided in class.**

**Service-learning Options.** According to the National Service-learning Clearinghouse (2015), service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Service-learning is a process of involving students in community service activities combined with facilitated means for applying the experience to their academic and personal development. It is a form of experiential education aimed at enhancing and enriching student learning in course material. When compared to other forms of experiential learning like internships and cooperative education, it is similar in that it is student-centered, hands-on and directly applicable to the curriculum.

The critical difference and distinguishing characteristic of service-learning is its reciprocal and balanced emphasis on both students learning and addressing real needs in the community. Course learning objectives are linked to meaningful human, safety, educational, and environmental needs that are co-determined with community partners and service recipients. Course materials such as lectures, readings, discussions, and reflection activities supplement the student service. In turn, the service experience is brought back to the classroom to enhance the academic dialogue and student comprehension. Students work on real problems that make academic learning relevant while simultaneously enhancing their social skills, analytical ability, civic and ethical responsibility, self-efficacy, and career development.

In this class, you ARE NOT REQUIRED to participate in service-learning. This is an invitation. If you choose one of the options below, **you may opt out of two article summaries** and up to **two class days**. If you decide to take this course for honors credit, you may accomplish this without opting out of any class days or article summaries. You would still need to talk to me about an honors contract, however. Below are your options for service-learning:

### **Option #1**

Solicit supplies from the community to help you construct hospitality/care-packages for clients of the Family Crisis Center of the Big Bend (FCCBB). This will require you to communicate with the FCCBB professionals as the needs of their clients may change over time.

### **Option #2**

Develop creative educational materials for clients of the FCCBB. For example, you may explore your creative skills in developing coloring books and/or story books for children dealing with family violence, addiction, poverty, and other challenges.

### **Option #3**

Develop some form of community education related to families. This *could* include advertising an educational event at the public library, developing a website/blog for parents, presenting to a classroom of (non-SRSU) students. As always, I am open to your creative suggestions.

### **Option #4**

Coach a little league sports team. This opportunity would put you right in the middle of interacting with children and parents.

## **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. Unexcused absences may result in a lower grade. In keeping with university policy, **I may drop you from the course if you meet or exceed nine unexcused absences in a MWF course or if you have at least six unexcused absences in a class that meets twice a week.** According to the university, an absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.

**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. 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. 66).

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

## **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, psychological, or learning impairment/disability/challenge, please contact the ADA Coordinator for Program Accessibility located in FH 112 or call 837-8203. E-mail: [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu)

The **Graduate Student Center**, located in BAB 104, provides resources and services for all SRSU graduate students. There is a computer lab with desktop computers and a networked printer/copier/scanner; laptop computers which can be checked out; a projector and screen for rehearsing student presentations; and a conference room for group study. Both Alpine and distance education students can receive writing and thesis assistance by contacting [shileman@sulross.edu](mailto:shileman@sulross.edu) or calling 432-837-8015.

## Calendar

(This calendar is subject to change)

Asterisk denotes a reading outside of the textbook, handed out in class the week before

Week	Date	Topic	Chapter	Assignment/Activity
One	Jan 23	Intro. To Course	N/A	Introductions
Two	Jan 28	Providing a Definition	1	
	Jan 30	Intellectual Traditions	2	
Three	Feb 4	Theory & Family Communication	2	
	Feb 6	Roles & Family Communication	3	
Four	Feb 11	Rules & Family Communication	3	
	Feb 13	<i>Library Workshop - Research</i>		
Five	Feb 18	<i>Library Workshop - Writing</i>		Deadline for Service-learning Decision
	Feb 20	Media & Families	4	
Six	Feb 25	Article Summary 1		Article Summary 1
	Feb 27	Article Summary 1		Article Summary 1
Seven	Mar 4	Expressing Intimacy & Affection	5	
	Mar 6	Explaining Intimacy & Affection	5	
Eight	Mar 11	Family Stories	6	
	Mar 13	Article Summary 2		Article Summary 2
	Mar 18	SPRING BREAK – No Class		
	Mar 20	SPRING BREAK – No Class		
Nine	Mar 25	Article Summary 2		Article Summary 2
	Mar 27	Conflict, Power, & Violence	7	
Ten	Apr 1	Stress and the Family	8	
	Apr 3	Stress and Resilience	8	
Eleven	Apr 8	Challenging Dialogues	9	Lit. Review Draft Due
	Apr 10	Challenging Dialogues	9	
Twelve	Apr 15	Article Summary 3		Article Summary 3
	Apr 17	Article Summary 3		Article Summary 3
Thirteen	Apr 22	Undergraduate Research Symposium		
	Apr 24	Future of Family Comm Research	10	
Fourteen	Apr 29	<i>Special Guests: FCCBB</i>		
	May 1	<i>Special Guests: FCCBB</i>		
Fifteen	May 6	Semester Wrap-up		
	May 8	Final Class Showcase		Literature Review Due

**The Final is scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm-2:30pm**