

South Plains College
Common Course Syllabus: Online SPCH1321
Fall 2025

Department: Communications

Discipline: Speech Communication

Course Number: SPCH1321

Course Title: Business & Professional Communication

Available Formats: Conventional, Internet, Hybrid

Campuses: Levelland, Reese, Plainview, Lubbock Center

Course Description and Purpose

Welcome to SPCH 1321-Business & Professional Communication! It is my 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 satisfies part of 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

Professor Information

Professor: Rebecca Greene

Email: rgreene@southplainscollege.edu **Office Phone:** 806.716.2445

Virtual Office meetings can be easily planned with an email or course message.

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.

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

Supplies & Requirements

1. Textbook (see above)
2. One audio recording device (most students use a phone or laptop-ask me if you don't have something to record with BEFORE buying something)
3. Notebook(s) and pen/pencil/highlighter
4. Choice of sensory aid materials for oral presentations
5. Access to a computer for online activities, quizzes, and tests
6. Check Blackboard Messages, Announcements, and Unit Assignments every weekday.

Communication Plan

- If you email me between Sunday afternoon and Friday at 1 p.m., you can expect a reply within 24 hours or less.
- If you email me after 1 p.m. on Friday or over the weekend, you can expect a reply by Monday afternoon.
- If you don't receive a reply within these timeframes, **PLEASE email me again and ask about your previous message.**
- I will use Blackboard messages and Microsoft Office email. I slightly prefer Microsoft email, but I will answer from the platform you choose.
- **I will post course-related announcements in Blackboard. You will miss essential information if you don't read them.**
- Please feel free to ask me questions AFTER you have read the relevant course information and/or watched the video if there is one. I cannot personally give instructions to each student, but I am **happy** to answer questions you have AFTER you have prepared by reading and/or watching. If it is obvious you have not read/watched, I will refer you to the correct place for the answer.

Technical Requirements

- Desktop or laptop computer
- High-speed internet access: This is ESSENTIAL. If we cannot hear or see you during your speech, I must take points off for that. I cannot give points for something I cannot see or hear.
- Blackboard course messages (you MUST check it, or forward it to the account you do check)
- Microsoft Office (Mac users, convert your files to .pdf or .docx documents before submitting) As SPC students, Microsoft Offices is FREE for students. Go to this website to see how to access it.
<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/instructional-technology/faculty/365/integration.php>
- Adobe Reader (download from Adobe.com)
- Audio and video capabilities (for watching and listening to course content)
- Web camera and microphone (for video conferencing and recording vlogs)
- Blackboard system requirements
- [Zoom system requirements](#)

Recommended Course Materials

- A headset with microphone or headphones (for video conferencing)
- Digital video recording equipment capable of recording up to 5 minutes of video footage

Student Self-Care & Mental Health

According to everydayhealth.com in an article called *What is Self-Care and Why Is it Important for your Health?* by Moira Lawler, "Self-care is anything you do to take care of yourself so you can stay physically, mentally, and emotionally well. Its benefits are better physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being. Research suggests self-care promotes positive health outcomes, such as fostering resilience, living longer, and becoming better equipped to manage stress.

Common examples of self-care include: maintaining a regular sleeping routine, eating healthy, spending time in nature, doing a hobby you enjoy, and expressing gratitude. Self-care can look different for everyone, but to count as self-care, the behavior should promote health and happiness for you." Ha! I am just remembering how hard it was to do most of these things in college, and that was before I was a parent and caretaker.

I care about your mental and physical health. I realize that a majority of students have many responsibilities, and we each have different loads we carry. I want you all to succeed. We all have problems. If there is anything I can do to help you, please let me know! Really. I am not a qualified therapist, but I am happy to help you know about campus and community resources.

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> This information comes from the website:

Licensed professional counseling is available free of charge to students. Counseling services in-person are available on the Levelland Campus and Lubbock Downtown Center. Virtual appointments are available for all campuses.

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am-4:00 pm

For more information, please call 806-716-2529 or email rcanon@southplainscollege.edu

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

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

Course Requirements for Students

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

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 will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

AI Use Policy

The ethical use of AI is encouraged in this course because my research shows that employers want you to know how to use AI *INTELLIGENTLY*.

1. AI is a tool to support your learning, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your academic growth.
2. Outlines for presentations generated by AI **MUST** be reviewed and revised. The citations must be double-checked, you must add correct source citations and often more information, and add personal content. **If you make no changes to an AI outline, it will receive no credit.** This is NOT an intelligent use of AI.
3. When you use AI for your work, you need to cite it, for example, *Outline generated by ChatGPT, September 7, 2025*.
4. AI can be a great way to brainstorm for or improve an assignment. It should not be used to replace your brain. AI content is sometimes
 - a. wrong
 - b. cites references that can no longer be accessed on the internet
 - c. makes up sources and content, and/or
 - d. bland and unmemorable
5. AI can help improve resumes and cover letters, but documents created entirely by AI tend to be so generic that they are quickly forgotten.

