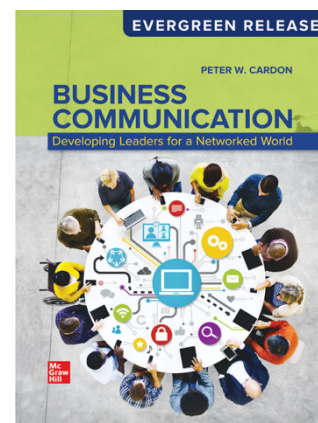


Professor:	Kami Vinton, Ph.D.
Office Hours:	Tue/Thur: from 2PM-4PM; Wed: 12:30PM-2:30PM
Office Location:	3420 Amy St., Eagle Pass TX, 78852
Telephone:	O: (830) 279-3036
Email Address:	Kami.vinton@sulross.edu
Class Schedule:	Tue/Thur: 4:30PM-5:45PM
Classroom Location:	Amy St. Building - 119
Required Text:	Cardon, P. (2026). <i>Business communication: Developing leaders for a networked world</i> (Evergreen 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)

Introduction

My name is Dr. Kami Vinton, and it is my honor and pleasure to be on this professional communication journey with you. Employers across nearly every field value people who can communicate effectively. Whether you work in healthcare, science, business, education, government, nonprofit organizations, media, or the humanities, you will be expected to communicate clearly with people who have different backgrounds, responsibilities, and levels of expertise.

As a future professional, you will need to do more than speak confidently. You will be expected to write clear and concise messages, explain complex ideas to different audiences, use credible information, work effectively with others, navigate conflict, participate in meetings, interview for opportunities, and present ideas persuasively.



This course is designed to help you build those skills for both entering your chosen profession and succeeding once you are there. Throughout the semester, you will practice professional communication in a variety of contexts while considering audience, purpose, evidence, ethics, and appropriate communication channels. The course is grounded in communication research but emphasizes practical application.

Course at a Glance

Primary text	Peter W. Cardon, Business Communication: Developing Leaders for a Networked World, ISE
Course design	Professional identity → disciplinary explanation → workplace writing → research and teamwork → proposals, presentations, and career communication
Major audiences	Students in nursing, biology, business, English, Humanities, social sciences, education, criminal justice, and related fields
AI approach	Responsible-use principles threaded throughout; AI remains secondary to communication knowledge and skill
Capstone	Collaborative written recommendation report plus persuasive professional presentation and completed portfolio

Section I. Student Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to meet one or more of the **student learning outcomes (SLO)** applied to 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

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

Course Learning Objective	Primary Methods of Evaluation
CLO 1: Analyze audiences, purposes, contexts, and ethical considerations in professional communication situations.	Class activities, business messages, quizzes
CLO 2: Create clear, concise, audience-centered written messages for professional contexts.	Professional messages, employment materials
CLO 3: Evaluate and use credible evidence to communicate specialized or disciplinary information to varied audiences.	Informative presentation, report/proposal
CLO 4: Demonstrate effective oral and visual communication in professional presentations.	Informative and persuasive presentations
CLO 5: Apply interpersonal, teamwork, meeting, and conflict-management principles in professional settings.	Team activities, collaborative project
CLO 6: Develop professional career communication skills, including employment documents and interviewing.	Résumé, cover letter, mock interview

Core Curriculum Assessment

In addition to the course outcomes above, this course will address the Core Curriculum assessment requirements designated by Sul Ross State University and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

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

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

- Audience-centered writing
- Informative and persuasive speaking
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Research and source evaluation
- Professional use of technology
- Interpersonal communication
- Teamwork and meeting communication
- Conflict management
- Visual communication
- Résumé and cover-letter development
- Interviewing
- Professionalism and ethical decision-making

Section IV. Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grading

Quizzes, Reading Checks, and Applied Activities — 150 points

Short quizzes, reading checks, workshops, exercises, peer reviews, case analyses, and other applied activities will assess your understanding and application of course concepts. Some activities will take place during class and may not be reproducible outside the original class setting.

