Communication 406.001
Professional Communication
Fall 2018 MWF 10-10:50 in Ferguson 373

Communication Studies Program
Department of Languages, Cultures, and Communication
Stephen F. Austin State University

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Assistant Professor of Communication Studies
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Office:   LAN 416
Office Hours: MWF 8:45-10, F 11-1:50, T 9:30-noon via D2L pager or as posted on D2L
Class Times: MWF 10-10:50; 11-11:50; 1-1:50; MW 12-12:50
Professor Spradley is available at other times for appointment. Please schedule appointments through her SFASU email. Do not use D2L email or phone to schedule appointments.

Course Information

Course Materials:
- Purchase a package of portfolio covers from an office supply store to submit all written work.
- Purchase or check out one book for book report and presentation related to: the specified profession you intend to pursue. The book must be pre-approved by your instructor.
- Each student will have to dress professionally for presentations, class events, and mock interviews. This may require the purchase of a few pieces of clothing or arranging in advance to check out clothing from the Interview Closet with Center for Career and Professional Development on campus (located Rusk Building, 3rd floor).

Course Description: Designed to give students an insight into professional communication, illustrated with examples from a broad range of business and professional settings. Prerequisite: advanced standing.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes
- Critically examine and apply communication concepts/theories to professional contexts, employment procurement processes, and contemporary issues in the workplace.
- Demonstrate understanding and application of cover letter, portfolio development, and resume writing.
- Demonstrate understanding and application of employment interviewing including verbal and nonverbal behaviors consistent with professional communication competencies.
• Demonstrate understanding and application of job appraisal interviewing including verbal and nonverbal behaviors consistent with professional communication competencies.
• Demonstrate understanding and application of effective public speaking in professional contexts.
• Apply communication inquiry skills.

Communication Studies Program Learning Outcomes

Objective 1—Theory Knowledge: Students majoring in Communication Studies should display comprehension of major communication theories.

Objective 2—Theory Application: Students majoring in Communication Studies will apply the major theories in the field to communicate effectively in a variety of settings.

Objective 3—Research Methods: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to use and demonstrate understanding of appropriate methodology in critical, humanistic, or social scientific paradigms in examining research questions in communication.

Objective 4—Diversity and Freedom of Expression: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to recognize the central role of diversity and freedom of expression in a global community.

Objective 5—Constitutive Nature of Communication: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the constitutive nature of communication, which includes forces that enable and constrain communication such as technology, ethics, and organizational life.

Objective 6—Higher Order Thinking: Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate oral and written competence in logical and critical thinking.

Course Adaptations
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Grade Withheld Policy (Semester Grades A-54)
http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp

II. Withheld Grades
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically
become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Governing Policies**

The following policies will apply toward decorum in online posts.

1. **ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

   "Unprofessional behavior includes but is not limited to talking while instructor/speaker is presenting, texting during presentations, sleeping during class, and using abusive, profane language/gestures.

2. **Electronic devices:** If a student text messages during class or attends to anything other than COM 406 course materials on an electronic device, the student in question will receive an absence for the day. If the behavior persists, the student will be asked to leave the class for the day. If the behavior continues to persist after this point, the student will be referred for disciplinary action.

3. **Academic Integrity:**

   Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.
Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

4. Attendance Policy: Students are expected to arrive on time so that they attend and participate in each class meeting. An absence is marked in a column on D2L, and it is the student’s responsibility to correct the attendance record on the class day in question (e.g. a student who is tardy needs to inform the professor of his(er) attendance at the end of class). For an online class meeting, an absence is indicated by lack of an assignment/discussion post.

