

COMM 5304.001 – Gender Communication (Graduate)
Fall 2025
Course Syllabus

Professor:	Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.
Office Hours:	MW, 10-11am & TTh 2-4pm, or by appointment.
Office Location:	LH 307; Online Classroom via Blackboard Collaborate
Telephone:	432-837-8370
Email Address:	jvelasco@sulross.edu
Class Schedule:	Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 12:30pm-1:45pm
Classroom Location:	LH 303
Required Text:	Wood, J. T., & Fixmer-Oraiz, N. (2019). <i>Gendered lives: Communication, gender, and culture</i> (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
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 lookout
Lobo Pass
Office 365

Introduction

Communication is a constant part of our everyday lives, yet even the most well-intentioned conversations can miss the mark. This isn't a reason to give up, but rather an opportunity to learn more about ourselves, others, and the social forces that shape how we interact.

In this course, we'll explore how sex and gender *influence* (not dictate) human communication. Our goal is not to promote a particular viewpoint, but to engage seriously with credible research and let the evidence guide our thinking. We will approach this topic with respect for a wide range of perspectives and a commitment to thoughtful, honest dialogue.

You'll encounter important theories and studies — and you'll also develop practical research skills through a series of smaller journal article summaries that build toward a major academic literature review. Because this course is co-listed for graduate credit, you may find yourself learning alongside students on an advanced track. That's intentional: this course is designed to challenge all students to push their writing, reading, analysis, and communication skills in meaningful ways.

In this classroom, learning is not just about memorizing facts; it's about growing as a communicator, thinker, and colleague. I invite you to bring your experiences, be open to others', and lean into the process of learning together.

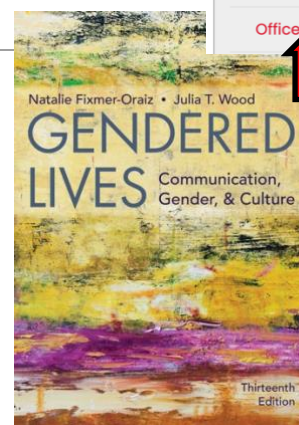
Section I. Student Learning Outcomes

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 objective for this course is to *enhance your competence and knowledge of human communication as affected by sex and gender*. As a student, your learning objectives are to:

1. Identify and explain various theories in the field of gender communication.
2. Build and develop skills essential to communicating interpersonally with others.
3. Comprehend various concepts and discuss them in an intellectual manner.
4. Describe your experience as a gendered communicator.
5. Analyze your communication and the communication of others.
6. Demonstrate proficiency with synthesizing concepts from multiple readings in conversation with other students.

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>
Attendance & Participation	200
Article Summaries (4)	400
Literature Review Draft	100
Final - Literature Review	300
Total	1000

Grade Description (Points)

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

Attendance & Participation. I will take role every day and note your level of contributions to our discussion. You will need to demonstrate that you are keeping up with the readings through our discussions. I will not count excused absences against you.

Article Summaries. Throughout the course, you are required to search the online database (provided by the library) and find four 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 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.

Literature Review (and draft). You will choose a topic that interests you and can be understood from a gender communication perspective. You will then survey the relevant literature written about your topic (primarily in the academic discipline of Communication Studies and its journals) and then organize it thematically. As you review your literature and themes emerge, you should be thinking about what gaps exist and where you might go in your research. On **Tuesday, November 4th**, you will submit a draft on Blackboard (saved as a Word document) of your literature review so that I can give you feedback a month in advance of the due date. The

draft is worth 100 points. Your final literature review is due on Tuesday, Dec 2nd by 5pm. Additional guidelines will be provided in class.

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.

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.

In this course, every element of class assignments must be fully prepared by the student. The use of generative AI tools for any part of your work will be treated as plagiarism. If you have questions, please contact me.

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.

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.

[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.

Section VI. Notes on University Programs and Policies

ADA. SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the 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 Mrs. Mary Schwartz Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartz@sulross.edu or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, 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 Student Responsibilities Statement: All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

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

SRSU Library Services. The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer 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 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), or by phone (432-837-8123). No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu. 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), ScanIt, and Direct Mail 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.

The Lobo Den Tutoring Center offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

Hours of Operation: Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

Location: BWML (aka the library) Room 128.

Contact Us: For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.

Looking for additional support?

Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors. Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere. Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. They look forward to helping you succeed

Calendar
(This calendar is subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due or To Do:
One	Aug 26 Aug 28	Introduction to Course Opening the Conversation	No reading <i>Introduction</i>	Discuss Syllabus How to write Article Summaries
Two	Sept 2 Sept 4	Gender Jargon & Gender Research How to Write a Lit Review	Chapter 1	How to write Lit Reviews
Three	Sept 9 Sept 11	Theoretical Approaches Competing Images of Women	Chapter 2 Chapter 3	
Four	Sept 16 Sept 18	Competing Images of Men <i>Out of Class Work on Lit Review</i>	Chapter 4	
Five	Sept 23 Sept 25	Gendered Verbal Communication Gendered Nonverbal Communication	Chapter 5 Chapter 6	
Six	Sept 30 Oct 2	Article Summary 1 Article Summary 1		Article Summary 1
Seven	Oct 7 Oct 9	Becoming Gendered Gendered Close Relationships	Chapter 7 Chapter 9	
Eight	Oct 14 Oct 16	Article Summary 2 Article Summary 2		Article Summary 2
Nine	Oct 21 Oct 23	Gendered Media Gendered Power & Violence	Chapter 11 Chapter 12	
Ten	Oct 28 Oct 30	Article Summary 3 Article Summary 3		Article Summary 3
Eleven	Nov 4 Nov 6	<i>Movie: The Red Pill</i> <i>Movie: Five Friends</i>		Draft of Lit. Review
Twelve	Nov 11 Nov 13	<i>Movie: Tough Guise 2</i> Family Crisis Symposium		
Thirteen	Nov 18 Nov 20	Family Crisis Symposium <i>NCA Denver – No class</i>		Article Summary 4
Fourteen	Nov 25 Nov 27	Article Summary 4 <i>Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class!</i>		Article Summary 4
Fifteen	Dec 2 Dec 4	Closing Discussion - Discuss lit reviews DEAD DAY – NO CLASS		Final Draft of Lit Review
Sixteen	TBA	Final Exam – 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.		