

## Comm 3352 - Communication In Professional Life

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Semester: Fall 2021

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

A course designed to investigate the role of human communication in professional life. Attention to interviewing, workplace culture, interpersonal and team communication, professional presentations, and leadership.

### REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- **Book** – Floyd & Cardon. *Business and Professional Communication*, 1st edition. McGraw-Hill (2020).
- **Blackboard** - I will post my notes and handouts, as well as your grades, on Blackboard.
- **Angelo State E-mail** - You should have access to your Angelo State E-mail account. You are responsible for reading and, if necessary, responding to e-mails from me. I send e-mails through Blackboard to the class regarding homework, exams, etc.

### ASSIGNMENTS

We will explore the various contexts of business communication through the following assignments. Additional instructions (including the length of presentations, required visual aids, outlines to turn in, etc.) will be provided to you throughout the course of the semester.

**Exams [200]:** You will take 2 exams throughout the course of the semester, each worth 100 points for a total of 200 points.

**Worksheets (100):** Two worksheets valued at 50 points each will accompany documentaries we watch in class.

**Career Interview [150]:** This assignment will familiarize you with various professions within your field. You will select a professional area of interest and you will interview a professional in that field. Once you have gathered information from your professional interview and from other sources, you will write a paper and present your findings to the class. You will also write a professional thank you letter as part of the assignment.

**Investor Pitch [150]:** You will research and present a full profile on a company of your choice. Using the communication principles and theories we learn in class, you will make a proposal on how to improve one aspect of that company.

**Diversity Training [150]:** Each of you will select one cultural group and will “train” his/her peers on this group including background, history, and best communication strategies. The training will incorporate Power Point/Prezi slides and an activity that involves the entire audience.

### GRADING

**Discussion of Graded Assignments:** Success in this course requires thoughtful self-evaluation of your performance. A student wishing to contest a grade **must** present me with a **typed** (either e-mail or paper), well thought out case regarding the evaluation **within one week of having received the evaluation** of the assignment in question. The argument must be related to the assignment as presented and based on how it compares with the criteria for the assignment (not how it compares with someone else’s work or how it will affect a student’s GPA). Once the student has submitted his or her argument to me, I will respond in writing within 7 days. Then we may meet face-to-face to view the speech in question and discuss ways to improve future papers/presentations.

Grades are determined on a straight percentage scale based on the number of points earned out of a maximum of 1,000 points. There will be no further rounding or curving of grades. Final grades are calculated as follows:

Assignment	Maximum Points Possible
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Documentary Worksheet 1	50 points
Documentary Worksheet 2	50 points
Career Interview	100 points
Professional Thank You Letter	50 points
Investor Pitch	150 points
Diversity Training	150 points
Peer Feedback (6 @ 25)	150 points
Participation/Preparedness	100 points
<b>TOTAL COURSE POINTS</b>	<b>1,000 points</b>

## COURSE POLICIES

**Instructional Methods:** A significant amount of the teaching/learning in this course is done by you through the presentation, observation, and evaluation of in-class exercises and presentations. You will learn communication skills by practicing them. The Internet, Blackboard, text book, PowerPoint and the Microsoft office suite will also be vital tools in this course. Students are expected to have reliable access to technology as well as solid computer skills in the above areas which require an understanding of uploading, downloading and attaching files to both e-mail and websites.

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class period. The following policy will be enforced in this class:

- (1) Your FIRST absence is without penalty. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the information that was covered from Blackboard, your textbook, and from one of your classmates first, then contact me if you have additional questions.
- (2) Your second absence will lower your final course average by 25 points or the equivalent of  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a letter grade. For example, if you have 800 points, you will be reduced to 775 points.
- (3) Each subsequent unexcused absence will lower your final course average by 25 points ( $\frac{1}{4}$  of a letter grade).
- (4) Tardiness will be counted as an absence.

**Excused Absences:** You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided you give me written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event.

If you have a legitimate excused AND DOCUMENTED absence (hospitalization, death in the family, etc.), you must see me immediately if you want to pass the course. For absences to be considered excused, official documentation must be submitted to me verifying the reason for your absence. Work conflicts, personal trips, being tired from previous evening activities, babysitting conflicts, and faulty alarm clocks are not the type of events that fall into the category of excused absences.

**Absences on Exam and/or Presentation Days:** Please note that an unexcused absence on exam or presentation days will result in a zero (0) being recorded for your grade. You must give your presentation/take your exam on the day it is scheduled. NO EXCEPTIONS.