6. Using AI to complete an assignment with no individual creation is forbidden.

7. AI can be a great way to brainstorm or improve an assignment. It should not be used to replace your brain.

See the campus AI policy. <http://catalog.southplainscollege.edu/content.php?catoid=59&navoid=2027>

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:

1. 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.
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation.
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
4. Missing in-text or verbal citations.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following

1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion.
2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given.
3. 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.**
4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage.
5. Taking an examination for another.
6. Altering grade records.
7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment.
8. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

Course Organization

This course is organized into Units. You can access the Unit Folders by clicking on the Course Content link on the Navigation bar in Blackboard. Unit folders will contain a combination of reading assignments, lecture videos or screencasts, links to additional readings and/or video material, and other content that will help you understand the focus of that unit. Additionally, there will be various assessments included in each unit, such as quizzes, learning activities, major assignments, discussion boards and comments, video blogs, video conferences, speeches, and peer and self-evaluations. Check the course schedule to see the specific assessments included in each unit and specific due dates for each assessment.

You can access your grades on the Blackboard Navigation bar in Gradebook. Grades will be posted after the due date and after all assignments have been graded. 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 or are concerned about a specific grade you earned, you will need to 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 one week after the grade has been posted in Blackboard to approach your instructor about your questions or concerns. After one week, I will consider the matter closed. When you approach me after viewing your

grade, you are expected to have revisited the assignment or speech description, the grading rubric, and the feedback provided to you by me.

Assignment Submissions

You will UPLOAD all assignments through their designated submission link in Blackboard. All documents must be submitted as .docx, .rtf, or .pdf files. I cannot open MAC 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.

When uploading your first submission, you may have some questions. I have a video that shows how to submit assignments with the assignments. 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: Greene_Rebecca_PeerFeedback.docx

All text document files should be submitted as .docx 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 are an average of your scores from all quizzes or activities.

Participation/Activities	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
Career Research 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 unit folders. Below you will find basic information about each speech.
 - The Informative Speech will be delivered to your audience in real-time in the Informative Speech Video Conference.
 - The Persuasive Speech will be delivered to your audience in real-time in the Persuasive Speech Video Conference. Additionally, this speech will require you to use a PowerPoint Presentation.
 - If you must miss a scheduled video conference, please notify me in advance if at all possible. You are required to email me to arrange a live makeup presentation—**recorded speeches will not be accepted**. To pass this course, **you must present at least one live speech to your group**.
 - You may make up one presentation for full points in the case of illness or another documented emergency. A doctor's note is required for illness.
 - If you miss a presentation for any other reason, you may still make it up live, but 20 points will be deducted.
 - During group presentations, you are expected to be on time, prepared, and an attentive, respectful audience member. Points will be deducted if you are late, unprepared, or inattentive audience member.

- The speech assignments are explained in the Assignments section of Blackboard. Additional information can be found within the Unit folders for the corresponding chapters.
- 2. **Peer and Self-Evaluations** You will complete peer evaluations and self-evaluations. These evaluations will give you the opportunity to reflect on your speeches and the speeches of your group members.
- 3. **Unit Quizzes** You will take unit quizzes based on chapter and supplemental readings, lecture videos, and any other supplemental material presented in each unit.
- 4. **Learning Participation & Activities** You will complete learning activities designed to help you apply course material and prepare for your upcoming speeches.
- 5. **Vlog Entries and Vlog Group Comments** You will create 1-minute vlogs (Video Blogs) related to course and unit material. These vlog entries will require you to summarize content, apply content to your personal life, reflect on your experiences in the course, practice skills taught in the course, and ask questions of your group members. Additionally, you will respond to the questions posed in the vlog entries of your group members.
- 6. **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 do a short, videoed presentation about what you learned in your interview.
- 7. **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.
- 8. **Exams** There will be 3 major exams during the course.

Attendance & Late Work

Live Presentation and Makeup Policy

9. Presenting live during our scheduled video conferences is mandatory and a requirement to pass this course. **You must deliver at least one live presentation to receive credit for the class.**
10. If you miss your scheduled presentation due to an emergency, you may make up one presentation for full credit, but **you must contact me by email or message before the video conference begins and provide documentation of your emergency.**
11. If you miss your presentation for any other reason, you may still make up one presentation, but 20 points will be deducted from your grade. The makeup will be scheduled at a time determined by the instructor.
12. All makeup presentations must be delivered live. Pre-recorded speeches will not be accepted or graded under any circumstances.

