

South Plains College

SPCH 1321-609-PUBLIC SPEAKING

Department: Communication Department

Discipline: Speech Communications

Course Number: SPCH1321

Course Title: Business and Professional Communication

Faculty Information

Instructor: Cynthia Callaham

Email: ccallaham@southplainscollege.edu

Office Hours : Tuesdays- 8:30 – 9:00 PM

Appointments are available by request. If you would like to meet virtually, send me an email, and we can set up a Zoom meeting with a cell phone or laptop.

Available Formats: Lecture – Conventional – In Person

Campuses: SPC – Lubbock Downtown Campus – B013

Course Description:

SPCH 1321 Business and Professional Communication. Welcome to SPCH 1321-Business & Professional Communication! I hope you will learn to enjoy the process of public speaking while gaining confidence, improving your skills, and making new friends.

This course includes the basic principles of speech applied to communications in business and professional settings. The course emphasizes practice in the construction and delivery of several types of speaking situations and the application of interpersonal skills that occur in a business, organizational, or professional setting.

Prerequisite: None **Credit:** 3 **Lecture:** 3 **Lab:** 0 **This course partially satisfies a Core Curriculum Requirement: Institutional Foundational Component Area (090)**

Core Curriculum Objectives addressed

- Communications skills—to include effective written, oral and visual communication
- Critical thinking skills—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Teamwork—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- Personal Responsibility—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- Social Responsibility—to include the demonstrated knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Free Course Textbook : Business Communication: Strategies for Success by Tasha Davis,
<https://sites.google.com/austincc.edu/buscommoer/home>

Supplies & Requirements

- Textbook (see above)
- One audio recording device (most students use a phone or laptop)
- Notebook(s) and pen/pencil/highlighter
- Choice of sensory aid materials for oral presentations
- Access to a computer and Blackboard for online activities, quizzes, and tests
- Check Blackboard Announcements and Weekly Assignments at least 3 times per week.

Communication Plan

- If you email me, please expect a response in 24 hours during the week and in 48 hours on the weekend. PLEASE email me again and ask about your previous message. Please use Microsoft Office email or Blackboard messages to contact me.

Student Self-Care & Mental Health

I care about your mental and physical health. I realize that the vast majority of students have many responsibilities and we each have different loads that we carry. I want you all to succeed. SPC does have mental health information and services. This is a link to where you can find the resources online.

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/health/studenthealth.php>

Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate communication competence and critical thinking through an understanding of the foundational communication models.
- Demonstrate essential public speaking skills in professional presentations.
- Demonstrate written and oral competencies as it relates to employment (including job searches, interviews, interpersonal interaction, conflict management, leadership and performance appraisals.)
- Apply essential dyadic and small group processes as they relate to the workplace.
- Utilize various technologies as they relate to competent communication.
- Demonstrate effective cross-cultural communication.

Course Requirements for Students

- Read the information assigned; you will be tested on this material, in addition to class lecture/discussion materials on scheduled exams.
- Take thorough notes and study all lecture material, informational handouts, and assigned readings.
- Actively participate in class discussions and group activities.
- Show maturity and professionalism in the preparation of assignments and in online behavior.
- Show courtesy to classmates/speakers.
- Initiate consultations with the instructor when assistance is needed regarding class assignments.
- Appropriately cite information obtained from other sources, both in written and verbal formats. Please refer to the academic honesty section below for further details.
- Initiate a withdrawal from the course if absences become excessive.

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

AI Use Policy

The ethical use of AI is allowed and, in some cases, encouraged in this course. Industry trends show employers want you to know how to use AI intelligently. In this class, that means using it as an assistant, not a ghostwriter.

Green light (permitted)

- Finding and vetting research on your topic
- Brainstorming attention getter and hook ideas
- Checking grammar, word choice, and clarity
- Testing whether a transition flows
- Explaining a concept from the reading you did not understand

Red light (not permitted)

- "Write my outline."
- "Give me my three main points."
- "Organize this speech for me."
- Generating any part of your outline structure: thesis, preview, main points, subpoints, or transitions

You build the outline yourself, using the guidelines in the course videos and templates. An outline planned by AI earns a zero on the rough draft (all 20 participation points), and it costs presentation points as well, because AI does not follow my outline guidelines.

