

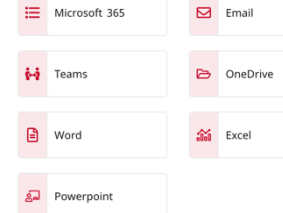
COMM 1320.2W1 –Business & Professional Communication
Summer-2 2026
Course Syllabus

Giving MySRSU

My Account

Microsoft 365

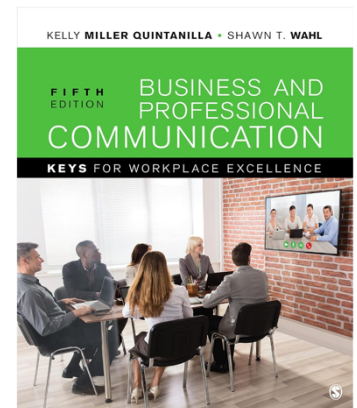
Professor:	Joseph Velasco, Ph.D.
Office Hours:	by appointment (virtual or face-to-face)
Office Location:	LH 307
Telephone:	432-837-8370
Email Address:	jvelasco@sulross.edu
Class Schedule:	TBD, though mostly asynchronous
Classroom Location:	Blackboard Collaborate (Online Classroom)
Required Text:	Miller, K., & Wahl, S. T. (2023). Business and professional communication: Keys for workplace excellence (5 th ed.). London: Sage.
Required Equipment & Software:	Internet connection; computer with webcam & microphone; Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint (available free to SRSU students via 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

2025-2026 Core Assessment (Personal & Social Responsibility):

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:

Personal Responsibility: Students will develop principles of personal responsibility for living in a diverse world; to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional and global communities.

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)
<i>Quizzes (5)</i>	250	A = 895-1000 B = 795-894 C = 695-794 D = 595-694 F = < 595
<i>Job Announcement</i>	50	
<i>Résumé</i>	100	
<i>Cover Letter</i>	100	
<i>Mock Interview</i>	100	
<i>Persuasive Presentation</i>	300	
<i>Persuasive Presentation Outline</i>	100	
<i>Total</i>	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. The idea is to find a likely target employer while you are at SRSU or just beyond graduation. This announcement will guide three assignments: the resume, cover letter, and the mock interview. The announcement should include job duties and desired qualifications.

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 minimum of four credible sources.

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.

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 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 a Licensed Professional Counselor or 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"). Feel free to email at counseling@sulross.edu. 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](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.

Calendar

Week	Date	Topic	Chapter	Assignment/Activity
One	July 6	Intro to Course	N/A	Introductions
	July 7	Excellence at Work	1	N/A
	July 8	Verbal and Nonverbal Communication	2	Quiz 1
	July 9	Personality Assessments		Check your Email
	July 10	Look for a future job or internship		
Two	July 13	Personality Assessments	N/A	See Bb Announcement
	July 14	Listening	3	Job Announcement
	July 15	Résumés & Interviews	4	Résumé & Cover
	July 16	Professional Writing	9	Letter
	July 17	<i>Video Lecture on Research</i>	N/A	Quiz 2
Three	July 20	Optional Online Practice Session @3pm	N/A	Online Classroom
	July 21	Interviews!	N/A	Online Classroom
	July 22	Diversity in the Workplace	5	N/A
	July 23	Work Relationships	6	Quiz 3
	July 24	<i>Team Role Inventory</i>	N/A	N/A
Four	July 27	Groups, Teams, & Meetings	7	Select Partner
	July 28	Hiring & Interviewing Others	10	N/A
	July 29	Informing & Persuading	11	Quiz 4
	July 30	Professional Persuasion	11	Team Meetings
	July 31	Designing a Speech	12	Team Meetings
Five	Aug 3	Professional Delivery	13	N/A
	Aug 4	Technology and Professionalism	8	N/A
	Aug 5	Team Meetings	N/A	Team Meetings
	Aug 6	Work on Speeches	N/A	
	Aug 7	Finding Balance	14	Quiz 5
Six	Aug 10	Final Exam Persuasive Presentations	N/A	Video Submission
	Aug 11	Late Persuasive Presentations (-10 pts)	N/A	Video Submission
	Aug 12	No submissions of any assignment allowed	N/A	No submissions
	Aug 13	All Grades Due from Professors to SRSU		