Late Work Policy

Unit quizzes, learning activities, discussions, vlogs/comments, speech uploads, and peer and self-evaluations are due by 11:59pm Central Standard Time on the due date listed on the Course Schedule. If something comes up and you need an extension, please email me. I will typically allow a few extensions. If you have something major happen that may affect you for longer than a few days during the course, please let me know.

Withdrawal Policy

For the 8-week course, the last day to withdraw/drop **with a grade of "W" is October 9**; for the full-semester course, the last day to withdraw/drop **with a grade of "W" is December 4**. 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 Greene throughout the term to help decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit the SPC Website: <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php>

Computer Crash

Not having a working computer or a crashed computer during the semester will not be considered an acceptable reason for not completing course activities at a scheduled time for a prolonged period. If you have a one-time issue, I will usually work with you. **Tip:** Identify a second computer before the semester begins, that you can use when/if your personal computer crashes.

Server Problems

When the Blackboard server needs downtime for maintenance, the Blackboard administrator will post an announcement in your course informing the time and date. If the server experiences unforeseen problems your course instructor will send an email and make adjustments as necessary.

Lost/Corrupt/Disappeared Files

You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external disk or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g., Blackboard server crash or virus infection, students own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions/problems, I may/will request you to resubmit the files. In other words, if you submit a document to me, and I do not receive it (lost in cyberspace) or it is corrupted when I open it, you need to resend it to me, corrected, with little or no “downtime” regarding the timeline for submission.

Professor Expectations of the Student

- You are expected to log into the Blackboard course **every weekday** to be aware of announcements/reminders and to pace your progress in the course.
- Colleges and universities recommend that students spend 2–3 hours of study outside of class for every 1 hour spent in class.
 - For a 16-week course, this adds up to about 6–9 hours per week.
 - For an 8-week course, the workload is doubled, requiring about 12–18 hours per week.
 - This is a significant time commitment—make sure you can dedicate the time before committing your time and resources.
- Online course activities promote learning and the creation of a learning community, so they are encouraged and expected.
- You will video conference from ONE location per conference. You will NOT video conference in a moving car, especially IF YOU ARE DRIVING. It is dangerous, it is unprofessional, and the connection will often have issues. I will disconnect you from the video conference if you connect in a moving car you are driving, and you will be counted absent.
- Students are expected to maintain an online 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.
 - Read your written response out loud to yourself before posting it. Doing so helps identify errors, unclear wording, and awkward phrasing, ensuring your response is clear and professional.
 - To my knowledge I have not had this happen yet, but if you are cyberbullied by anyone in our course, please let me know immediately! It is my responsibility to make sure you feel safe and respected by me and your classmates. I take that responsibility seriously.

Course and Technical Help

Please message, e-mail, or call me if you have course-related questions. I am here to guide you through the course. I will try to respond to calls and e-mails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours (about 2 days) on the weekend. If you do not hear from me within that time, please contact me again.

Be aware that the Instructional Technology office and Blackboard both recommend using a browser other than Internet Explorer when using Blackboard.

Please remember that this course focuses on **business and professional communication skills, not computer programs like Windows or Word**. I am happy to help with questions about our course content or assignments. If you run into technical issues, I encourage you to reach out to the **IT Help Desk**, 806.716.2600, or helpdesk@southplaincollege.edu.

You can also check our college's online resources so you can stay on track in the course. I find that searching for a solution on the internet is one of the quickest ways to answer technical questions about your specific device or internet browser.

Blackboard Support

For Blackboard support you may refer to the following resources:

1. 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.
2. You may also contact
Secretary to the Director of Instructional Technology
Direct: 806-716-2180
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: [Syllabus Statements](#).

Let's work together to have a wonderful learning experience!

