

**Comm 1302: Business & Professional Communication**  
**University of Texas at El Paso**

CRN# 21370, 4:30-5:50 p.m., MW, Education Building 318

CRN# 21369, 6:00-7:20 p.m., MW, Education Building 318

**I. Instructor Information**

**Name:** Keri Moe      **Telephone:** 915-373-5096      **Email:** [KLMOE@utep.edu](mailto:KLMOE@utep.edu)

**(Note: In emails and phone messages or texts, please state your first and last name and which class you are in.)**

**Office Hours:** MW 7:20 p.m. – 7:40 p.m., outside of classroom and by appointment

**II. Text and Materials:**

- Adler, R.B. & Elmhorst, J.M. Communicating at Work: Principles and Practices for Business & the Professions, 11th Edition. (10<sup>th</sup> Edition is okay too)
- Additional Readings: Instructor may provide additional readings via email, Blackboard or hard copy
- Blackboard: Students may be requested to access Blackboard or UTEP student email in order to receive copies of course materials, exams or other assignments. The instructor will post any materials necessary for the class meeting by noon the day of the class. It is the student's responsibility to log into Blackboard or email and print any required materials for the class. Being unprepared puts you at risk for a reduction or loss of participation points.

**III. Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes:**

A course in communication covering both informative and persuasive presentations as these occur in business and professional activities. Instruction and guided practice, informal and semi-formal speaking situations.

**Course Objectives:**

- To explore the functions of communication in organizational and professional settings.
- To understand organizational communication theory as well as develop interpersonal, presentation, and group communication skills to enhance understanding of today's business and professional organizations.
- To learn about leadership and other practical business applications.
- To examine theory and research in organizational and professional communication.
- To enhance communication skills.
- To strengthen, build understanding and build competence for one's own personal participation in the workplace.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Proficiency in oral communication skills in interpersonal, group, organizational and public contexts.
- Learn competencies for communicating at work both verbally and nonverbally.
- Explain the role of communication in career success and apply the basic elements, the process and key principles of communication to specific professional situations.
- Identify and utilize effective communication channels in formal and informal communication networks within an organization.
- Identify cultures and co-cultures in the professional environment.
- Understand and apply effective listening skills.
- Utilize verbal and nonverbal messages effectively.
- Describe and apply the role of ethics in professional settings.
- Recognize communication climate in a working environment, identify messages that created that climate and suggest ways of communicating that can maintain or improve that climate.
- Understand how to give and receive feedback appropriately.
- Prepare of each stage of an interview and demonstrate knowledge of the uses and limitations of interview questions.
- Create an effective resume and cover letter.
- Diagnose a group and identify team-building and leadership strategies.
- Describe and conduct effective meetings and prepare agendas and minutes.
- Analyze participant behavior (including self) at meetings while applying methods to encourage full participation of all members, keep discussion on track, create a positive atmosphere and promote understanding.
- Understand the elements of a variety of types of business presentations and distinguish appropriate informative or persuasive organizational strategies.
- Identify general and specific goals for a speaking situation and develop a presentation based on complete analysis of the situation with appropriate verbal and visual support.

#### IV. Course Overview and Grades\*\*:

**Assessment\*\*:** A=900-1,000 points; B=800-899 points; C=700-799 points; D=600-699; F=599 & below

Attendance & Participation/Quizzes/Homework, Discussion & Class Activities or Presentations	200 points
Unit Exams (5 at 100* points each, based on reading in text) *the lowest exam score will be dropped; <b><u>there are no makeup exams</u></b>	400 points
Elevator Speech	25 points
Critical Analysis Paper & Presentation	75 points
Career Project	150 points
Team Business Project & Presentation	150 points

\*\*All assignments and exams will be announced in advance and specific guidelines will be explained in class. **It is the student's responsibility to be informed of changes by attending class or by contacting the instructor in case of extenuating circumstances.**

#### **Assignment Summaries (detailed guidelines and instructions will be discussed in class):**

**Extra Credit**—Students may elect the following extra credit option: Attend a minimum of 10 fine arts/cultural/campus activities throughout the semester and write a one-page summary/analysis of each event. Several events will be announced in class throughout the semester and will take place at different places and times. If you select this option, your reports, along with any proof that you attended the events (e.g., ticket stubs, programs, etc.) will be turned in on the day of your final exam. You must use a separate sheet of paper for each event and your analysis must include a paragraph describing the event followed by critical analysis describing your thoughts and reaction to the event. Successful completion requires that you attend a minimum of 10 events. Students who meet these requirements can get up to 50 points added onto their final point total. Partial completion will result in no additional points being added—no exceptions.