Disciplinary, Career, or Professional Explainer — 100 points

You will explain a topic, concept, development, issue, or process connected to your major, intended profession, or area of academic interest for an audience that does not share your level of expertise. The exact format may include a professional brief, informational document, visual explanation, short presentation, FAQ, or another professional genre described in the assignment instructions.

Professional Message #1 — 75 points

You will create a clear, concise, audience-centered workplace message. Depending on the assignment, this may take the form of an email, memo, request, response, status update, set of instructions, or similar professional communication.

Professional Message #2 — 75 points

You will create a message requiring greater strategic judgment, such as persuasive communication, a difficult message, or the delivery of bad news. The assignment will emphasize audience analysis, organization, tone, ethics, credibility, and preservation of the professional relationship.

Informative Professional Presentation — 125 points

You will deliver an informative presentation related to your major, intended profession, community, or area of sustained academic interest. The presentation will emphasize audience analysis, clear organization, credible evidence, explanation of specialized information, effective visual support, professional delivery, and appropriate oral citation of sources. Specific time limits and source requirements will be provided in the assignment instructions.

Employment Communication Portfolio — 200 points

You will identify a real job, internship, graduate-school opportunity, or other appropriate professional position and use it as the basis for several related assignments. The portfolio may include a job or opportunity announcement, employer/audience analysis, tailored résumé, tailored cover letter, interview preparation, mock interview, follow-up or thank-you message, and revision materials. Selected employment documents may be revised after feedback.

Professional Recommendation Project — 225 points

You will identify a meaningful organizational, professional, campus, regional, or community problem or opportunity and develop an evidence-based recommendation. The written component (125 points) may be a professional report, proposal, executive brief, or comparable document. The oral component (100 points) will be a professional persuasive presentation adapted to a clearly defined decision-making audience. The project may be completed individually, in pairs, or in teams depending on enrollment, class progress, and project needs.

Team, Peer, and Professional Engagement — 50 points

This category may include team-process activities, meeting exercises, self- and peer evaluations, professional participation, and other activities requiring active engagement.

Assignment Category	Points
Quizzes, Reading Checks, and Applied Activities	150
Disciplinary or Professional Explainer	100
Professional Message #1	75
Professional Message #2	75
Informative Professional Presentation	125
Employment Communication Portfolio	200
Professional Recommendation Project — Written (write your own proposal)	125
Professional Recommendation Project — Oral (take individual recommendations and create one proposal as a group)	100
Team, Peer, and Professional Engagement	50
TOTAL	1,000

A: 895–1,000 B: 795–894 C: 695–794 D: 595–694 F: Below 595

Section V. Course Policies

Professional Expectations

This is a professional communication course, and the classroom will function in many ways as a professional environment. Students are expected to communicate respectfully, arrive prepared, meet commitments, participate constructively, and treat classmates as professional colleagues. Professional communication often involves disagreement; students are expected to communicate differences respectfully and thoughtfully.

Attendance and Participation

Much of this course involves activities that depend on interaction with other people, including presentations, interviewing, teamwork, workshops, and peer feedback. Regular attendance and participation are therefore important. Some interactive activities may not be reproducible as make-up work.

Communication

Students should regularly check their Sul Ross email and Blackboard for announcements, assignments, feedback, and schedule information. When contacting the instructor, use professional communication practices, including a meaningful subject line, sufficient context, a clear question or request, and your name.

Late Work

Assignments are expected by the stated deadlines. If an unexpected circumstance affects your ability to complete an assignment, communicate with me as early as possible. Specific late-work or make-up requirements may vary depending on whether the assignment is written, individual, collaborative, or performance-based. Late work is accepted at the sole discretion of the professor.

Revision

Revision is an important part of professional communication. Selected written assignments may be revised following feedback. Revision opportunities may require an on-time original submission, participation in peer review or a conference, and a short explanation of the changes made.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to submit work that accurately represents their own knowledge, effort, sources, experiences, and contributions. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, fabricated sources or evidence, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of professional qualifications or experiences, misrepresentation of team contributions, and unauthorized or undisclosed use of generative AI.

