Spring 2018
Small Group Communication - COMM 3320 – W02

This course is 100% online. Students must manage time, deadlines and work independently to succeed in this course. Because communication will take place online, email professionalism is strictly enforced (formal greetings, correct grammar, proper etiquette) for all class and instructor communication.

Contact Information

Instructor: Lucy E. Wilson-Garza
Office: Bay Hall (3rd Floor)
Phone: 361-825-2316 (please email me before calling, this is given for emergencies ONLY)
E-mail: Lucy.Wilson-Garza@tamucc.edu
Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 1 – 3:15 p.m. (or by appointment)

*If students need to reach out to the instructor, this must be done through Blackboard messages only (not through email). *

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to introduce the basic skills, principles, and contexts of communication in business and professional settings. The content of the course synthesizes public speaking with aspects of communication ethics, organizational, small group and interpersonal communication. You will learn practical skills via presentations, research, resumes, interviews and professional writing grounded in communication theory.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Identify key terms and major communication theories relevant to the study of business and professional communication
- Create resumes (one print, one visume) to enhance individual career and/or educational marketability
- Employ effective interviewing skills and techniques used in both F2F and electronic mediums
- Produce an effective corporate profile

Required Course Materials


Students are required to read the text assignments prior to class (see schedule). Additional supplemental readings will be available through the blackboard site.
**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an academic advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto [http://cla.tamucc.edu/advising/](http://cla.tamucc.edu/advising/).

**Disabilities Accommodations**

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 of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at 361-825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at 361-825-5816.

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/index.html](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.
**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero points for that particular assignment.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please check with the registration office regarding the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Classroom/professional behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

As the instructor, I pledge to do my best to present course materials in an interesting and engaging manner, to actively listen to and consider the ideas of every student in the classroom or online, and to be fair in grading all assignments.

**Statement of Civility (can be in place of classroom/professional behavior)**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious
background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Statement of Academic Continuity***

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Late Work**

All assignments are due by the designated due dates. Late work is not accepted.

**Communication**

This course will rely on blackboard to communicate electronically with students outside of class. Students need to be sure to check regularly. **Students must communicate with their instructor through Blackboard messages only.**

**Exams**

Two exams will be given in the course. Exam questions will come directly from the assigned readings. Material on the exam will not necessarily be covered in class, so it is imperative that all students have access to the course textbook.

**Assignment Requirements**

Assignments should be double spaced with one-inch margins and typed in Times New Roman 12-point font. It is also important that student use APA citations in submitted assignments. Students are also responsible for keeping track of assignments and grades.

**Blackboard**

Because this is an online course, it is imperative that all students check Blackboard regularly. If a student has technical difficulties, you will need to contact the university’s Help Desk at 361-825-2825 or 866-353-2491.
Course Assignments

Discussion Forum Posts (100 points): In order to discuss the assigned readings, students must craft reflective responses to the weekly course content and synthesize previous work experience (if applicable) with the readings. Each student must post a new thread with 5-7 full paragraphs of original thought, and also reply to 3 other students (each reply must be 1-2 paragraphs). Comments on previous week’s posts are due by the following Sunday. For example, the discussion post for Chapters 1-4 are due Sunday, February 4th. Students must continue to discuss online throughout the week and additional 3 replies are due by the following Sunday, February 11th. (Students must keep up with weekly discussions!)

Elevator Speech (100 points): An elevator speech (or pitch) is a 60-90 second summary of your qualifications and strengths that can be recited easily during impromptu networking situations. In other words, if you step in to the elevator and see the CEO of the company you would love to work for, what would you say to him or her about yourself? The elevator speech must be recorded via webcam and posted to YouTube. The link must be posted to the discussion forum, and students must view and comment on the elevator speeches of 3 other students as well. Do not try to attach the video file to Blackboard. The student is responsible for researching and selecting a video software to use.

**Job Posting, Resume & Cover Letter (100 points):** Early in the semester, you will choose an available job posting and will tailor your resume, cover letter, and interviewing strategy to align appropriately with the posting objectives. Your resume and cover letter must clearly state your qualifications, background, and current career objectives. Your final resume and cover letter will be due on the discussion forum the day before of your mock interview. Each student is required to comment constructively on the resumes and cover letters of three other students. The resumes and cover letters will absolutely not be accepted late, as late submission is unprofessional behavior and not permitted in this class (the same expectations apply for all assignments).

**Visume (100 points):** Employers are increasingly conducting interviews via telephone and Skype. An electronic account of your qualifications and objectives is also becoming increasingly desired so that employers may screen candidates’ communication skills, appearances and mannerisms. Your visume will be approximately 2 minutes, organized, structured, and thoroughly practiced and prepared!

Visumes must be recorded on a Webcam and posted to YouTube or Vimeo. Students must post the YouTube link of your visume to the discussion forum. Do not try to post the video file to Blackboard. Visumes are due on the Visume Discussion board. You must view and post comments on at least three other students. Execute this assignment with professionalism, so that you can use the final product to market yourself! Once again, the student is responsible for researching and selecting a video software to use.
**Interview (300 points):** Mock interviews will be conducted via telephone on Wednesdays as indicated in the semester schedule (resumes and cover letter are due on the Tuesday before your assigned date). Check Blackboard to find your designated Wednesday. Date requests will not be considered. You are expected to be on time for the phone call, and conduct yourself formally and professionally. Your instructor will schedule an exact time with you at least the week before/of your assigned day via email and will also verify your phone number. The call will be on an individual basis to conduct the interview at that designated time. The interview should take about 20-30 minutes. Students who do not reply to the interview time request email within 24 hours (to finalize the time) will receive a ZERO, no exceptions. After a confirmed time is scheduled, it can not be changed under any circumstance.

