COMM 1320.001 –Business & Professional Communication
Summer-2 2024
Course Syllabus

Professor:	**Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.**
Office Hours:	by appointment (virtual or face-to-face)
Office Location:	LH 307
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Email Address:	jvelasco@sulross.edu
Class Schedule:	TBD, though mostly asynchronous
Classroom Location:	Blackboard Collaborate (Online Classroom)
Required Text:	Quintanilla, K. M., & Wahl, S. T. (2019). Business and professional communication: Keys for workplace excellence 4th ed.). London: Sage.
Required Equipment & Software:	Internet connection; computer with webcam & microphone; Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint (available free to SRSU students via **Office 365**)

RESOURCES

Bookstore

Graduate
Student
Center

Human
Resources

Library

Lobo lookou

Lobo Pass

Office 365

Introduction

My name is Dr. Joseph Velasco (most students call me Dr. V), and I am happy to be on this professional journey with you. In the 21st century, increasing employers 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 written documents and presentations. Further, you will be expected to work well with others, handle challenging situations including conflict, asking for a raise, interviewing (others), participating (and leading) meetings, and more.

This course is designed to help you develop in many ways to genuinely increase your chances of selecting the right career for you, getting hired, thriving in the workplace, and effectively managing your work-life balance. Developing your self-awareness and increasing your professionalism are vital. Further, this course is designed to develop communication skills within multiple interpersonal business contexts. This course is taught from a communication perspective that is firmly rooted in research yet is balanced by practical experience.

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:

Course Learning Objectives	*How Evaluated…*
CLO 1: Identify and overcome common obstacles in group meetings	Class discussions, Quizzes
CLO 2: Write several types of professional written communication	Resume, Cover-letter
CLO 3: Compose and perform a professional persuasive speech using technology	Persuasive Presentation, Speech Outline
CLO 4: Interview for a job	Quizzes, Mock Interview
CLO 5: Develop self-awareness	Personality Assessments, Mock Interview, Cover-letter, Resume

2023-2024 Core Assessment (Critical Thinking & Communication):
In addition to other outcomes listed here, as required by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), I will promote and assess the following in this class:

Critical Thinking. Students will develop critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

Communication. Students will develop communication skills to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.

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

Assignment	**Points Possible**	**Grade Description** *(Points)*
Quizzes (5)	250	
Job Announcement	50	A = 895-1000
Résumé	100	B = 795-894
Cover Letter	100	C = 695-794
Mock Interview	100	
Persuasive Presentation	300	D = 595-694
Persuasive Presentation Outline	100	F = < 595
Total	1000	

Quizzes. In this course **reading is necessary**. As with most courses, learning is greatly enhanced when students internalize the material. Five quizzes will assess your understanding of course concepts. Each quiz will have ten questions worth five points each. You may be quizzed on reading and lecture material.

Job Announcement. This assignment requires you to find an actual job or internship announcement. It may be part of an active search, or it may be an older archived copy. Don't submit a link. Upload an image into a document I can read in Blackboard. MS Word with embedded jpeg and pdf files both work. The idea is to find a likely target employer while you are at SRSU or just beyond graduation. This announcement/advertisement will guide three assignments: the resume, cover letter, and the mock interview.

Résumé & Cover Letter. For these assignments, you will use the job announcement (referenced above) and create a résumé and cover letter as if you are applying for this position. Submit a copy of the job announcement along with these assignments. You are allowed multiple submissions throughout the course to encourage revision. The latest revision replaces the previous grade. In this way, I can track your learning, encourage a process approach to writing, and you can end up with your best work. It's rigorous for me as a professor, but your learning is worth it. Please respect my time by offering your best work.

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 as your objective when preparing your responses for the interview. I expect you to prepare responses to a list of typical interview questions which I provide. I will interview you in front of the class. The questions I will ask you are already posted and viewable on Blackboard. You will be graded on how well you handle the live interview without any scripted responses in front of you.

Persuasive Presentation. The Persuasive Presentation asks you and possibly 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. If you choose to work alone, your presentation must be 5-10 minutes in length. Each presentation must verbally cite a <u>minimum of four credible sources</u>.

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 class has online resources, I expect 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 alerts (e.g., email, text, etc.) 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 our interactions whether they are face-to-face or virtual. We will discuss and establish these ground rules in class.

[Texas Senate Bill 17](), the recent law that outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas, does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Expectations and academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered post-SB 17, and students should not feel the need to censor their

speech pertaining to topics including race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Academic Integrity. Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as 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. Students should also avoid using open AI sources unless permission is expressly given for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Late Work: All 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. 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. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartze Grisham, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 ("please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours"). The office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and their mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832. **Please note that instructors are not permitted to provide classroom accommodations to a student until the appropriate verification has been received.**

Technical Support. SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support: Toll Free: 888.837.6055. Email: 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. 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), or phone (432-837-8123).

New for Fall 2023: Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and ScanIt to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Counseling. Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting Timelycare/SRSU. The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Calendar

Week	Date	Topic	Chapter	Assignment/Activity
One	July 8	Intro to Course	N/A	Introductions
	July 9	Excellence at Work	1	N/A
	July 10	Verbal and Nonverbal Communication	2	
	July 11	Take the first quiz		Quiz 1
	July 12	Search for a job or internship or get your personality assessments done		
Two	July 15	Personality Assessments	N/A	See Bb Announcement
	July 16	Listening	3	Job Announcement
	July 17	Résumés & Interviews	4	Résumé & Cover
	July 18	Professional Writing	9	Letter
	July 19	*Video Lecture on Research*	N/A	Quiz 2
Three	July 22	Interview Peer Evaluation	N/A	<mark>Online Classroom</mark>
	July 23	Interviews!	N/A	<mark>Online Classroom</mark>
	July 24	Diversity in the Workplace	5	N/A
	July 25	Work Relationships	6	Quiz 3
	July 26	*Team Role Inventory*	N/A	N/A
Four	July 29	Groups, Teams, & Meetings	7	Select Partner
	July 30	Hiring & Interviewing Others	10	N/A
	July 31	Informing & Persuading	11	Quiz 4
	Aug 1	Professional Persuasion	11	Team Meetings
	Aug 2	Designing a Speech	12	Team Meetings
Five	Aug 5	Professional Delivery	13	N/A
	Aug 6	Technology and Professionalism	8	N/A
	Aug 7	Team Meetings	N/A	Team Meetings
	Aug 8	Work on Speeches	N/A	
	Aug 9	Finding Balance	14	Quiz 5
Six	Aug 12	Persuasive Presentations	N/A	<mark>Online Classroom</mark>
	Aug 13	Persuasive Presentations! ☺	N/A	<mark>Online Classroom</mark>
	Aug 14	**Final Exam** -Pers. Presentations! ☺	N/A	<mark>Online Classroom</mark>