Course Flexibility

The schedule and assignment sequence in this syllabus represent the planned direction of the course. Business and professional communication is an applied subject, and the pace of instruction may change based on student needs, class progress, enrollment, current professional practices, or opportunities that arise during the semester. The instructor may adjust readings, activities, assignment details, due dates, or the sequence of topics when doing so supports the course learning objectives. Substantial changes will be announced in class and through Blackboard with reasonable notice. Changes will not reduce students' opportunity to meet the stated learning outcomes or fundamentally alter the grading structure of the course.

Section VI. Responsible Use of Generative AI

Generative AI tools are increasingly used in professional communication. In this course, students may have opportunities to use these tools for limited purposes when doing so supports the learning goals of an assignment. AI use is not automatically permitted on every assignment.

Unless an assignment states otherwise, students should assume that AI may assist with planning and feedback but should not replace the student's own analysis, research, writing, or performance.

Students may not use AI to fabricate sources, evidence, experiences, qualifications, quotations, data, or personal examples. Do not enter confidential, personally identifying, clinical, proprietary, or otherwise protected information into public AI systems.

Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of information and sources and must be able to explain and defend work submitted under their names.

Because AI technologies and professional practices continue to change, permitted uses may be clarified or modified during the semester. Any changes will be communicated before they apply to graded work.

The general rule of thumb in this class is as follows:

- **Planning/revision permitted:** AI may be used for activities such as brainstorming, generating practice questions, comparing approaches, or receiving feedback on a student-created draft.
- **AI-assisted with disclosure:** specifically identified uses are permitted, but students must disclose that assistance and remain responsible for the final work.

Section VII. University Policies and Student Resources

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).

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://timelycare.com/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.

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading
One	Aug. 25 & 27	Course Introduction; Professional Credibility	Ch. 1
Two	Sept. 1 & 3	Interpersonal Communication and Emotional Intelligence	Ch. 2
Three	Sept. 8 & 10	Teams, Meetings, and Difficult Conversations	Ch. 3
Four	Sept. 15 & 17	Inclusion, Culture, and Audience Adaptation	Chs. 4–5
Five	Sept. 22 & 24	Creating Effective Professional Messages	Ch. 6
Six	Sept. 29 & Oct. 1	Style, Readability, and Document Design	Ch. 7
Seven	Oct. 6 & 8	Email, Digital Communication, and Professionalism	Chs. 8–9
Eight	Oct. 13 & 15	Routine Business Messages	Ch. 10
Nine	Oct. 20 & 22	Persuasive and Difficult Messages	Chs. 11–12
Ten	Oct. 27 & 29	Research, Evidence, and Source Credibility Professional Reports and Proposals	Chs. 13–14
Eleven	Nov. 3 & 5	Planning Professional Presentations Delivering Professional Presentations	Chs. 15–16
Twelve	Nov. 10 & 12	—Group Presentations— Employment Communication	Ch. 17
Thirteen	Nov. 17 & 19	—Mock Interviews— —Mock Interviews—	
Fourteen	Nov. 24	—Mock Interviews— Thanksgiving Holiday Nov 25-27	
Fifteen	Dec. 1 & 3	Course Integration, Career Communication, and Portfolio Work Dec. 3 - Dead Day – No Class	Review & complete portfolios
Sixteen	Dec. 8	Final Project / Portfolios Due	

Course Calendar
(Calendar subject to change)

Important Fall 2026 Dates

- August 24: First day of classes
- August 27: Last day for late registration and schedule changes
- September 7: Labor Day holiday
- September 9: Twelfth class day
- October 19: Midterm of the 16-week semester
- November 6: Last day to withdraw from the 16-week course with a W
- November 25–27: Thanksgiving holiday
- December 2: Last regular class day
- December 3: Dead Day
- December 4 and 7–9: Final examination period

Faculty Note on AI-Assisted Syllabus Development

Generative AI was used as a planning and drafting aid during the initial development of this syllabus. OpenAI's ChatGPT assisted with organizing course material, comparing syllabus structures, developing preliminary curriculum alignment, and drafting adaptable language. The instructor reviewed the source materials, selected the course priorities, substantially revised and adapted the generated content, verified institutional information, and accepts responsibility for the final syllabus and curriculum.