A student wishing to observe a religious holy day must notify me in writing at least 14 days prior to the classes scheduled on dates the student will be absent. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, notice should be given on the first day of the semester.

**Deadlines** will be announced by me. Assignments must be turned by the date and time specified in the syllabus. **Assignments turned in after the due date are considered late. Late assignments are not accepted.** In addition, the tentative course schedule does not allow flexibility for rescheduling presentations. Don't miss class on a day you are scheduled to speak. Unexcused absences on presentation or exam days and will earn a grade of zero; *no make-ups will be granted.* If you miss an in-class activity for participation points, you will earn a zero for that assignment (unless you have a university excused absence).

**Readings** must be completed *by the day they are assigned* on the course schedule. Be sure to read the book and take notes while reading. Lectures and Power Points are intended to *complement* (not duplicate) that information.

**Written Work** (presentation preparation, essay assignments, etc.) must be typed. Failure to type any written portion of an assignment results in a zero for that assignment. Any assignments completed in class as part of class participation may be hand written.

**Changes** to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these

changes when announced.

**Visual Aid Backups:** You will often be required to design and deliver presentations using PowerPoint software and computer projection systems. While every effort is made to keep the equipment in working condition, on occasion the equipment may not work properly. Please be prepared: back up any visual aids (e-mail them to yourself, bring two flash drives, etc.). Also, be prepared to present even if technology fails you.

### **Masks/Facial Coverings**

Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, masks/facial coverings are strongly encouraged. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge during class. You are encouraged to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability.

**Classroom Civility:** People and ideas must be treated with respect. Please avoid disruptive behavior that makes it difficult to accomplish our mutual objectives. **All cell phones and other noisy devices should be turned off before entering the classroom and headphones/earbuds should be removed.** Distracting behaviors, particularly during presentation days (i.e., working on laptops, doing homework, falling asleep, working on your presentation, or talking) will result in a reduction of points on your own presentation. Excessive phone use will result in dismissal from class and/or being counted absent for the day. If you are expecting an important call or message, please notify me before class. If you are late on presentation days, wait outside until the first presentation is completed.

**Freedom of Expression:** Each student is strongly encouraged to participate in class. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, there are bound to be differing viewpoints. These differences enhance the learning experience and create an atmosphere where students and instructors alike will be encouraged to think and learn. On sensitive and volatile topics, students may sometimes disagree not only with each other but also with me. However, it is possible to disagree without being disrespectful. Sneering, name-calling, questioning motives, and representing positions unfairly aren't good ways to disagree, even if in everyday life and in politics they are sometimes used. It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.

**Academic Integrity:** University standards regulating academic integrity (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, etc.) are strictly enforced. Infractions may result in a zero for the assignment or a failing grade in the course.

**Plagiarism** is a serious offense in this course. Using the words and ideas of others is borrowing something from those individuals. It is always necessary to identify the original source of supporting information; you must cite the source of any material, quoted or paraphrased, used in your presentation. The absence of this documentation constitutes **plagiarism** – a serious academic and professional offense. Proper documentation requires a bibliography of any outside texts you have consulted including both traditional sources and on-line sources.

Your responsibility as a speaker is to distinguish between what *your* thoughts and ideas are, what they are not, and to credit those who have contributed to your presentation. Putting your name on a piece of work indicates that the work is *yours* and that the praise or criticism is due to *you* and no one else. Putting your name on a piece of work in which any part is not yours, is **plagiarism** – unless the borrowed thought or wording is clearly marked and the work is fully identified. Keep in mind that plagiarism is a form of theft. Taking words, phrasing, or sentence structure, or any other element of another person's ideas, and using them as if they were your own, is stealing. Simply paraphrasing the work of another without acknowledging the information source is also plagiarism. Merely restating another individual's ideas in different words does not make the ideas yours. ALL presentations are to be your original work. Using speeches or presentations from previous semesters or other classes is still considered plagiarism. Unauthorized collaboration on presentations (with a student in your section or another student in a different section) is not allowed without prior approval from your instructor. If you are caught being dishonest, you will be given an "F" for the assignment and/or the course depending on the severity of the offense.

Understand I do not tolerate plagiarism and will fail you for it, even if your plagiarism is unintentional. These standards may seem subtle, so feel free to ask if you have questions or concerns. Please see full Honor Code Policy at [http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf)

**Academic Advising:** The College of Arts and Humanities and the Department of Communication and Mass Media require that students meet with a Faculty Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Faculty Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, faculty advisor, and the department chair. Communication and Mass Media majors who have questions about advising or declaring a major in the department, can call 325-942-2031. Undeclared majors are supported by ASU's Center for Academic Excellence located in Library A312, and can be reached at 325-942-2710.