- If a student is texting, surfing the web, sleeping during class, etc.…, the student is marked absent.
- If a student misses 25% of the class regardless of excused/unexcused absence status, the result will be an F in the course. On the 3rd absence (excused or unexcused), students will be penalized by having 2% deducted from their final course grade. On the 4th absence, 5% is deducted from their final course average. On the 5th absence, 8% is deducted from their final course average. On the 6th absence, 10% is deducted from their final course average. On the 7th absence, 12% is deducted from their final course average. On the 8th absence, 15% is deducted from their final course grade. On the 9th absence, 18% is deducted from their final course grade. On the 10th absence, 20% is deducted from their final course grade. On the 11th absence, 22% is deducted from their final course grade. On the 12th absence, 25% is deducted from their final course grade. An absence is an absence.

5. Makeup Work Policy: No late work is acceptable. Deadlines for coursework are posted in advance, and it is the responsibility of each student to complete his/her work and submit it either early or on time. The University recognizes three types of documented excuses that may permit a student to make up work: 1) University Sponsored Event, 2) unavoidable emergency, and 3) personal illness. Your instructor will not hear or recognize oral excuses for missed course material. Your instructor is the exclusive decision maker on approving or denying an excused absence request in order to make up work in the class. Acceptable documentation includes: doctor/medical paperwork, written acknowledgement of participation in a university sponsored event, notification disseminated from the Judicial Office, and family emergency records. Acceptable documentation of an absence to make up coursework must be turned into the professor within one week of returning to class. No exceptions will be made.

Evaluation: Grades will be determined by: Written work, presentations, and attendance.

COURSE POINTS: You may earn up to 1000 points total. Your chance to earn your grade ends when the semester ends. No grades will be bumped up at the end of the semester regardless of how borderline the grade is perceived to be.
There are no opportunities for extra credit outside of that which is offered to every student enrolled in the course. To calculate your grade at any time in the course, add up your earned course points and divide them by the possible course points at that point in the semester. That gives you an average. The following indicates which letter grades correspond to earned points:

- 1000 – 900 points A
- 899 – 800 points B
- 799 – 700 points C
- 699 – 600 points D
- 599 and less F

Class Activities/Assignments: 100 points
During the semester, you will participate in online modules and in-class activities that will be graded. Instructions are provided as assigned.

Book Report and Presentation: 100 points
First, one book written book report will be completed in order to build your personal knowledge about success in your future profession. You must get your book approved by your instructor. The book report will be formatted in APA style and be no more and no less than 4 complete pages of content (use Times New Roman font, 12 font, 1 inch margins). The report should begin with an introductory paragraph about your chosen professional path followed by several summative paragraphs with exemplary quotes from the book. The book report is NOT simply a summary of each chapter or unit of the book. Instead, the report should include additional research about the profession (i.e. Dept. of Labor statistics on average salaries, professional organizations’ description of job responsibilities, etc…). The final paragraph should detail the utility of the information, specifically how you plan to use this information. Your grade will be assessed using a rubric based on formatting, grammar and writing style, composition, support, research, APA style, clarity, and personalization. Submit as an attachment to D2L dropbox.

Second, a presentation will accompany the submission of the book report to share with the class what was learned about the desired profession. Presentations will be 5-7 minutes in length. Presentations should exhibit an attention-getting introduction, clear main points about the desired profession (support points with cited research and personal examples), and an impactful conclusion. There is an outline template for students wanting to excel in organization. Presentations will be delivered from minimal notes and no podium. Professional dress and polished delivery is expected of all class presentations.

Cover Letter and Resume Writing: 100 points
You will be assessing your career interests and goals in this course. This process is ongoing, but you will need to articulate specific job types, organizations, and skill-sets that are central to your future professional outlook. The development of a cover letter and resume is intended to facilitate the transition from college to a professional career. Additionally, this assignment prepares you to attend job fairs and network with professionals. Submit hard copies of the cover letter and resume in a professional portfolio with a business
card. Formatting should be consistent between cover letter, resume, and business card. The portfolio contains the following:

- Example position announcement (this will be used to help your instructor determine how your cover letter and resume have been customized to highlight your qualifications and transferrable skills for the job)
- Cover letter for example position
- Resume for example position
- Business card

The portfolio and its contents will be assessed based on completeness, formatting, customization for the position, grammar, and writing style.

