

COMM 4310.001 – Senior Capstone  
FALL 2020  
Course Syllabus



<i>Instructor:</i>	Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.
<i>Office Hours:</i>	by appointment
<i>Office Location:</i>	FAB 206B
<i>Telephone:</i>	432-837-8370
<i>Email Address:</i>	<a href="mailto:jvelasco@sulross.edu">jvelasco@sulross.edu</a>
<i>Class Schedule:</i>	TBD
<i>Classroom Location:</i>	TBD
<i>Required Texts:</i>	TBD

### Section I. Introduction

First, CONGRATULATIONS on getting to this point in your college career! If you are beginning your Senior Capstone experience, you are near the end; and you have likely successfully completed a considerable amount of Communication coursework.

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 or professional project. The course aims at providing students with the opportunity to integrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired as Communication majors.

Though the instructor of record is Dr. Joseph Velasco, students are encouraged to consider any tenure-track Communication faculty member to guide their capstone experience. Work with the faculty member whom you feel can guide your senior capstone the best. **It is up to you to approach your preferred capstone advisor and ask them if they are willing and able to advise your project.**

Again, Congratulations, and it's time to get to work.

### 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 Objectives**

1. To provide students an opportunity to clarify and articulate their area of specialization within the academic discipline of Communication Studies (e.g., interpersonal communication, family communication, political communication, health communication, organizational communication, etc.) or a related, non-disciplinary, professional field of communication (e.g., film directing, public relations, radio production, marketing/advertising, journalism, etc.).
2. To develop students' understanding of the connection among communication theory, application, and research via an in-depth original scholarly or professional project.
3. To assess students' written communication competency and content knowledge across the curriculum of their Communication major.
4. To produce an original scholarly or professional project in-line with the student's academic and/or career aspirations.

### **Section IV. 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 V. Course Requirements (Velasco's Advisee's)**

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.

### **Section VI. Grading**

Forty percent 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 project.

## **Section VII. Course Policies**

**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.

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## **Section VII. Notes on University Programs and Services**

**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. You may also call 432-837-8203. E-mail: [rebecca.wren@sulross.edu](mailto:rebecca.wren@sulross.edu) or [danielle.pertuso@sulross.edu](mailto:danielle.pertuso@sulross.edu)  
The Center, however, will now be scheduling online confidential (HIPAA compliant) Zoom video therapy sessions. To make an appointment, please complete and return the Electronic Informed Consent Form.

Students should complete and return the Student Electronic Informed Consent

Form: [https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/counseling/student\\_electronic\\_informed\\_consent-srsu\\_rev-4-28-20\\_to\\_use.pdf](https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files//sites/default/files/users/docs/counseling/student_electronic_informed_consent-srsu_rev-4-28-20_to_use.pdf)

**SRSU Distance Education Statement:** Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. **Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course,** as outlined on the SRSU website.

**Technical Support.** SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support: Toll Free: 888.837.6055.  
Email: [blackboardsupport@sulross.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@sulross.edu)

**SRSU Library Services.** The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

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.

## **Section VII. SRSU Safety Pledge - One University/One Community**

As a partner in each campus community, the faculty, staff, and students agree to the following statements in relation to the COVID-19 virus:

- I will wear a face covering, wash my hands, and disinfect my workspaces to protect others from the potential spread of this virus.
- I promise to follow social distancing guidelines as a way to mitigate the risk of transmission to others both professionally and personally.
- I will monitor my health and report any potential agree to follow the guidelines set forth in this document or as described by Sul Ross State University to protect the public health.
- I understand that my actions may impact the larger community and could affect my academic progress or professional attainment at Sul Ross State University.

Failing to meet these expectations may be subject to corrective action under university disciplinary policies. Changes or recommendations to the guidelines based on evolving guidance from federal, state, or local agencies will be communicated to the university community.