You need to cite AI for green-light uses, and be ready to tell me how you used it if I ask.

Verify every source

AI invents sources that sound completely real. Whatever it hands you, go find the actual article and read it before you cite it. If you cannot find it, it does not exist. Citing a fabricated source costs you points on the source citation portion of the rubric. Sources are cited out loud during your presentation, using the format we practice in class: state your point, name the author, article, and source, give the information, then relate it to your audience.

Other written work

The same rule applies to the resume and cover letter, reflections, self-evaluations, and peer feedback. The thinking has to be yours. Work that is primarily unmodified AI output receives no credit.

AI can be an effective tool for brainstorming ideas and refining your work, but it should enhance, not replace, your own critical thinking. See the [campus AI policy](#).

Plagiarism and Cheating

Students are expected to do their own work on all outlines, quizzes, presentations, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant.

Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Turning in an outline or paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill.
- Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation.
- Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
- Missing in-text or verbal citations.

Cheating violations include but are not limited to, the following

- Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion.
- Discovering the content of an examination before it is given.
- Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps) during an examination: I expect you to use notes and the textbook for quizzes.
- Entering an office or building to obtain an unfair advantage.
- Taking an examination for another.
- Altering grade records.
- Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment.
- Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.
- See the AI use policy above

Course Organization

This course is organized into weeks. You can access the Weekly Folders by clicking on the Content link on the Navigation Bar in Blackboard. Check the course schedule to see the specific assessments included in each week and specific due dates for each assessment.

Grades

You can access your grades on the Blackboard Course Menu (My Grades). Speech Grading Rubrics will be made available to you when speeches are assigned so that you can prepare for my assessment methods.

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- **To earn an A, you need 89.5%**
- **To earn a B, you need 79.5%**
- **To earn a C, you need 69.5%**
- **To earn a D, you need 59.5%**

If your percentage is 59.4 or less, you will earn an F

If you have questions about a specific grade you earned, email me or visit me in virtual or face-to-face office hours to discuss the grade. If you want to appeal a grade you earned on a specific assignment, you

have two weeks after the grade has been posted in Blackboard to approach me about your questions or concerns. After two weeks, I will consider the matter closed

Assignment Submissions

You will **UPLOAD, NOT LINK**, all assignments through their designated submission link in Blackboard. All documents must be submitted as **.docx, .rtf, or .pdf files**. I cannot open .pages files. I will **NOT ACCEPT** links to OneDrive or Google Drive. The only exception to this rule is for the Career Research Interview Assignment with a large audio or video file.

I usually allow unlimited submission attempts so if it does not work the first time, you can just try again. If you repeatedly submit your assignment in the wrong place or just email it to me, I will deduct 5 points from the assignment.

You are required to title your assignments in the following format:

Lastname_Firstname_Assignmentname.docx Example: Callaham_Cynthia_PeerFeedback.docx

All text document files should be submitted as .docx, .rtf, or .pdf files. I will ask you once to convert a .pages or other file to a .pdf file, and after that, incorrect file types will receive a 0. Linked documents will not be accepted!

Course Grades

Course grade will be assessed according to the completion of the following using percentages noted:

Major Presentations and Group Projects 30%

Exams, Projects, Daily Work, Class Participation 70%

Grade Distribution

BOLD items are major assignments. Unbolded items represent averaged scores from multiple quizzes or activities.

Participation/Activities/Attendance 15%-all participation points averaged

Quizzes 10%-all quiz scores averaged

Test 1 7%-100 points

Test 2 8%-100 points

Test 3 10%-100 points

Resume Assignment 10%-100 points

Interview 10%-100 points

Informative Presentation 10%-100 points

Persuasive Presentation 10%-100 points

Group Project 10%-100 points

Course Work

1. Presentations You will deliver two major speeches in the course. More information about speech purposes and topics, instructions, and assessment methods will be included in the weeks. Below you will find basic information about each speech.

- The Informative Speech will be delivered live, in class, to your classmates.
- The Persuasive Speech will be delivered live, in class, to your classmates. This speech requires a PowerPoint presentation.