**Leadership Competency:** 50 points

Customizing a cover letter and resume is a necessary skill. For this assignment, you will be customizing a cover letter and resume to apply for a certification for a leadership competency through Student Affairs. Copying your professor on your submission of your cover letter and resume will result in full credit for the assignment. If you have already completed a certification and competency, you simply show your professor evidence, and you will receive the full credit for the assignment.

**Mock Interview & Guide:** 150 points

First, students will work in groups to develop a set of interview questions. Then, students will individually select, edit, and generate their own set of 15 interview questions to use in the development of an interview guide. The interview guide should list the question followed by the response the student would give in the interview. Responses must be thorough, specific, provide examples, and make explicit transferable skills. The interview guide will be assessed based on: completeness, question quality, response specificity, use of examples in responses, personalization of responses, evidence of transferrable skills, professionalism, and grammar/spelling. The interview guide is worth 75 points and submitted via D2L Dropbox.

Second, students will be conducting mock employment interviews. Students will work in pairs and perform the mock interviews in front of the class taking turns as interviewer and interviewee. Mock interviews will be 5 minutes per student including: greeting, abbreviated Q & A session, and closing. Your grade will be assessed using a rubric evaluating your verbal and nonverbal delivery and content development of questions and answers compatible with professional communication. The performance as interviewee and interviewer is assessed in the grade. Partners should be well versed in one another’s professional goals and the position for which the interviewee is interviewing. The mock interviews are performed in class and worth 75 points.

**Professional Communication Training & Development Presentation:** 200 points

You will work individually to develop a 7-10 minute communication training and development presentation for your classmates on a topic related to effective
professional communication. Topics will be selected from a list and assigned speaking days. Students must submit the following: an informational packet formatted professionally for each member of the audience, an outline of the presentation with an APA style reference list, and a presentational aid (i.e. PowerPoint).

- The **informational packet** must contain: key ideas/definitions related to the topic (with APA citations), best practices, and additional resources. These packets could use a program like publisher (Microsoft) or pages (Mac) with templates to create an attractive looking handout. Students are encouraged to use applications like CANVA, which are free to create graphics or other applications to generate infographics. Individual students are responsible for making 16 copies of this packet to handed out to the class, professor, and guests.

- The **outline** must contain: introduction, body, conclusion, and APA style reference list for the in-class presentation (follow the outline template provided by your professor).

- The in-class **presentation** must combine professional speaking skills along with excellent content reflected in the packet and outline. Consider using highly visual demonstrations/illustrations to make a point. To further assist the audience listening to you, you must develop a **presentational aid** that enhances the presentation such as a graphically oriented PowerPoint, Prezi, or another form of visual aid.

This assignment will ask you to draw on your broad spectra of communication coursework and relevant competencies as well as research the topic of the training. You must use and cite CREDIBLE sources including journal articles and books. Presentations will be 7-10 minutes each. Your grade will be assessed using a rubric based on packet development, aesthetics of packet, completeness of packet, quality of research, use of oral and written citations, relevancy to audience, engaging illustrations/examples, practicality of best practices, knowledge/proficiency of topic, speaking competencies, and professionalism.