**Elevator Speech**—Often the chance to present yourself and ideas lasts less than a minute. You meet a prospective client at a party or event. You run into your boss on the elevator. You are introduced to a potential employer in the hallway. Whether networking opportunities like this turn out well or badly depend on your foresight or preparation. You will develop and present this brief speech.

**Critical Analysis Paper & Presentation**—After defining a variety of key terms and theories relating to interpersonal and organizational communication, you will view and identify these concepts by viewing a variety of communication scenarios taking place within a workplace. Then you will write a 3-5 page critical analysis (analyzing NOT summarizing) what you have seen. Your team will present your analysis in an informative presentation to the class.

**Career Project**—This comprehensive project will explore skills needed for the job search, including interviewing, resumes and cover letters. The class will partner with UTEP's Career Services as part of the project to help build awareness of and understanding of important career skills.

**Team Business Project & Presentation**—This project is a team project that will require you to work with a team and appropriately manage both task and relational dynamics. The proposal, project and presentation are completed in randomly assigned groups. Absences—excused or unexcused—from this portion of the course may negatively impact your participation and overall grade for this assignment and the group dynamics portion can not be replicated as an individual assignment.

#### **Instructor Policies:**

**Attendance/Participation/Late Work, etc.:** By enrolling in this class and accepting this syllabus, you agree to come actively participate and engage in this class. Students are expected to attend class regularly and attendance will be taken in the form of random quizzes over the assigned readings or by active participation in group activities and/or discussion. Tardiness could lead to an increase of quizzes at the start of class. Since the majority of class time will be spent in group discussion and activities, it is important to read the assigned reading BEFORE coming to class. Other measures of student performance may be implemented at the instructor's discretion. **Quizzes, in-class activities and small group activities CANNOT be made up. If you miss a quiz or activity, you lose that day's points. Please do NOT ask me to make up a quiz or group activity. Note: An absence does not excuse you from an exam or other assignment due date. Failure to turn in an assignment or take an exam as scheduled will result in a**

zero. THERE IS NO MAKEUP WORK. Not submitting an assignment by the time indicated on the due date will result in a zero (0). The only excused absences are for documented reasons such as participation in University activities, hospitalization, etc. Any extenuating circumstances must be presented to the instructor for consideration. PLAN AHEAD, SUBMIT EARLY. It is the student's responsibility to stay informed of changes to the syllabus or course calendar. All changes will be announced in class.

**Classroom Behavior:** This is a college class. Mature, respectful and responsible classroom behavior is expected at all times. **DISRUPTIVE OR DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR TOWARDS THE INSTRUCTOR OR OTHER STUDENTS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** Students must be professional and respectful during all group activities.

**Work Guidelines:** Students are expected to follow instructions and submit work on time. All work prepared outside of class should be typed. Work should also be proofread to avoid errors in grammar, spelling, etc. A strong communicator pays attention to details; therefore you will lose points for these types of errors. Students are expected to do their own work and research. All assignments must reflect the student's own ideas and research must be cited. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with UTEP and department policies. It is your responsibility to have your papers PRINTED, TYPED and STAPLED on their due dates. Failure to meet these basic criteria will cost you points and handwritten papers will not be graded. All assignments are graded using basically the same criteria: 1) grammar/spelling; 2) organization; 3) accuracy in use of concepts/terms/theories; 4) originality and depth of analysis; 5) depth of critical thinking; 6) quality of arguments, including use of evidence to substantiate/justify your perspective; and 7) following instructions.

**Dropping the Course:** The instructor reserves the right to drop students who are not in active pursuit of the course. However, if you need to drop the course, it is the responsibility of the student to drop the course by the date indicated in by the UTEP Calendar.

