

**ANSC 4317**  
**Senior Capstone**  
**Spring 2025**

**“An investment in knowledge cannot be stolen from a person and it always pays the best interest.”**  
- Benjamin Franklin

**Instructor:** Dr. Jamie Boyd  
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**Office Hours:** MWF: 9:30-12:30

Appointments may be made outside office hours.

**Class:** TH 8-9:15  
RAS 135

**Course Description:** The course is designed to provide senior animal science students with an opportunity to reflect upon topics related to communication skills and current literature in the field of animal science. Material will be addressed through lecture, discussion, and presentations. Student presentations are a significant portion of this course.

**Text:** None

**Purpose and Scope:** Seminar is considered a capstone course. It is designed to culminate your tenure at Sul Ross and integrate all you have learned. This course should further develop your communication skills, both oral and written.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** The primary goals of this course are:

1. Enhance your recognition to the importance of oral communication skills.
2. Enhance your recognition to the importance of written communication skills.
3. Develop skills in evaluation of written and oral communication.
4. Effectively demonstrate interviewing skills.
5. Synthesize information from the Animal Science curriculum.

**Program Learning Outcomes, Department of Animal Science:**

Student will demonstrate that he/she is able to:

1. Apply basic skills interpreting research data gathered in an agricultural context.
2. Apply critical thinking skills to mitigate potential challenges in diverse animal sciences and related agricultural industries.
3. Develop problem-solving skills.
4. Communicate through written, spoken and graphical methods.

**Assessment Measures:** Upon completion of this course you should have a greater appreciation for the importance of written and oral communication skills as they relate to your field of expertise. You are expected to maintain at least a 61% accuracy based on assignments. The student will demonstrate a satisfactory level of competency in effective oral presentations as assessed by the attached rubric. The student will demonstrate a satisfactory level of competency in effective written communication skills as assessed by various writing assignments.

**Method of Instruction:** This course consists of minimal lecture, some discussion and a significant level of class participation as an individual.

**Attendance Policy:** Due to the nature of the course and required participation, attendance is mandatory and will be a part of the final grade. Unapproved absences will result in a 5pt deduction from your final grade for each instance. Valid absences include 1) medical emergency (signed note from a medical doctor required), 2) participation in a SRSU-sanctioned activity (a letter from the faculty advisor is required before the absence), or other emergencies or conflicts that are allowed at Dr. Boyd's discretion. Excessive absence will result in the student being dropped from the class. Private conversations during lecture or presentations are disrespectful and unnecessary. Students that fail to demonstrate respect for others in the classroom by conducting private conversations will have points deducted from their final accumulated points. **Cell phones must be turned off during class.**

**Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any violation of academic integrity may (will probably) result in a grade of zero for an assignment or a grade of “F” for the course. Unless otherwise specified, group studying and discussion is permitted for papers, but all work submitted must be the student’s own and individual work. This means that discussing options in a group is allowed, but you must write your OWN paper. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. No group work is permitted on quizzes or tests, which are closed note/book (unless otherwise specified).

**Accommodation Statement:** Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Counseling and Accessibility Services Office: Ferguson Hall 112 (432-837-8203) as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

### Assignments:

**1. Animal Science Technologies:** Students will work in groups to research and present a topic related to technology use and advancement in animal science. The audience for the paper and presentation will be the **general adult public**, so your task is to inform those that do not have an animal science background. Each group will be required to deliver a presentation during the scheduled class periods, **February 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>** with the following requirements:

- a. Time Length: 18-20 minutes per group.
- b. Topics- each group selects one topic (only 1 group can present on each topic)
  - Genetic Manipulation of Animals
  - Cloning of Animals
  - The effects of rBST on the Dairy Cow and Consumer
  - GM Crops
  - Stem Cell Research
  - Antibiotic Use in Animal Production

Each student in the group will need to present part of the research. The presentation should flow as one topic, presented by several individuals. Keep slide format similar between presenters. **Each** student in the group is required to turn in a 3-4 page report 12pt font, double spaced, on their topic. Papers must be unique to each student! **Remember**, the audience is the adult general public.

