

**COMM 1315.W02 – Public Speaking**  
**Fall 2025**  
**Course Syllabus**

<b>Professor:</b>	<b>Dr. Cherise Johnson</b>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Virtual Office Hours Mon/Wed 5pm-7pm
<b>Office Location:</b>	No physical office (Virtual Office)
<b>Telephone:</b>	281.910.2186
<b>Email Address:</b>	Cherise.Johnson@sulross.edu
<b>Class Schedule:</b>	Online Anytime
<b>Classroom Location:</b>	Web-delivered through Blackboard
<b>Required Text:</b>	Lucas, S., & Stob, P. (2023). <i>The art of public speaking</i> (13 <sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
<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 Center](#)

[Human Resources](#)

[Library](#)

[Lobo looka t](#)

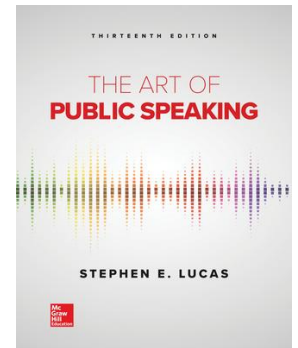
[Lobo Pass](#)

[Office 365](#)

## Introduction

Hello Students,

Welcome ... I am elated to be your Instructor for this course. I am anticipating a semester of learning, fun, and growth. For many the task of communication may seem daunting, but it is my goal to make this course enjoyable for you! For the next few weeks we will be partners as we travel on your educational journey. If at any time you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out for my assistance. More than anything I desire for each of you to be successful in this course and I believe you will.



Remember time management will be one of the most important skills you will need to be productive over the next few weeks. Take time to plan ahead just in case unforeseen situations or circumstances occur.

## Section I. Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able:

1. To demonstrate information literacy by verbally citing credible sources.
2. To specify a central idea and specific purpose for speaking in an audience-centered way.
3. To write informative and persuasive speeches.
4. To effectively perform informative and persuasive speeches to a live audience.
5. To analyze informative and persuasive messages for logical development and support.
6. To conduct secondary research using university library resources.

## Section II. Student Learning Objectives

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.

**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:

**Teamwork.** Students will develop teamwork skills to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

**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	Grading Scale
Exam One	50	A = 895-1000
Exam Two	50	B = 795-894
Peer Evaluation (Informative)	50	C = 695-794
Peer Evaluation (Persuasive)	50	D = 595-694
Introduction Speech	25	F = < 595
Oral Reading	50	
Impromptu Speech	25	
Informative Speech	150	
Informative Speech Outline	100	
Persuasive Speech	300	
Persuasive Speech Outline	100	
Final Exam	50	
Total Points Possible	1000	

**Introduction Speech.** One important function of this course is to build your confidence when speaking publicly. This speech is designed to build your confidence by giving you an opportunity to practice in front of an audience; however, you won't be alone. For this assignment, you will introduce yourself to the class on Blackboard Collaborate by responding to the following prompts:

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. What do you do for fun?
4. What is your major?
5. What is your biggest fear?
6. Who/what inspires you?
7. What was your most embarrassing moment?

**Oral Reading.** You will need to select a piece of literature, poem, sonnet, song (within reason), or a selection from a speech. What I am looking for is for you to bring something to read in front of the class. The purpose of this assignment is to further acclimate you to the world of communicating with others.

Your selection, when read, must not exceed three minutes and must be at least one minute in length. Points will be deducted for reading from a screen or a textbook.

**Exams.** There will be two exams in this course. Exams cover assigned reading and lecture material. The exams likely will include a mix of matching, multiple-choice, and short-answer items. All exams will be done through Blackboard.

**Peer Evaluation.** It is my view that people often improve their public speaking skills when given appropriate and immediate feedback. You will find that the most important feedback (in life) is from that of your audience. Before you present both your informative and persuasive speeches, you will have the opportunity to practice your speech outside of class for an audience of at least one of your peers. This can be done through MS Teams or our Online Classroom. While one student listens and evaluates, the other will fill out a peer evaluation form. Each/both of you will take turns practicing, being the captive audience, and writing feedback on a peer evaluation form. You will send your evaluation to your peer and they will share their evaluation of you. Submit your evaluation through Blackboard Assignments.

