By way of introduction, my name Michael Brooks and I generally use Mike. I received my primary education in El Paso, received a Bachelor’s degree in Social Work at The University of Texas at El Paso (after completing coursework at El Paso Community College and UTEP). I completed a Master of Arts degree in Communication at UTEP. I consider myself an El Paso “almost” native and absolutely love this part of the country. While I appreciate the compliment, I am not Dr. Brooks ;). I like to keep things professional and informal and Mr. Brooks works just fine.

The majority of the text readings are grouped in the opening weeks of the course. The purpose of this scheduling is so that the student can learn, as early as possible in the term, working information relating to applied theoretical concepts to their own communication interactions. We will be working on text-readings and class projects concurrently, it’s important that you keep up with the weekly assignments.

The second part of the semester, there are few assigned readings. The second part of the class will focus on group and individual presentations with classroom time dedicated to development and presentation.

I hope to have engaged students and plan on concentrating class time on discussion and activities related to course content rather than lecture for 90 minutes. You will be responsible for course content before the beginning of each class. I will make minor adjustments for students not in possession of the text during the first days of class but it is imperative that you keep ahead of the readings and assessment materials.

Communication 1302 sections will utilize Blackboard and/or other online tools throughout the semester. Blackboard provides students access to the syllabus, supplemental reading materials, class messaging, discussion groups, and student progress reports. It is vital that students check and participate in Blackboard consistently as it is an integral part of the course. It is important
that the device you use to access the course has all the current updates especially Java and Acrobat--issues with technology will not be an acceptable excuse for late or missing work.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday, 11:30-3:00 or by appointment
Friday by appointment

Feel free to contact my UTEP email address but do maintain professional dialogue. At the very minimum, your message should contain an accurate Subject Line (please, don’t ask a new question or introduce a new topic by returning one of my mass emails using an old subject line). Your message should include some identifying information like course number (1302), the meeting time, or CRN of the course and enough information that I know what your concerns might be.

Note: It is a good idea to remain courteous in all of your email correspondence-not simply with this instructor.

And Another Note: SMS acronyms are not appropriate for business communication i.e., DUNA (Don’t Use No Acronyms) when you email your instructors.

RATIONALE AND OVERVIEW

This course, Business and Professional Communication, is an analysis of the networks and methods of communication found in organizations and small groups; including, the qualities necessary for good communication as both an employer and employee. Emphasis will be on intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, cultural, and public communication as it relates to the business and professional environment. Exercises and assignments will encompass many areas of business communication, including oral presentations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, the student will:

• Know basic theories of communication and how they apply to personal and professional interactions
• Recognize the barriers that may occur in interpersonal communication
• Recognize the importance and impact of nonverbal and cross-cultural communication
• Participate effectively as a member of a small group
• Understand the importance of communication in an organization
• Make an assessment of leadership skills
• Design and present effective oral presentations to a group

TEXT

CELL PHONES & LAPTOPS

There is legitimate debate surrounding the use of cellphones in the classroom. My opinion is that we should make the effort to remain connected with other people, and our environment, during our potentially important interaction with others. Frequently, cellphones detract from that potentially important interaction. Please, no texting during class; it is noticeable. I view the use of cellphones, and text messaging during a lecture as disruptive, disrespectful and discourteous [rude].

Additionally, cellphones can have a negative impact on your grades (Duncan, Hoestra, and Wilcox, 2012) and their use distracts other students (Tindell and Bohlander, 2012).

Have your cell phone off or on vibrate during class time. If you are expecting an important call/message during class, please quietly leave the room and return when you are able to focus on and participate in classroom activities.

WE NEED TO CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Our classroom and discussion boards will be a safe place for all ideas. Interpersonal communication is based on the concept that we are all unique individuals entitled to our own opinions and beliefs. If we want others to respect our individuality and uniqueness, we must respect theirs.

Therefore, any comments, jokes, or remarks that denigrate the worth of an individual's physical or mental ability, body size, genetic information, veteran’s status, religion, race, creed, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or gender identification are inappropriate and detract from your effectiveness as a speaker/writer and from your credibility as a member of society. Our in-class and online interactions must be conducted in a courteous and professional manner.

Consider adopting an “ethic of reciprocity” for your interpersonal communication, whatever the medium. Please be courteous to others.

If you are late from normal class meetings, come in and take your seat. If you arrive late during student presentations, please wait outside of the classroom until the presenter has finished or you hear applause.

ETHICS

Your work is to be your own. Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, submitting work attributable to another person, taking an exam for another person, or any act that gives a student unfair advantage over another) will be dealt with through a failing grade on the assignment.
and/or in the course, probation, suspension or dismissal. Please be familiar with university policy regarding academic dishonesty.

