

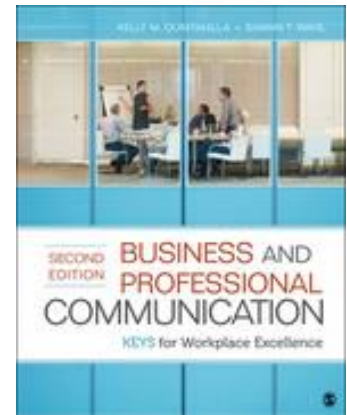
COMM 1320.001 –Business & Professional Communication
Fall 2019
Course Syllabus

Professor: Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.
Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 2-2:50pm, or *by appointment*
Office Location: FAB 206B
Telephone: 837-8370
Email Address: jvelasco@sulross.edu
Class Schedule: 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. TTh
Classroom Location: MAB 302
Required Text: Quintanilla, K. M., & Wahl, S. T. (2014). Business and professional communication: Keys for workplace excellence (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Always bring applicable reading material to class with you.

Introduction

Employers of the 21st century 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 help you develop communication skills relevant to multiple professional 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. 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 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. Marketable Skills

This course offers you the opportunity to develop the following skills:

- Informative and Persuasive Speaking
- Audience-centered Writing
- Critical Analysis
- Research
- Effective Message Construction Using Technology

Section IV. Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grading

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

Grade Description (Points)

A = 895-1000
B = 795-894
C = 695-794
D = 595-694
F = < 595

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 a product. 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 300 points.

Section V. 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. Don't cheat. 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).

Section VI. Notes on University Programs and Policies

ADA. It is Sul Ross State 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

challenge, please contact the ADA Coordinator in the Counseling office in Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is PO Box C-122, Alpine, TX 79832. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu

Course Calendar

(This calendar is subject to change)

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading | Due or To Do: |
|----------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| One | Jan 14 Jan 16 | Course Introduction Excellence at Work | Chapter 1 | Core Pretest |
| Two | Jan 21 Jan 23 | Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Personality Assessments | Chapter 2 N/A | Location: UC 211B |
| Three | Jan 28 Jan 30 | Listening Résumés & Interviews | Chapter 3 Chapter 4 | |
| Four | Feb 4 Feb 6 | Professional Writing <i>Library Workshop on Research</i> | Chapter 9 | Résumé & Cover Letter Location: Library |
| Five | Feb 11 Feb 13 | Work Relationships Groups, Teams, & Meetings | Chapter 6 Chapter 7 | |
| Six | Feb 18 Feb 20 | Diversity in the Workplace <i>Practice for Interviews Outside of Class</i> | Chapter 5 | N/A |
| Seven | Feb 25 Feb 27 | Interview Peer Evaluation Interviews | | Interviews! |
| Eight | Mar 3 Mar 5 | Informing & Persuading Professional Persuasion | Chapter 11 Chapter 11 | |
| Nine | Mar 10 Mar 12 | SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS | | |
| Ten | Mar 17 Mar 19 | Designing a Speech <i>Team Meetings</i> | Chapter 12 | |
| Eleven | Mar 24 Mar 26 | Professional Delivery Technology & Professionalism | Chapter 13 Chapter 8 | |
| Twelve | Mar 31 Apr 2 | Team Meetings Team Meetings | | |
| Thirteen | Apr 7 Apr 9 | Team Meetings Finding Balance | Chapter 14 | |
| Fourteen | Apr 14 Apr 16 | Duo Speech Presentations Duo Speech Presentations | | Course Evaluations |
| Fifteen | Apr 21 Apr 23 | Duo Speech Presentations Duo Speech Presentations | | |
| Sixteen | Apr 28 Apr 30 | Duo Speech Presentations DEAD DAY – NO CLASS | | |
| FINALS | May 4 | Final Exam – 8 a.m.-10 a.m. | | Final Exam |