**Impromptu Speech.** There are four different modes of public speaking: 1) extemporaneous, 2) manuscript, 3) memorized, and 4) impromptu. Impromptu speeches involve little or no preparation. For this speech, I will likely assign you a topic, and you will have about 5 minutes or less to prepare. Your speech must be persuasive.

**Informative Speech.** This will be your first of two major speeches. For this speech your specific purpose will be to inform the audience on a particular topic. You will be required to speak for at least 4 minutes, but no longer than 7. For every 30 seconds you speak over 7:30 minutes (e.g., I give a 30-second pad on the back end), I will deduct 10 points from your grade. For every 30 seconds you go under 4 minutes, I will deduct 10 points from your grade. This rule applies to both major speeches. You are required to verbally cite a minimum of three credible sources. Presentations will be made through our Online Classroom. Your presentation must include your face being visible while you are speaking.

**Informative/Persuasive Outline.** For each major speech, you will need to write a full-sentence outline of your entire speech. Significant points are added for the inclusion of a specific purpose and central idea written at the top (as modeled in the samples provided). You will also include a list of credible references you cited in your speech. If you are using MLA, call it Works Cited. For APA, call it References. For that section, pick a style and stick to it.

**Persuasive Speech.** This will be your second and final major speech. For this speech your specific purpose will be to persuade the audience on a particular topic. You will be required to speak for at least 4 minutes, but no longer than 7. Still, there's 30 seconds of grace on the backend, as described for the Informative Speech. You are required to verbally cite a minimum of five credible sources. Presentations will be made through our Online Classroom. Your presentation must include your face being visible while you are speaking.

**Final Exam.** The final exam is quasi-comprehensive. It will largely cover the chapters not tested for in the previous exams; however, it will also cover chapters throughout the semester.

## **Section II. 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. Lastly, to make sure we are all present and participating, **everyone must be on camera throughout the class session.** This will be especially important when we are audience members for student speeches.

**(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.

**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 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 my response which may (or may not) include an accommodation.

## **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.**

**SRSU Distance Education Statement:** Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as 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. 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.** Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

**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).

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 24/7/356 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.

Course Calendar  
(Calendar subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due or To Do:
<b>One</b>	Aug 25 Aug 26	Course Introduction Student Introductions		<b>Introduction Speech</b>
<b>Two</b>	Sept 1 Sept 2	<i>Labor Day – No Class</i> Speaking in Public	Chapter 1	
<b>Three</b>	Sept 8 Sept 9	Ethics and Public Speaking; Listening Giving Your First Speech: Speaking to Inform	Chapters 2 & 3 Chapters 4 & 15	
<b>Four</b>	Sept 15 Sept 16	Topic & Purpose Selection Oral Reading	Chapter 5	<b>Oral Reading</b>
<b>Five</b>	Sept 22 Sept 23	Analyzing the Audience & Researching Your Speech Topic Supporting Materials & Reasoning	Chapters 6 & 7 Chapter 8	<b>Online Exam 1</b>
<b>Six</b>	Sept 29 Sept 30	Organizing & Outlining Your Speech Transitions, Introductions, & Conclusions Outlining the Speech	Chapters 9 & 10 Chapter 11	
<b>Seven</b>	Oct 6 Oct 7	Language & Delivery Using Visual Aids	Chapter 12 & 13 Chapter 14	<b>Online Exam 2</b>
<b>Eight</b>	Oct 13 Oct 16	Informative Peer Evaluation Informative Speeches		Informative Speeches
<b>Nine</b>	Oct 20 Oct 23	Informative Speeches Informative Speeches		Informative Speeches Informative Speeches
<b>Ten</b>	Oct 27 Oct 30	Informative Speeches Informative Speeches		Informative Speeches Informative Speeches
<b>Eleven</b>	Nov 4 Nov 6	The Persuasive Speech Making Arguments	Chapter 16 Chapter 17	
<b>Twelve</b>	Nov 11 Nov 13	Impromptu Speeches Persuasive Peer Evaluation		Impromptu Speeches Peer Evaluation
<b>Thirteen</b>	Nov 18 Nov 20	Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches		Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches
<b>Fourteen</b>	Nov 25 Nov 27	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class</i>		Persuasive Speeches
<b>Fifteen</b>	Dec 2 Dec 4	Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches – <b>Last Day of Class</b>		Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches
<b>Sixteen</b>		<b>Final Exam Day &amp; Time TBA</b>		<b>Online Final Exam</b>