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." In other words, I cannot and will not speak to your parents about details of your grades and progress in this course without your written consent.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation. Angelo State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Dean of Student Life and Student Services at 325-942-2191. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

**Title IX at Angelo State University:** The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU's Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator at:

Michelle Miller, J.D.  
Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator  
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210  
325-942-2022 michelle.boone@angelo.edu  
You may also file a report online 24/7 at [www.angelo.edu/incident-form](http://www.angelo.edu/incident-form).

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345.  
For more information about Title IX in general you may visit [www.angelo.edu/title-ix](http://www.angelo.edu/title-ix).

### **CORE CURRICULUM STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The objective of a communication component of a core curriculum is to enable the student to communicate effectively in clear and correct prose in a style appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

#### *Exemplary Educational Objectives*

1. To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
2. To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices.
3. To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e., descriptive, expository, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication.
4. To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
5. To understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.
6. To develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or to give an oral presentation.

### **PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Apply key communication principles that build positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace.
2. Have working knowledge and practice of various types of professional written and oral communication genres such as résumés, cover letters, industry profiles, research reports, business proposals, etc.
3. Identify ways in which a culturally diverse workforce can influence business communication.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Demonstrate understanding of the terminology and principles of public speaking through the production and performance of oral presentations and chapter quizzes.

This will support the ASU Learning Goal Statement #2: **CORE SKILLS:**

*Students will become proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They will also develop quantitative literacy and technological fluency.*

Students will

- comprehend and critically interpret information in written and oral forms;
- communicate information and ideas effectively;
- use technological resources to access and communicate relevant information.

This will also support ASU Learning Goal Statement #4: **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

*Students will understand their responsibility as citizens in a complex, changing society.*

Students will

- employ professional and personal judgments based on ethical considerations and societal values;
- understand civic responsibility and leadership;
- demonstrate an understanding of the purpose and value of community service in advancing society.

2. Create and deliver informative and persuasive oral presentations which incorporate elements of effective public speaking as identified through classroom lectures and assigned readings.

This will support ASU Learning Goal Statement #3: **SPECIALIZED SKILLS:**

*Students will gain knowledge and skills appropriate both for their fields of study and to enter into the professional sector and/or graduate school.*

Students will

- acquire research skills and specialized vocabulary for critical discourse;
- demonstrate competencies and achievements appropriate to their fields of study; and
- apply classroom learning in a combination of reflective practice and experiential education.

3. Utilize listening skills in critically assessing speeches presented by other speakers.

This will support University Learning Goal #5. **CULTURAL IDENTITY**

*Students will gain insight into the ways cultural identities and experiences shape individual perspectives of the world.*

Students will

- demonstrate respect for differences among cultures;
- practice the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for communicating and cooperating effectively with people of diverse backgrounds

WEEK	IN CLASS	DUE
1 Aug 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro/Syllabus Review</li> <li>Career Interview Assignment</li> </ul>	
2 Sep 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 1</li> <li>Chapters 11 – 14</li> </ul>	Due Wednesday, Sept. 8 Blackboard post: Career Interview (Interviewee and date/time)
3 Sep 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 2 &amp; 3</li> <li>Library Resource Guide</li> </ul>	
4 Sep 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secrets of Body Language</li> </ul>	
5 Sep 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career Interview workshop</li> <li>Chapters 4 &amp; 5</li> </ul>	Due beginning of class: Secrets of BL worksheet
6 Sep 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exam #1</li> </ul>	
7 Oct 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career Interview Presentations</li> <li>Diversity Training Assignment</li> </ul>	Due in class: Thank you letter and slides Cultural group selection
8 Oct 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career Interview Presentations</li> <li>Chapters 8 &amp; 9</li> <li></li> </ul>	Due in class: Thank you letter and slides
9 Oct 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emotional Intelligence</li> <li>Diversity Training Workshop</li> <li>Investor Pitch Assignment</li> </ul>	
10 Oct 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity Training presentations</li> </ul>	Due beginning of class: Emotional Intelligence worksheet
11 Nov 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity Training presentations</li> </ul>	
12 Nov 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 6 &amp; 7 &amp; 10</li> </ul>	
13 Nov 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investor Pitch presentations</li> </ul>	
14 Nov 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investor Pitch presentations</li> </ul>	
15 Dec 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exam #2</li> </ul>	