Legend			
Tests			
Video conferences on Zoom			
Major assignments other than tests			
Time due different than 11:59 pm			
Unit Name	Assignments Due	Due Date at 11:59pm	Grade Category/Points or % of Grade
Unit 1, part 1: Getting Started	Sign up for your video conference time, the sooner the more choices you have!	8/27	
	Syllabus/Getting Started Quiz	8/28	Quiz Average
Unit 1, part 2: Computer Mediated Communication	Unit 1 Quiz	8/29	Quiz Average
	Introduction Slides	9/1	Participation
Unit 2: Communication Principles & Listening	Video Conference 1: Introductions	9/2	Participation 50
	Unit 2 Quizzes	9/2	Quiz Average
	Vlog 1 Post: Post your video & ? At the end	9/3	Participation 25
	Vlog 1 Comments: Respond to group member video questions	9/4	Participation 20
	Post one response to Vlog Comments: Post one sentence in response to comments. I'm trying to make sure you read responses to your video question.	9/5	Participation 10
Unit 3: Job Interviews & Career Research Interview	Start working on J.D., resume and cover letter assignment		
	Unit 3 Quiz(zes)	9/5	Quiz Average
Unit 4: Professional Resume & Cover Letter	Unit 4 Quiz	9/8	Quiz Average
	Video Conference 2: Interviewing	9/9	Participation 50
	J.D., Cover Letter & Resume Assignment	9/11	JD, CL &Resume-10%
TEST 1	Review Quizzes from Units 1-4	9/12	Test 1-7% of grade
Unit 5: Planning & Organizing your Presentation	Post presentation topic	9/15	Participation 10
	Unit 5 Quiz	9/15	Quiz Average
Unit 6: Research & Organizational Patterns	Unit 6 Quiz	9/16	Quiz Average
Unit 7: Rough Draft Outline & Effective Delivery	Turn in presentation rough draft OUTLINE	9/18 at NOON	Participation 20
	Review my rough draft comments and make changes as necessary		
	Unit 7 quiz	9/19	Quiz Average
Unit 8: Informative Speech Video Conference	Final Outline with Updates	9/22	Participation 10
	Video Conference 3: Informative Speech	9/23	Inform. Speech-10%
	Informative Presentation Peer Feedback	9/24	Participation 20
	Informative Presentation Self Feedback	9/24	Participation 15
	Respond to peer feedback on blog	9/25	Participation 5
Unit 9: Persuasive Patterns & Logic and Persuasion	Vlog 2: Post Persuasive Topic only	9/26	Participation 5
	Vlog 2: Post Video & ? & Brainstorming Activity	9/29	Participation 35
	Unit 9 Quizzes	9/29	Quiz Average
	Vlog 2 Comments: Respond to group member video questions	9/30	Participation 20
	Post one response to Vlog Comments: Post one sentence in response to comments. I'm trying to make sure you read responses to your video question.	10/1	Participation 10
TEST 2	Review Quizzes from Units 5-9	10/2	Test 2-8% of grade

If there are differences between the Weekly Blackboard assignments /deadlines and this Schedule, the Blackboard dates are correct. Blackboard is updated throughout the semester and this schedule is not.

Unit Name	Assignments Due	Due Date at 11:59pm	Grade Category/Points or % of Grade
Unit 10: Presentation Aids	Unit 10 Quiz	10/3	Quiz Average
	Turn in persuasive presentation outline	10/6	Participation 20
	Practice using your presentation aid for your Persuasive Presentation		
Unit 11: Persuasive Presentations	Video Conference 4: Persuasive Speech	10/7	Persuasive Speech-10%
	Persuasive Presentation Peer Feedback	10/8	Participation 15
	Persuasive Presentation Self Feedback	10/8	Participation 20
	Respond to peer feedback on blog	10/9	Participation 5
Unit 12: Handling Conflict & Problems	Activity: Bystander Intervention	10/10	Participation 20
	Unit 13 Quizzes	10/10	Quiz Average
Unit 13: Collaborating in Teams	Career Research Interview Project Due	10/13 at NOON	CRI 100-10%
	Group Discussion post	10/13 by 7 pm	Participation 15
	Unit 12 Quiz	10/13	Quiz Average
Unit 13:Group Project	Group Project Due	10/16 by 7 pm	Group Project-10% of grade
Test 3	Review quizzes from Units 10-13	10/17 by 7 pm	Test 3-10%
Grades due to SPC		10/20 by 10 am	

Important Notes

1. Check your SPC email often, or forward it to the email address you check regularly.
2. You have ONE weeks after a grade is posted to discuss the grade with me. After such date, the grade will not be changed.
3. You may make up ONE presentation for full points in the event of an emergency, and documentation is required. If you miss your presentation for any other reason, 20 points will be deducted. You MUST contact me BEFORE the video conference starts to be able to make up a presentation. No pre-recorded presentations will be accepted. All presentations MUST be presented live. It is
4. **October 9 is the last day for a student to drop a course with a W.**
5. If you have something happen during the course that makes you miss more than ONE UNIT of content, please let me know a little about your situation as soon as possible. Don't wait! Sending an email to let me know what is going on is much better than just waiting and missing a unit or more of content. In an 8-week course, it isn't easy to catch up.
6. **Missing a major assignment – cover letter and resume, speech, exam, etc – will result in lowering your course grade one letter grade. You MUST present at least one presentation to your group to successfully complete the course.**