

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**COMM 1310-001**  
**SPRING 2023**  
**Fundamentals of Communication**

Class meetings at 11:00 am – 11:50 am MWF  
BAB 305

**Instructor's Office Hours:**

MWF 1:00 – 2:00 pm

T/TH 2:00 – 3:00 pm.

All other times by appointment.

Marjorie Scott

Associate Prof. of Communication & Theater

Chair, Department of Visual and Performing Arts

Office: FAB 106

Office: 432-837-8039

[msscott3@sulross.edu](mailto:msscott3@sulross.edu)

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the fundamental principles, theories, and practical applications of oral and written communication in a variety of contexts. Throughout this course you will enhance your communication competence in small group, public, and business settings by examining how various analytical frameworks covered in both text and lectures intersect with our personal experiences. The readings and assignments are designed to increase your skills at listening to messages, analyzing them internally, and making the private knowledge you gained public through various means of communication.

### **This course has three main goals:**

- 1) to meet the state and university core curriculum oral communication requirement;
- 2) to develop the oral and written communication skills needed to succeed in the remainder of students' college courses;
- 3) and to begin the lifelong process of becoming literate, critical consumers and producers of messages, and develop the skills needed to succeed in the professional world.

It's that last goal that will drive this entire course.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

- Communicate effectively in small group discussions
  - Demonstrate effective conflict management processes
  - Demonstrate effective decision making processes
  - Demonstrate effective group reporting processes
- Organize and deliver a public presentation
- Demonstrate improvement in written communication skills (grammar, clarity of expression,
- Explain the role of communication in various work and personal situations
- Demonstrate effectiveness in critical thinking when evaluating messages

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course is designed to meet one or more of the following Student Learning Outcomes:

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.

### **For Core Curriculum Courses Only for 2022-2023**

#### **Personal Responsibility**

Students will develop principles of personal responsibility for living in a diverse world; to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

#### **Social Responsibility**

Students will develop principles of social responsibility for living in a diverse world, to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

#### **Marketable Skills**

1. Informative and Persuasive Speaking
2. Audience-centered Writing
3. Critical Analysis
4. Research
5. Effective Message Construction Using Technology

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

There is no required textbook for this class. All required readings for the course will be posted on Blackboard or handed out in class.

## **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Study time:** Most college courses require that students spend a significant amount of time outside of class in individual study time. A typical guideline is to spend two hours per week for every class hour. This means, in a 3-credit course, six hours of outside study per week would be expected. The actual in-class meeting time is short in college courses because it is expected that

students can and will work independently outside of class in order to meet the requirements of the course.

**Freedom of Expression:** You are strongly encouraged to participate in class. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. These differences enhance the learning experience and create an atmosphere where students and instructors alike will be encouraged to think and learn. On sensitive and volatile topics, students may sometimes disagree not only with each other but also with the instructor. It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.

**Electronic Devices:** Cell phones, tablets, and computer usage are strictly prohibited during class unless their use is specifically related to coursework. You are responsible for making sure that your personal devices not being used for class are turned off or silenced for the duration of the class. Be here now.

**Class Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend class and participate in class exercises and discussions. Just being present in the classroom does not satisfy the participation requirement for this course. You are expected to be actively involved in the discussions and learning activities during each class period. **Arriving to class late or leaving early will be counted as an absence for the entire class period, unless previously approved by the instructor. If you accrue 9 unexcused absences, you will be dropped from the course with an "F."**

## ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Your comprehension and mastery of the course material will be evaluated through a variety of methods. Grades for the class will be based on the following:

Informative Speech (midterm)	20%
Written Assignments	20%
Group Presentation	20%
Class Discussions/Participation	20%
Final Exam	20%

**Informative Speech:** Students will prepare and deliver a **5-7-minute informative speech on a subject of their choosing (with approval from instructor)**. Assignment details will be posted on Blackboard and reviewed in class.

**Written Assignments:** There will be several written assignments on topics covered in readings and lectures. Due dates of these assignments are in the calendar section of this syllabus and will be reviewed in class throughout the semester. All written assignments must be typed, double spaced, and turned in at the beginning of class on their assigned due date.

**Group Presentation:** Students will work in small groups to select a topic and then research, write, and deliver a presentation to the class on their chosen subject. Assignment details to follow.

