

**COMM 1315_EPL_CST – Public Speaking
Fall 2026
Course Syllabus**

Professor:	Dr. Amy Post-McCorkle
Office Hours:	Online; by appointment only
Office Location:	Online
Telephone:	Cell#4054017820
Email Address:	Amy.post-mccorkle@sulross.edu
Class Schedule:	Online
Classroom Location:	Online
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; Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint (available free to SRSU students via Office 365)

RESOURCES

Bookstore

Graduate
Student
Center

Human
Resources

Library

Lobo looka t

Lobo Pass

Office 365

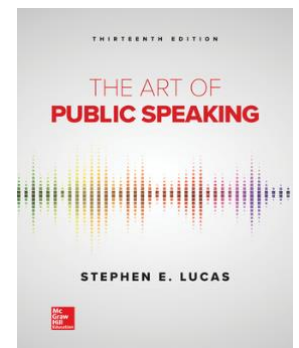
Introduction Welcome Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yAqrI0WN2A>

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
Self Evaluation (Informative)	50	C = 695-794
Self Evaluation (Persuasive)	50	D = 595-694
Introduction Speech	25	F = < 595
YOU Speech	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?

YOU Speech is designed to be a "beginning" point for an informative speech. The student will bring **three** items that communicate who **they were** in the past, who **they are** now in the present, and **who they see themselves to be** in the future. The items need to be large enough for the entire class to see. Each item should be presented as the student shares their story of their past, present, and future. **TIME:** (2) minutes. The student must make it to the (2) minute mark for full credit. The student has a grace period of (30) seconds over the (2) minute mark making 2:30 the total time the student should speak. Over the 2:30 mark the student will be deducted five points. That means at 2:31 it becomes a five point deduction from the student's speech grade.

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS:

- No notecards or notes of any kind will be allowed for the YOU Speech.
- No outline/bibliography is required for the YOU Speech.
- (3) Items are **required** for the YOU Speech.

- The speech should not be memorized, rather well practiced.
- The YOU Speech is worth (50) total points.

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.

Practice Speech Self-Evaluation. Effective public speakers improve through practice, observation, and feedback. In a traditional classroom, you would receive feedback from classmates after practicing your speech. Because this is an asynchronous course, you will instead become your own audience and evaluator.

Before submitting your **Informative Speech** and **Persuasive Speech**, you will record yourself delivering a complete practice version of your speech. After recording, you will **watch the entire recording from beginning to end** and complete the Practice Speech Self-Evaluation. As you watch your recording, evaluate your performance as if you were a member of your intended audience. Pay particular attention to both the content of your speech and your delivery. Look and listen for strengths as well as specific areas that you can improve before your final recording.

Your self-evaluation should address questions such as:

- **Organization:** Was my introduction engaging and did it clearly establish my topic and purpose? Were my main points easy to follow? Did my conclusion effectively reinforce my message?
- **Content:** Did I provide appropriate supporting material and explain my ideas clearly?
- **Delivery:** Was my pace appropriate? Was my volume easy to hear? Did I use effective vocal variety?
- **Nonverbal communication:** Did I maintain appropriate eye contact with the camera? Was my posture and body language effective? Did I appear confident and prepared?
- **Fluency:** Did I use unnecessary filler words such as "um," "uh," "like," or "you know"? Did I stumble, lose my place, or rely too heavily on my notes?
- **Audience awareness:** If I were watching this speech as a member of the intended audience, what would make me want to continue listening? What might distract me or reduce my interest?
- **Strengths:** What are two things I did particularly well?
- **Improvement:** What are two or three specific changes I will make before recording my final speech?

Submission

1. Record yourself delivering the complete practice speech.
2. Watch the entire recording before completing your evaluation.
3. Complete the Practice Speech Self-Evaluation form.
4. Identify specific examples from your recording rather than simply stating that your speech was "good" or "bad."
5. Submit your completed self-evaluation through Blackboard. Upload a Word file.