We will present a speech and you must cite your research, failure to tell the audience where the research and information you used to develop the speech is plagiarism. We will be discussing the importance of accurate and ethical citations throughout the semester.  

http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not optional; I generally take attendance daily. Any unexcused absence will have a negative impact on your final grade but I do not consider all absences unexcused. I think it is important for you to develop your communication skills and discussing your possible absence is one skill you can develop in this class. That said, this is a hybrid class and we will follow the course calendar that has the dates for required meetings on campus versus online assignments that do not require time on campus.

If for some reason you know you cannot attend class on a required day, let me know about it before the class (email is fine) and you will probably have an excused absence. Do not test this proposition on testing days. I will not excuse undocumented absences on test or presentation days.

From UTEP catalog: Regulations/curriculum and classroom policies

Class Attendance

The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions and attendance is mandatory for all freshman-level courses (1XXX). It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of extended absences. When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor can drop the student from the class with a grade of W before the course drop deadline and with a grade of F after the course drop deadline.

http://goo.gl/3lxQ3J

COURSE DROP DEADLINE APRIL 1, 2016

CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

As part of the warm-up exercises designed to help you to relax while speaking in public, and to serve the purpose of focusing the attention of the class on the assigned readings in the text book, you are asked to lead a class discussion of approximately 10 minutes on one text book chapter. The educational philosophy behind this assignment and others like it is simple: that people learn more when they are actively engaged in absorbing and practicing the messages contained in class materials than when they are passive listeners.

Speakers: Students will be assigned a chapter and a due date. Please be sure to be prepared to speak when scheduled! Students may be asked to work in groups, dividing chapters into sections.
Audience: All must listen actively and interact with the speaker. You may be required to answer questions, participate in surveys, or make comments at the end of the presentation.

Speakers will need to plan an informal outline to help in remembering important ideas. Also, this is an open book presentation—feel free to quote from the text.

Remember, as a discussion leader, you have the right to plan questions or an activity related to the discussion to ask the class. You may also feel free to ask the instructor to help you during this warm-up exercise.

This is an informal exercise. You should speak clearly and distinctly and make an effort to share the important ideas from the chapter with the class. If you are able to elicit discussion from the class, this is a mark of success, so plan strategies to get the class talking!

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Written communication in a business environment tends to be more formal than in other venues. Individuals and employers use your written communication to assess your intelligence, skills, and ability, your “fit” in the organization. In the classroom, written communication receives an assessment (a grade). Your comments and responses to a discussion thread are not like informal text messages or status updates to Facebook— they should be academic in nature and well thought out.

• We will make extensive use Blackboard for graded assignments.
• Most on-line discussions will require a minimum of two other students to receive full credit.
• Your name needs to be on ALL attached-file written assignments.
• There is a minimum required response criteria for each type of assignment that includes word count and word choice, appropriate format, and the inclusion of course-related content for each assignment. You need to elaborate; your response should indicate your mastery of the concepts described in the prompts.
• It is imperative that you submit your assignment in the proper section of Blackboard to insure you receive credit.

Content, organization, insight, and style are taken into consideration. Please, take the effort to proofread your submissions- including your discussions responses.

Do consider--electronic media has influenced our communication. Many of us have unwittingly modified our writing style to conform to a 140 or 160-character maximum. The shortest written assignment in this course is the discussion response at 150-200 WORDS. Make sure you adequately expand on the discussion assignments. Additionally, short message service (SMS)
abbreviations are not acceptable for business/professional communication. (No “text-speak” in reports, assignments, or email correspondence--see DUNA above ;-) 

We will use of Blackboard for all assignments. Alternate methods of submission (paper copies or submissions to my UTEP email) will not be graded. Responses/Submissions, other than discussions, that are posted in the dialog box will receive a grade of 0. All attached file submissions must be “Word compatible;” I will not be responsible for converting files.

Technology problems are not an acceptable excuse for work that is late or missing. Make sure you can successfully send and receive attached files on Blackboard. You will need up-to-date Java and Adobe software to complete the assignment.

QUZZES, AND DISCUSSIONS, BLOGS AND/OR WIKIs ON BLACKBOARD

Course content is divided into learning modules. Each module will contain, lecture notes and discussion topics, blog posting relating to the associated chapter(s), or a quiz.

Discussions, Blog posts, and Wikis are based on readings or ideas taken from the textbook and other sources as they relate to various communicative exchanges. Your responses must be rational and thought-out. Make your initial post 200-300 words long and your responses to others 75-100 words long. Instructions for any posting will be included in the assignment. Responses should develop the dialogue. “Me too” or “I agree” are not viable responses, you should provide examples and your response should expand on the concepts we examine. Late responses are not considered for credit after the discussion is closed. The discussions are an assessment of your understanding of course materials. Thoughtful answers will receive the highest evaluation.