**V. Calendar\*:** \*Tentative subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class or via Blackboard or email.

1. UNIT ONE: BASICS OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
  - a. (January 21<sup>st</sup>—February 5<sup>th</sup>)
    - Chapter 1: Communicating at Work
    - Chapter 2: Communication, Culture, and Work
2. UNIT TWO: PERSONAL SKILLS (February 10<sup>th</sup>—March 5<sup>th</sup>)
  - Chapter 3: Listening
  - Chapter 4: Verbal and Nonverbal Messages
  - Chapter 5: Interpersonal Skills
3. UNIT THREE: COMMUNICATION FOR THE JOB SEARCH & INTERVIEWING (March 17<sup>th</sup>—April 9<sup>th</sup>)
  - Chapter 6: Principles of Interviewing
  - Appendix I: Interviewing Materials
  - Appendix III: Business Writing
4. UNIT FOUR: WORKING IN GROUPS (April 14<sup>th</sup>—April 23<sup>rd</sup>)
  - Chapter 7: Working in Teams
  - Chapter 8: Effective Meetings
5. UNIT FIVE: MAKING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS (April 28<sup>th</sup> – May 16<sup>th</sup>)
  - Chapter 9: Developing and Organizing the Presentation
  - Chapter 10: Verbal and Visual Support in Presentations
  - Chapter 11: Delivering the Presentation
  - Chapter 12: Types of Business Presentation
  - Appendix II: Sample Presentations

## GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST FOLLOW APA GUIDELINES. FAILURE TO FOLLOW APA GUIDELINES WILL RESULT IN A GRADENO HIGHER THAN "C."

**An "A" paper will be a paper that is superior.** It will address all of the issues assigned (i.e., directions are followed). The writer(s) will demonstrate exceptional fluency and use of language. The paper will be distinguished by the quality of its content, the amount of detail used to support or illustrate its central ideas, and the coherency of the analysis presented. It will contain very few grammatical errors. It will include original analysis of the theories/concepts (not repeating what it covered in class or the texts). It will accurately cite sources (using APA style; this means citing them in text as well as including a reference list) and use the sources well. That is, there is a good amount of substance from the sources and it is accurate. The sources are strong, academic sources. Finally, the paper will be well organized with a clear purpose/thesis statement, clear topic sentences for paragraphs, good transitions, and good previews and reviews of main points.

**A "B" paper will be above average.** It will be well organized and developed, and it will demonstrate a clear understanding of the assignment (i.e., all issues are addressed—directions followed). Although it may contain minor flaws, the writing will exhibit an ability to use the language effectively and the analysis presented will be relatively coherent. It will include original analysis of the theories/concepts, but not quite as compelling as an A paper (e.g., not as well supported with evidence). It will accurately cite sources (using APA style; this means citing them in text as well as including a reference list) and use the sources well. The amount of substance is strong, but not as well developed as an A paper and there may be minor flaws in the evidence. The sources are strong, academic sources. Finally, the paper will be well organized, but with some minor flaws in organization (presented above).

**A "C" paper will be an average paper.** It will demonstrate an adequate level of organization and development. It will contain enough specific information to illustrate a described experience or a proposed argument. Although the paper may contain writing errors, they will not be serious or frequent enough to distract the reader from the content. All issues must be addressed for it to receive a "C" (i.e., you must follow directions to get a C. The analysis is largely repetitive with what is presented in class or texts and thus is not original. Sources are not cited properly or the amount of substance from the sources is limited (An example of limited substance is using one quotation—usually a definition—from the source to show you used it in order to count as one of the required sources.). All of the sources are not strong academic ones. Finally, the organization has some flaws. For example, main points may not be clear, the paper lacks a thesis, etc.

**A "D" paper will be below average.** It will reveal one or two of the following weaknesses: (1) all objectives of the assignment are not addressed (you did not follow directions), (2) serious problems of organization or focus, (3) insufficient information to illustrate experiences or support the arguments, (4) serious problems in sentence structure, (5) errors in writing that are sufficient to distract the reader from the content of the paper, (6) not enough outside sources (or none), and (7) lacking original analysis.

**An "F" paper will demonstrate little understanding of the assignment or the mechanics of writing.** Essentially, it will include three or more of the weaknesses presented in the "D" paper.

I have high standards of excellent work. To receive an excellent grade you will need to work hard AND do excellent work. Hard work is necessary but not sufficient to receive high grades. The assignments are designed to challenge you, and expect you to do more than memorize concepts. Engage the readings and contribute your original ideas to the class discussions and in your assignments.

Source: Frank Perez, Ph.D.