Note to students: The above assignments are simulations of the actual interview process. Be on time, professional, and demonstrate high-caliber work. Prepare your responses and communicate professionally for the interview and practice your answers thoroughly. Take these assignments very seriously, as they comprise 40% of your semester grade!

Exams (300 points): Students will be graded on 2 examinations during the semester. The exams will be objective (true/false and multiple choice).

**Grade Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Forums</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevator Speeches</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Posting, Resume &amp; Cover Letter</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visume</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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There are 1000 points possible, broken down as follows:

- A = 900-1000
- B = 800-899
- C = 700-799
- D = 600-699
- F = 500 or fewer

**Evaluation**

Grades are based on demonstration of mastery of course material. Work that meets the minimum requirements of an assignment, is done on time, and displays average involvement with the course content is deserving of a ‘C.’ Higher grades are awarded to work that goes above and beyond the minimum standards to produce products that reflect superior intellectual effort, excellence in critical analysis, and overall creativity in the approach to any given assignment. Remember: perception, perception, perception! To average your grade up to any given point in the semester:

1. Add what you COULD have earned up to that point
2. Add what you have actually earned up to that point
3. Divide what you COULD have earned INTO what you actually earned you will have your current average in the course.
Schedule

Our weekly class rotation will start on Mondays and end each Sunday night at midnight. All assignments, discussion forums, etc. will be due each Sunday evening at 11:59 p.m. Telephone mock interviews will take place on assigned Wednesdays. Make sure to read the section regarding weekly discussion forums and responses (each week you will post on the discussion forum and respond to select classmates’ discussions from the previous week).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>WEEKLY ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week begins 1/16</td>
<td>Course introductions, syllabus, purchase textbook, student introductions</td>
<td>Post introduction on IceBreaker discussion forum. Due Sunday, 1/21 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week begins 1/22</td>
<td>Discussion forum on chapters 1-4 Professional Excellence in the Workplace</td>
<td>Discussion forum for chapter 1-4 due Sunday @ 11:59 p.m. Responses from the prior week’s discussion are due Sunday, 1/28 @ 11:59 p.m. as well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 1/29</td>
<td>Read chapters 8 &amp; 9 Draft Elevator Speech and post video link from YouTube to discussion form (not video file)</td>
<td>Discussion forum for chapters 8 &amp; 9, post Elevator Speech link. Due Sunday @ 11:59 p.m. Responses from the prior week’s discussion are due Sunday, 2/4 @ 11:59 p.m. as well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 2/5</td>
<td>Take exams over Chapter 1-4 and 8-9 Prepare for mock interview</td>
<td>Exams due Sunday @ 11:59 p.m., Responses from the prior week’s discussion and Elevator Speeches are due Sunday, 2/11 @ 11:59 p.m. as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week begins 2/12</td>
<td>Prepare for Mock Interview Answers</td>
<td>Written answers to mock interview due Sunday, 2/18 @ 11:59 p.m. No responses are due from the previous week (because of your exam).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 2/19</td>
<td>Interview Day 1 (Wednesday)</td>
<td>Students assigned to interview this day, must submit their final cover letters and resumes Tuesday at 5 p.m. (day before) on the discussion forum. Students must also comment on interview questions by Sunday, 2/25 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 2/26</td>
<td>Interview Day 2 (Wednesday)</td>
<td>Students assigned to interview this day, must submit their final cover letters and resumes Tuesday at 5 p.m. (day before) on the discussion forum. Students must also comment on 3 resumes by Sunday, 3/4 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week begins 3/5</td>
<td>Interview Day 3 (Wednesday)</td>
<td>Students assigned to interview this day, must submit their final cover letters and resumes <strong>Tuesday at 5 p.m. (day before)</strong> on the discussion forum. Students must also comment on 3 resumes by Sunday, 3/11 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 3/19</td>
<td>Interview Day 4 (Wednesday)</td>
<td>Students assigned to interview this day, must submit their final cover letters and resumes <strong>Tuesday at 5 p.m. (day before)</strong> on the discussion forum. Students must also comment on 3 resumes by Sunday, 3/25 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 3/26</td>
<td>Work on Visume <strong>(Students are fully responsible for researching/finding a video software to use and testing it before the due date)</strong></td>
<td>Post visumes due on Sunday, 4/1 @ 11:59 p.m. <em>Post link to Youtube, not video file.</em> Students must also comment on three resumes from the previous week by Sunday, 4/1 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 4/2</td>
<td>Read Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>Post on discussion forum for chapters 5 &amp; 6 by Sunday @ 11:59 p.m. Responses to Visumes are due Sunday, 4/8 @ 11:59 p.m. as well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 4/9</td>
<td>Read Chapters 13 &amp;14</td>
<td>Post on discussion forum by Sunday @ 11:59 p.m. Responses from the prior week's discussion are due by Sunday, 4/15 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 4/16</td>
<td>Watch TedTalk about Interviews</td>
<td>Post on discussion forum about the TedTalk by Sunday @ 11:59 p.m. Responses from the prior week’s discussion are due by Sunday, 4/22 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week begins 4/23</td>
<td>Prepare for exam</td>
<td>Respond to last week’s forum by Sunday, 4/29 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week begins 4/30</td>
<td>Prepare and take Final Exam <strong>(Chapters 5-7, 10, 13, 14)</strong></td>
<td>Due Friday, May 4 @ 11:50 p.m.</td>
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*Please note: This syllabus is tentative and can change at any time. Although we try our best to plan ahead, there are typically unforeseen circumstances throughout the semester, or the need to change for improvements. It is important to check Blackboard regularly to be informed of changes and additions.*