Blog and Wiki posts should be your reflection or assessment relating to given prompt. Your reflection must be a minimum of 200 words. I will be looking for thoughtful responses that expand on, or rationalize, the given topic/prompt.

Quizzes can be repeated multiple times and your highest grade will be recorded but you must begin the quizzes before their due date.

Outlines will conform to APA or MLA guidelines, without exception. We will work on developing acceptable outlines in class and outline through discussion board exercises.

CRITERIA FOR ORAL PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENTS

Your group presentation and persuasive speech receive are graded based using the following standards: originality of thought, clarity of structure, adequate supporting material, conformity to the prescribed time limit, topic appropriateness for the audience, and communicative delivery.

Your group presentation will be approximately five (5) minutes for each group member speaking to the audience. Your group may decide to have its members speak 5 minutes continuously or broken into segments. Your group presentation will be 20 minutes for full credit.
Persuasive Speech. Required, a 5-7 minute persuasive speech that will include a minimum of four outside resources, cited in an “oral citation” format. We will discuss this assignment and acceptable citations throughout the semester.

For all presentations:
You cannot present from your outline or read from a manuscript, there is a minimum 25-point penalty for reading your speech.
You can use note cards to present your speech. Note cards are not copies of your outline; we will cover note card specifics in class.

LATE WORK AND MAKEUP WORK
• No late work accepted without prior approval, no exceptions
• Work is due on the day assigned. No assignments, extra credit, or make up accepted after the last day of school, May 6, 2016.
• All work must be submitting in the correct format and submitted to the proper location in order to receive credit.

CLASSROOM ACCOMODATIONS

Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, mandates the University’s support for students with access and accommodations. UTEP requires students needing accommodation then to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Center for Accommodations and Support Services. You may call (915) 747-5148 for general information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the office of the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS), Room 106, Student Union East, (915) 747-5148, as soon as possible to ensure that any necessary accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

GRADING

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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation including chapter presentations</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resume</td>
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<td>Mock Interview</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Individual Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
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<td>Outline</td>
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Quizzes 10 %
Final Exam 10 %

Note: Course content subject to change pending classroom performance, I will submit written changes to the syllabus, should the need arise.

WORKING IN GROUPS

We will be working in groups for the duration of the semester, two Chapter presentations will

GROUP DYNAMICS

This assignment will help us gain understanding about what makes a group function (or not). We will examine types of leadership, conflict resolution, and presentation skills. Groups will design a product or service and give a 20-minute presentation to the class. Each member of the group will have an active role in the design and presentation of the product or service.

Note: Working groups can be problematic. We are going to examine several behaviors including “social loafing” and nonproductive group members. Non-performing group members can be removed from the group and will receive an alternate individual project for presentation to the class. Detailed instructions will be provided when we begin this assignment

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Students will present an extemporaneous 5-7 minute original speech to the class that will include legitimate research and an outline for development. You cannot read your presentation from the outline or your note cards (or from Power Point or Prezi frames). Students can speak using a presentation outline on note cards.

The outline is developed in two steps and the final submission will be written following APA or MLA guidelines. The use of visual aid(s) is encouraged but optional. Detailed instructions provided when we begin this assignment. If you have any questions regarding your outline, always default to standard publication guidelines i.e., MLA or APA.

Your persuasive speech will use a policy format that has distinct components including a clearly distinguished introduction, body, and conclusion.

The INTRODUCTION of the speech will include:
An attention-gaining device (AG)
A reason why you feel the topic is important (credibility statement or CS)
A reason for the audience to continue listening (motivational link or ML),
A clear thesis or central idea
A preview (that indicates you will be discussing a problem, its causes, and solution/s)

The BODY of the speech will include:
A problem that is established with research, your research must be cited in the context of the presentation. Citations should be part of the speech. You cannot show a list, or tell the audience that “all” your research came from x, y, and z sources.

A transition that guides the audience from the problem to the cause
A cause that is established with research that is cited in context
A transition that guides the audience from the cause to the solution
Solution(s) that are established with research

The CONCLUSION of the speech will include:
A restatement of your central idea and of your main points
A logical concluding statement that may include a call to action
In no case should you end a prepared speech with, “That’s it” or “That’s all I have.”

QUIZZES

All quizzes are taken in BlackBoard. You can take the quiz multiple times until you are satisfied with your grade but you must complete the quiz before the due date.

FINAL EXAM

We will have a comprehensive final based on all course material. The final will be posted on BlackBoard.

FINAL EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

| 21234 | December 8, 2016 | 10:00-12:45 pm | Cotton Memorial 201 |