**Research Participation:**

100 points

You will work with a Communication Studies faculty member on a research project for at least 10 hours. Five class periods are allotted toward the 10-hour minimum, with the remaining hours to be out-of-class hours. However, you do not have to complete the research hours during the allotted class periods if scheduling does not permit. You will keep a log and have the faculty member sign off on the completion of your hours. The log will describe the types of activities that you completed to assist the faculty member. An example log is on D2L in the Dropbox for you to look at. The log must be submitted to the D2L Dropbox prior to finals week. Faculty members, their contact information, and descriptions of projects will be posted periodically on D2L under announcements to help you get started. You should begin this participatory assignment prior to mid-term. Your professor can assist you.
Capstone Paper: 100 points
The Capstone Paper is an Appreciative Inquiry exercise, in which you will draw upon your coursework (including lectures, modules, textbooks, readings, involvement, relationships, and projects) to reflect and synthesize what you have learned as it relates to your professional trajectory. No education is perfect nor complete; yet, your investment in your education coupled with your educators’ investment in you should influence what you know and how you will use what you know to accomplish your professional goals. Creative approaches to this paper are welcomed and encouraged. While you may negotiate with your professor alternative representations of this assignment (i.e. video, blog, etc…), generally the paper needs to be 5 complete pages of content excluding the cover page and reference page. Within the assignment, citations are required. Expected sources include assigned readings from classes, textbooks, personal communication with faculty, module content, lectures… Because this paper is to make relevant applications of your knowledge and skills to your professional goals, you are expected to write in the first person and use personal and hypothetical examples for support. Submission of the paper will be explained in class, but the due date is on the syllabus.

Final Exam: 100 points
You will complete one final exam in the course that synthesize what you have learned from assigned articles, course lectures, guest speakers, student presentations, and content provided in modules on D2L. The exam is taken on D2L consisting of a variety of question types. The exam is timed and available during the specified time periods. The final exam is worth 100 points.

Calendar

Week 1:
8/27 Introduction to Professional Communication
8/29 Professional Trajectory
9/31 Communication Competence

Week 2:
9/3 Labor Day
9/5 Selling your Communication or related degree
Considering graduate school
Get book approved for the book report before end of class today.
9/7 Employment Search/Tools; Professional Organizations

Week 3:
9/10 Center for Career and Professional Development
9/12 Book Report Presentations
Book Report due on D2L Dropbox before 11 pm
9/14 Book Report Presentations
Week 4:
9/17   Writing Cover Letters
9/19   Writing Resumes
9/21   Writing Thank You Notes and Follow Up Messages

Week 5:
9/24   Cover Letter and Resume Writing Workshop
9/26   Cover Letters and Resume portfolio due at the beginning of class
9/28   Research Participation Release

Week 6:
10/1   Interviewing
       Workshop for Leadership Competency Cover Letter and Resume
10/3   Interviewing
10/5   Mock Interview Guide due on D2L Dropbox, no class

Week 7:
10/8   Mock Interviews
10/10  Mock Interviews
10/12  Mock Interviews

Week 8:
10/15  Research Participation Release
10/17  Performance Appraisal Interviews
       CC’ Professor on Leadership Competency Submission
10/19  Performance Appraisal Interviews

Week 9:
10/22  Presenting in the workplace to adult learners
10/24  Presenting in the workplace to adult learners
10/26  Research Participation Release

Week 10:
10/29  Working in teams/groups and managing meetings
10/31  Communication Training & Development Presentations
11/2   Communication Training & Development Presentations

Week 11:
11/5   Communication Training & Development Presentations
11/7   Communication Training & Development Presentations
11/9   Communication Training & Development Presentations

Week 12:
11/12  Communication Training & Development Presentations
11/14  Using technology to manage work
11/16  Research Participation Release

Week 13:
11/19  Research Participation Release
11/21  Thanksgiving Holiday
11/23  Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 14:
11/26  Managing conflict at work
11/28  Writing in business and professional settings
11/30  Work/Life issues

Week 15 & 16:
12/3-7  Capstone Paper due on Dropbox prior to 11 pm on 12/7
        Research Participation Log due on Dropbox prior to 11 pm on 12/7

12/10-15 The final exam is available from 12/8 through 12/12 at 11 pm

Important University Dates:
Last Day to Register: 8/30
Twelfth Class Day: 9/11
Begin Applying for Graduation for May 2019: 9/15
Mid-semester: 10/17
Last Day to Drop or Withdraw without WP or WF: 10/24
Last Day to Apply for Graduation for May 2019: 11/15
Last Day to Withdraw from the University: 11/26
Finals Week: 12/10-12/15