

**COMM 5305.W01 – Relational Communication (Independent Study)**  
**Fall 2021**  
**Course Syllabus**

<b>Instructor:</b>	<b>Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.</b>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	<i>by appointment</i>
<b>Office Location:</b>	FAB 206B
<b>Telephone:</b>	505-362-1066 (cell)
<b>Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:jvelasco@sulross.edu">jvelasco@sulross.edu</a>
<b>Class Schedule:</b>	Asynchronous w/ optional attendance, TBD
<b>Classroom Location:</b>	MAB 301
<b>Required Texts:</b>	Guerrero, L. K., Andersen, P. A., Afifi, W. A. (2018). <i>Close encounters: Communication in relationships</i> (5 <sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Sage.
<b>Required Equipment &amp; Software</b>	Internet connection; computer with webcam & microphone; Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint (available free to SRSU students via <b>Office 365</b> )

Resources

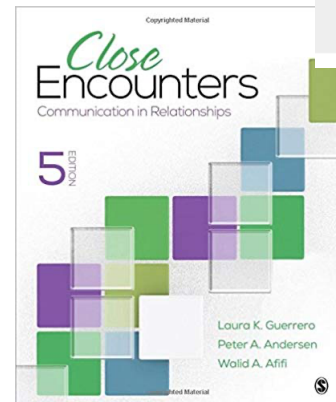
- Bookstore
- Graduate Student
- Human Resources
- Library
- Lobo lookit
- Lobo Pass
- Office 365
- SGA
- Student Publication
- VoIP Control Panel

*How do people maintain their romantic relationships?*

*How are some relationships different from others?*

*Why do we form friendships and why am I more close to some friends and not others? In what ways do people develop closeness with friends, siblings, parents, etc.?*

*How can I communicate more effectively when in conflict with others?*



A field within the diverse discipline of communication, relational communication is a well-established intellectual area, complete with a base of knowledge, theories, and research developed by communication scholars. In recent years, interest in relational communication has mushroomed, making it one of the largest and most vibrant areas in the discipline. Reflecting the intellectual maturity of the field, communication theory and research offer rich insight into the impact of relational communication on individual identity and personal, social, and professional relationships.

This course offers an in-depth examination of human relationships which goes beyond understandings of human communication typically found in introductory interpersonal courses. This course, then, extends our knowledge of interpersonal communication while also refocusing our examination with what we will call a *relational perspective*.

## 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 *further enhance your competence and knowledge of human communication in many interpersonal and relational contexts*. As a student, your learning objectives are to:

1. Identify and explain various theories and concepts in the fields of relational and interpersonal communication.
2. Analyze your communication and the communication of others.
3. Synthesize concepts from multiple readings in conversation with other students.
4. Develop proficiency with academic and reflective writing.
5. Effectively summarize relevant academic journal articles.

## 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>
Discussion Boards (8)	400
Article Summaries (6)	600
Total	1000

### Grade Description (Points)

A = 900-1000  
B = 800-899  
C = 700-799  
D = 600-699  
F = < 600

**Discussion Board.** Forty percent of your grade is dependent upon your contribution to our Blackboard discussion board. For each discussion question that I post, you are asked to contribute one response (25 points) and a reply (25 points) to one of your peers.

**Article Summaries.** Throughout the course, you are required to search the online database (provided by the library) and find six scholarly journal articles that interest you, relate to the field of relational or interpersonal communication, represent primary research, and **come from a peer-reviewed Communication journal**. For each journal article, you will write a one-page summary which adheres to a format which is posted on Blackboard. You will submit a Word document through our Bb Assignments link, and you will also post a copy in the designated discussion board so that your peers can view your work and respond to it. Basically, your summary will 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.

## Section V. Policies

**Basic Class Expectations:** It is expected that you spend at least a few hours each week to complete the course readings and assignments. Since this is an online course, it is also expected that you have reliable internet service and that you check your university email at least once a day. It is also recommended that you set up course notifications in Blackboard to receive a text alert when I post announcements, grades, or other course-related items. See instructions in Blackboard.

**Online Classroom Demeanor:** Communication issues tend to be emotionally charged. It is highly unlikely in a class this size that everyone will share your personal values, beliefs, and opinions. Believe it or not, this is a good thing! The presentation of varying perspectives will help all of us to learn. This can be accomplished if ideas, beliefs, and opinions are presented in a respectful way. I will be expecting all students to follow basic ground rules for online discussion. These are included at the end of the syllabus

**Academic Integrity.** Doing and/or taking credit for someone else's work, presenting the ideas and work of others as your own, and/or not citing your sources when you utilize the ideas of others are all violations of academic integrity. It is your responsibility to read and understand the university's stance on academic dishonesty in the SRSU Student Handbook (p. 80), as all violations will be taken seriously and handled through the university judicial process.

**Late Work:** All of the assignments for the entire course will be posted and available as soon as the course is open. It is expected that all assignments are completed by the stated deadlines. Please plan your time carefully. If something does come up, prompt and clear communication will facilitate an accommodating response.

## 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. 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 contact [lbutler@sulross.edu](mailto:lbutler@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.

**Course Calendar**  
(This calendar is subject to change)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Due or To Do:</b>
One	Course Introduction <i>Video: Library Research</i> Conceptualizing Relational Communication	Chapter 1	
Two	Communicating Identity Attraction & Drawing People Together	Chapter 2 Chapter 3	DB 1
Three	Managing Uncertainty Relational Changes	Chapter 4 Chapter 5	DB 2
Four	Presentations		Article Summary 1
Five	Privacy and Disclosure Communicating Closeness	Chapter 6 Chapter 7	DB 3
Six	Article Summary 2		Article Summary 2
Seven	Making a Love Connection More on Love	Chapter 8 Chapter 8	DB 4
Eight	Communicating Sexually Article Summary 3	Chapter 9	Article Summary 3
	<b><i>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</i></b> <b><i>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</i></b>		
Nine	Article Summary 4 Staying Close	Chapter 10	Article Summary 4
Ten	Coping with Conflict Managing Conflict	Chapter 11 Chapter 11	DB 5
Eleven	Influence Dominance University Holiday – Good Friday	Chapter 12 Chapter 12	DB 6
Twelve	Hurting the Ones We Love Article Summary 5	Chapter 13	DB 7 Article Summary 5
Thirteen	Healing the Hurt Article Summary 6	Chapter 14	Course Evaluations Article Summary 6
Fourteen	<b><i>Family Crisis Symposium</i></b>		DB 8
Fifteen	Ending Relationships DEAD DAY – NO CLASS	Chapter 15	
Sixteen	<b>Final Exam – TBA</b>		