Important: The purpose of this assignment is not to criticize yourself. The purpose is to develop your ability to observe your own communication, recognize what is working, and make purposeful changes. Effective speakers learn to become their own coaches.

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. Your speech must be persuasive.

Choose one of the following prompts, take 3 minutes to write out a persuasive speech on that topic, and record your speech and upload it to Blackboard. Your speech should have an Intro, Body, and Conclusion. If you make a claim, you need to support it. Your speech should be at least 1 minute long.

1. What is the most important book every high school student in America should read?
2. How long should judges serve on the Supreme Court?
3. Should voting become mandatory?
4. Has the popularity of “selfies” increased self-confidence or self-centeredness?
5. Should children be told to believe in Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy?
6. Should single-use plastic be banned?
7. What is the most beneficial parenting style and why?
8. Do ghosts exist?
9. Boredom is a good thing.
10. Why is Sul Ross the best university?

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 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.

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.

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. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

[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

Statement Regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). This course assumes that work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups as directed by class assignment instructions. This policy indicates the following constitute violations of academic honesty: a student has another person/entity do the work of any substantive portion of a graded assignment for them, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, and/or using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT).

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.

All assignments should be fully prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in the skills associated with this course, from student-based brainstorming to project development, will prepare you for success in your degree pathway and, ultimately, a competitive career. Therefore, the use of generative AI tools to complete any aspect of assignments for this course are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. If you have questions about what constitutes a violation of this statement, please contact me.

ADA Statement. 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. To help protect confidentiality, students seeking accessibility/accommodation(s) services must submit the [Accommodation Request Form](#) located on our [website](#). Students are welcome to call the Office of Accessibility Services at 432-837-8203 or stop by

Ferguson Hall Room 112 if they have any additional questions regarding the process. Our mailing address is PO Box C-122; Alpine, TX; 79832.

Student Responsibilities. 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 him/herself 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!

Course Calendar
(Calendar subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due or To Do:
One	August 24 August 26	Course Introduction Speaking in Public	Chapter 1	

Two	August 31 Sept. 2	Ethics and Public Speaking; Listening Introduction Speech	Chapters 2 & 3	Introduction Speech
Three	Sept. 7 Sept. 9	Labor Day holiday Topic & Purpose Selection	Chapters 4 & 15 Chapter 5	
Four	Sept. 14 Sept. 16	YOU Speech Analyzing the Audience & Researching Your Speech Topic	Chapters 6 Chapter 7	YOU Speech
Five	Sept. 21 Sept. 23	Online Exam 1 Supporting Materials & Organization Introductions, & Conclusions	Ch. 8 & 9 Ch. 10	Online Exam 1
Six	Sept. 28 Sept. 30	Outlining Your Speech Using Language Delivery	Chapter 11 Chapter 12 Chapter 13	
Seven	Oct. 5 Oct. 7	Using Visual Aids Informative Self Evaluation Online Exam 2	Chapter 14	Informative Self Evaluation Online Exam 2
Eight	Oct. 12 Oct. 14	Research Informative Speech Prepare Informative Speech Outline		
Nine	Oct. 19 Oct. 21	Rehearse Informative Speech Informative Speeches Due		Informative Speech & Outline
Ten	Oct. 26 Oct. 28	The Persuasive Speech Making Arguments Claim/Evidence/Reasoning	Chapter 16 Chapter 17	
Eleven	Nov. 2 Nov. 4	Persuasive Self Evaluation Delivery Exercises—Impromptu Speech		Persuasive Self Evaluation Impromptu Speech
Twelve	Nov. 9 Nov. 11	Research Persuasive Speech Prepare Persuasive Speech Outline		
Thirteen	Nov. 16 Nov. 18	Rehearse Persuasive Speech Persuasive Speeches Due		Persuasive Speech & Outline Due
Fourteen	Nov. 23	Thanksgiving holiday (Nov. 25-27)		
Fifteen	Nov. 30 Dec. 2	Makeup Speeches Due Last Day -- Prepare for Finals		
Sixteen	Finals	Final Exam Day & Time TBA		Final Exam