

COMM 1315.005 – Public Speaking (Dual Credit)
Spring 2026
Course Syllabus

Professor:	Kami Vinton, Ph.D.
Office Hours:	M-W 5:00-6:00 (virtual) or available by appointment
Office Location:	Classroom
Telephone:	(830) 279-3036
Email Address:	Kami.vinton@sulross.edu
Class Schedule:	T/TH, 8:30-9:45am
Classroom Location:	Eagle Pass High School: Brenda Mata
Required Text:	Lucas, S., & Stob, P. (2023). <i>The art of public speaking</i> (13 th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
Required Equipment & Software:	Internet connection; computer with webcam & microphone (in case we need to meet online); Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint (available free to SRSU students via Office 365)

RESOURCES

[Bookstore](#)

[Graduate Student Center](#)

[Human Resources](#)

[Library](#)

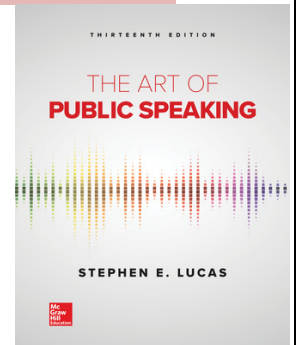
[Lobo lookout](#)

[Lobo Pass](#)

[Office 365](#)

Introduction

My name is Dr. Kami Vinton, and I am overjoyed at the opportunity to teach public speaking to dual credit students this year! Public speaking is a skill that will help you think deeper, learn more, communicate better, and ultimately achieve many of your goals in life. Most people fear public speaking, yet most people have to do it in some form or another—this gives you the opportunity to learn to do it well in a safe space. Humans affect each other in numerous ways—but language and speech (either signed or spoken) are among the most powerful. Through public speech we are taught, persuaded, entertained, validated, and more. Whether it is in a job interview, a toast at a wedding, or a TEDx talk about how to save the planet—the skill of public speaking is the at the heart of impacting others. This course is designed to help you understand the science and art of public speaking and give you skills that are based on nearly 2,500 years of philosophy, practice, and research.



In addition, this course will introduce you more broadly to the discipline of Communication Studies. Professions that employ the art and science of Communication can include careers in Public Relations, Journalism, Broadcasting, Politics, and Health Communication to name a few. Regardless of your decision to enroll in more Communication courses in the future, this course will provide you with a solid foundation of speaking, writing, and research skills that will benefit you throughout your high school and college experiences, and likely for the rest of your life. For those of you who will take advanced courses in Communication and possibly begin a major in Communication, this course will provide the essential foundation for more advanced and specialized study.

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 (SLOs)

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:

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

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 in class and accessed 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. 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. We will split into small groups of 2-3 and do this activity in class.

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 (I allow a 30-second grace period at the 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 in class.

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. You are required to verbally cite a minimum of five credible sources. Presentations will be made in the classroom.

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 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. **Lastly, in case we need to meet online**, 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.

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 is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation 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 should contact Alejandra Valdez at 830-758-5006 or email alejandra.valdez@sulross.edu. **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

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 24/7/356 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](https://www.timelycare.com/sulross). 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:
One	T Jan 12 TH Jan 14	Course Introduction – First Day		
Two	T Jan 20 TH Jan 22	Student Introductions Speaking in Public	Chapter 1	Introduction Speech
Three	T Jan 27 TH Jan 29	Ethics and Public Speaking; Listening Giving Your First Speech: Speaking to Inform	Chapters 2 & 3 Chapters 4 & 15	
Four	T Feb 3 TH Feb 5	Topic & Purpose Selection Analyzing the Audience & Researching Your Speech Topic - Library	Chapter 5 Chapters 6 & 7	
Five	T Feb 10 TH Feb 12	Oral Reading Supporting Materials & Reasoning	Chapter 8	Oral Reading Online Exam 1
Six	T Feb 17 TH Feb 19	Organizing & Outlining Your Speech Transitions, Introductions, & Conclusions Outlining the Speech	Chapters 9 & 10 Chapter 11	
Seven	T Feb 24 TH Feb 26	Language & Delivery Using Visual Aids	Chapter 12 & 13 Chapter 14	Online Exam 2
Eight	T Mar 3 TH Mar 5	Informative Peer Evaluation (Visual links to signup) Informative Speech – Practice Small Groups		Peer Evaluation
	T Mar 10 TH Mar 12	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS		SPRING BREAK NO CLASS
Nine	T Mar 17 TH Mar 19	Informative Speeches Informative Speeches		Informative Speeches Informative Speeches
Ten	T Mar 24 TH Mar 26	Informative Speeches Informative Speeches		Informative Speeches Informative Speeches
Eleven	T Mar 31 TH Apr 2	The Persuasive Speech Making Arguments	Chapter 16 Chapter 17	
Twelve	T Apr 7 TH Apr 9	Impromptu Speeches Persuasive Peer Evaluation (visual links to signup)		Impromptu Speeches Peer Evaluation
Thirteen	T Apr 14 TH Apr 16	Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches		Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches
Fourteen	T Apr 21 TH Apr 23	Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches		Persuasive Speeches Persuasive Speeches
Fifteen	T Apr 28 TH Apr 30	Make up Speeches Online Final Exam		<i>*Make up Speeches</i> Online Final Exam
Sixteen	T May 5	Final grades due		Final grades due