**Class Discussions:** Students are expected to participate in class. Show up and participate in discussions.

**Final Exam:** The final for this class is open book, will cover all assigned readings, viewings, and class discussions and will consist of several short answer and some fill-in-the-blank questions.

**Alpine Disability statement:**

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203, or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu) Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall – room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

**Libraries**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine 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 logging in with your LoboID and password. 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). Additional information for students at Rio Grande College:

The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may additionally use online resources available through SWTJC website, [library.swtjc.edu](http://library.swtjc.edu). The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for InterLibrary Loan (ILL) from the Alpine campus.

**Academic Integrity**

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

**Classroom Climate of Respect**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance,

civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

**Diversity Statement**

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

**COURSE CALENDAR**

*The dates and topics on the following calendar are subject to change at instructor's discretion.*

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>READING DUE</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
Wednesday 1/18	Syllabus Review. The Communication Process		
Friday 1/20	The Communication Process (continued)	<i>Communication Skills: Sections 1</i>	In-class writing exercise on personal and social responsibility
Monday 1/23	Listening	<i>Communication Skills: Section 2</i>	
Wednesday 1/25	Listening		<b>Writing Assignment #1:</b> Listening for Meaning (due in class)
Friday 1/27	Listening		
Monday 1/30	Language	<i>How We Use Language</i>	
Wednesday 2/1	Language		<b>Writing Assignment #2</b> <b>due in class</b>

Friday 2/3	Language		<b>Writing Assignment #3 due in class</b>
Monday 2/6	Non-verbal Communication	<i>Communication Skills: Section 3 &amp; Nonverbal Messages</i>	
Wednesday 2/8	Nonverbal Communication		Nonverbal communication exercise (in class)
Friday 2/10	Nonverbal Communication		
Monday 2/13	Critical Thinking	<i>Critical Thinking Skills</i>	
Wednesday 2/15	Critical Thinking		<b>Writing Assignment #4 due in class</b>
Friday 2/17	Critical Thinking		
Monday 2/20	Personal and Social Responsibility		Discussion of goal progress
Wednesday 22	Social Media		
Friday 2/24	Social Media		
Monday 2/27	Informative Speaking	<i>Preparing Your Speech And Speech Delivery</i>	<b>Writing Assignment #5 due in class</b>
Wednesday 3/1	Informative Speaking (continued)		
Friday 3/3	Review and discuss Specific Purpose and Central Idea Statements		<b>Specific Purpose and Central Idea Statement worksheet due in class</b>
Monday 3/6	Review and discuss Specific Purpose and Central Idea Statements (continued)		

Wednesday 3/8	Gathering Information Worksheet		<b>Gathering Information Worksheet due in class</b>
Friday 3/10	Gathering Information Worksheet review (continued)		
Monday 3/13	<b>Spring Break – No Class</b>		
Wednesday 3/15	<b>Spring Break – No Class</b>		
Friday 3/17	<b>Spring Break – No Class</b>		
Monday 3/20	Review of informative speech assignment		
Wednesday 3/22	Informative speeches		<b>Informative speeches delivered in class</b>
Friday 3/24	Informative speeches		<b>Informative speeches delivered in class</b>
Monday 3/27	Informative speeches		<b>Informative speeches delivered in class</b>
Wednesday 3/29	Informative speeches		<b>Informative speeches delivered in class</b>
Friday 3/31	Informative speeches		<b>Informative speeches delivered in class</b>
Monday 4/3	Intercultural Communication	Intercultural Communication	
Wednesday 4/5	Intercultural Communication		
Friday 4/7	<b>Good Friday – No Class</b>	N/A	<b>N/A</b>
Monday 4/10	Small Group Communication	Small group (various readings)	
Wednesday 4/12	Small Group Communication		<b>Assign groups for small group project.</b>
Friday 4/14	Small Group Communication		
Monday 4/17	Work in small groups		
Wednesday 4/19	Work in small groups		
Friday 4/21	Work in small groups		
Monday, 4/24	Work in small groups		

Wednesday, 4/26	Work in small groups		
Friday, 4/28	Work in small groups		
Monday, 5/1	<b>Group Presentations</b>		
Wednesday, 5/3	<b>Group Presentations</b>		
Friday, 5/5	<b>Group Presentations</b>		
Monday, 5/8	<b>Group Presentations</b>		
Wednesday, 5/10	Reflection and Review		
Tuesday, 5/16	<b>FINAL EXAM on May 16 from 10:15 am – 12:15 pm</b>		