- 2. Ideal Position Description:** Each student must submit and “ideal” position description suitable for a B.S. candidate. If you are applying to veterinary school or graduate school, you may submit a position description for your ideal job once you have finished veterinary (or graduate) school. **The description should be written in a similar format found in position announcements or trade publications.** It must be a realistic position. Salaries and benefits should not be included. A statement such as “Commensurate with qualifications and experience” is acceptable. **The description with your name included at the bottom of the page must be submitted via Blackboard by 10pm March 7th.**
- 3. Resume and Cover letter:** Each student will submit a resume and cover letter for a job you would be interested in applying for after graduation. You must include a copy of the position description with your submission. Rough drafts are due in class on **February 26th** and final drafts are due on **April 2nd**.
- 4. Interview:** You are required to schedule an appointment to interview for a position in animal science. The interviews are planned for **April**. These times are subject to change based on the availability of interviewers. Each interview and review should last approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be a general interview for an animal science major. You will be critiqued on interview skills and content.
- 5. Career presentations:** Each student will present a seminar to the class (and guests) with the following requirements;
  - a. Length: 8-10 minutes.
  - b. Question and Answer period: 2-3 minutes additional
  - c. Topic- Career of choice related to your professional interests. **Topics must be approved by the instructor.**
  - d. An outline of your presentation must be submitted via Blackboard **at least 2wks** before your scheduled presentation time.

**6. Topic Presentations:** Each student will present a seminar to the class (and guests) with the following requirements;

- a. Length: 15-20 minutes.
- b. Question and Answer period: 2-3 minutes additional
- c. Topic- Current Scientific information, suitable for senior students, and related to your professional interests. **Topics must be approved by the instructor. (Due 1/29/26 on Blackboard)**
- d. An outline of your presentation must be submitted via Blackboard **on March 31st** before your scheduled presentation time.
- e. You must make an appointment with me **at least 1wk** before your scheduled time for an evaluation of your proposed seminar presentation.

**Points Available:**

1. Animal Science Technologies: Presentation: 100pts  
Paper: 100pts
2. Position description: 50pts
3. Interview: 100pts
4. Rough Drafts Resume and Cover Letter: 80pts
5. Resume: 100pts
6. Cover Letter: 50pts
7. Individual Presentation Topic: 20pts
8. Presentation Outline: 50 pts
9. Presentation Meeting: 50 pts
10. Individual Presentation: 100pts  
Your presentation will be evaluated by everyone present. The score will be based on my evaluation. Evaluations from guests and other students will be for your benefit.
11. Career Presentation: 100pts  
Everyone present will evaluate your presentation. The score will be based on my evaluation. Evaluations from guests and other students will be for your benefit.

**Total Points Possible: 900 points**

The grade **that you earn** is based on the following scale.

A = > 90%  
B = 80-89%  
C = 70-79%  
D = 60-69%  
F = < 60%

**Tentative Class Schedule:**

January 15	Introduction
January 20-22	Career Options and Professional School Oral/Visual Communication Skills
January 27- 29	Resume Writing/ Cover letters <b>(Individual Presentation Topic due on Blackboard Jan 29th)</b>
February 3-5	Job Search Strategies
February 10-12	Animal Science Technologies Presentations
February 17-19	Challenging Questions and Interview –Do's and Don'ts
Feb 24-26	Career Presentations ( <b>Rough Drafts of Resume and Cover Letter due in class 26<sup>th</sup></b> )
March 3-5	Career Presentations or TBD <b>(Ideal Position Description due-Blackboard by 10pm the 5th)</b>
March 10-12	Spring Break!
March 17-19	Financial Planning
March 24-26	Interview Skills
March 31-April 2	Presentation Skills <b>(Resume and Cover Letter due in class on the 2<sup>nd</sup> in class)</b>
April 7-9	Interviews
April 14-16	Student Presentations
April 21-23	Student Presentations
April 28	Wrap-up/Last day of class