You must be an attentive audience member on every presentation day, and you must present speeches in class to pass this course. Points will be deducted from your presentation if you are late, not ready when it is your turn to speak, and/or not an attentive and respectful audience member. The speech assignments are explained in the Course Resources/Major Assignments section of Blackboard.

Additional information can be found within the Weekly folders for the corresponding chapters and information.

- Peer and Self-Evaluations You will complete peer evaluations and self-evaluations. These evaluations will give you the opportunity to reflect on your own speeches and the speeches of your group members.
- Weekly Quizzes You will take weekly quizzes based on chapter and supplemental readings, lecture videos, and any other supplemental material presented in each week.
- Learning Participation, Activities, and Attendance You will complete learning activities designed to help you apply course material and prepare for your upcoming major assignments.
- Career Research Interview You will find a professional in a job you would like to have 5-10 years after finishing your education. You will interview the professional about that career. You may either audio record the interview or record a short video presentation about what you learned in your interview.
- Group Project You will be assigned a group and together you will use multimedia and create an infographic project OR a short video file project.
- Exams There will be 3 major exams during the course.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. A student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive as defined in the course syllabus.

When an unavoidable reason for class absence arises, such as illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity, the instructor may permit the student to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to complete work missed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the instructor. Should a student, for any reason, delay in reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first class meeting.

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records.

The department abides by this policy and enforces the following guidelines established for SPCH 1321:

- If a student is tardy, he/she must see the instructor after class to have the absence mark removed. Three tardies (3) will constitute an absence. If a student leaves class before dismissal of the class, he/she may be counted absent.
- Missing more than two weeks of class is considered excessive.

Example: MW/TR – 4 sick days allotted

One day/week – 2 sick days allotted

Unexcused absences one day over your allotment (2) will lower your final course grade by 10 points.

- Each subsequent absence will lower your final course total by 5 points.
- If, in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student should withdraw from the course.

Late Work Policy

Quizzes, learning activities, discussions, vlogs/comments, speeches, and peer and self-evaluations are due by **11:59 pm Central Time on the due date listed on the Course Schedule/Blackboard.** If you do not submit an assignment by the deadline, ten percentage points are deducted for each weekday it is late.

Speeches are mandatory. Because our meeting times are scheduled, you are allowed to make-up **ONE** speech only. If you have a documentable reason, there is no point penalty. **Without documentation, 20 points are deducted.** I determine the date and time of the makeup, and it must be delivered live — pre-recorded presentations are not accepted. You must present at least once in our class to successfully complete the course.

Withdrawal Policy

The last day to withdraw/drop with a grade of “W” is Thursday, December 3, 2026. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from this course. Otherwise, students will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Course averages will be updated frequently, and students can seek guidance from Professor Callaham throughout the term to help decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit [Schedule Changes](#)

Professor Expectations of the Student

- You are expected to log into the Blackboard course at LEAST 3 times/week
- Higher education institutions recommend that students plan to spend 2-3 hours of outside study for every 1 hour of in- class time.
- Students are expected to maintain an environment conducive to learning, which includes “netiquette” (Internet etiquette). Ensure that your e-mail messages, discussion board postings, and other electronic communications are thoughtful. Be concise and clear. Diverse opinions are welcome in this course, and you are expected to demonstrate an open mind and courtesy when responding to the thoughts and ideas of others. If you disagree with someone, respond with respect.
- Keep all your assignments until the semester is over. Occasionally, something goes wrong, and you need to re-submit an assignment or a file can't be opened.

Blackboard Support

For Blackboard support you may refer to the following resources: When you log into Blackboard (BB), at the very top of the page, you will see a question mark icon with the word help next to it. Click on that icon. You may also contact Secretary to the Director of Instructional Technology
Ext. 2180. Direct: 806-716-2962 blackboard@southplainscollege.edu

South Plains College policies concerning

Disabilities, Non-discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation), Intellectual Exchange, Campus Concealed Carry, COVID-19, and AI (Artificial Intelligence) can be found here: [South Plains College Syllabus Statements](#)

As the semester progresses, changes may need to be made to the schedule or grading distribution. I reserve the right to make said changes. If changes are made, students will be made aware through Blackboard announcements, email, and an announcement in class.

I am excited to get to know you this semester.