

**SPCH1321-BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
SPRING 2025**

Faculty Information

Instructor: Hilary Nixon

Email: hnixon@southplainscollege.edu

Location: CM 139

Office Hours:

- Monday Plainview Campus: 11am-1pm
- Tuesday Levelland Campus: 12:15pm-1pm & 2:15pm-3:00pm
- Wednesday Levelland Campus: 12:15pm-2:00pm
- Thursday Levelland Campus: 12:15pm-1pm & 2:15pm-3:00pm
- Friday Levelland Campus: 12:15pm-1:15pm

Communication Plan:

- You can expect an email reply within 24 hours on weekdays, and within 48 hours (about 2 days) on weekends.
- Please use the SPC (South Plains College) email found at the top of the syllabus for sending e-mail messages to me.
- I DO NOT use blackboard messages. If you email within blackboard, you may not receive a timely response. Please email me from your SPC email address.
- I will be posting course related announcements on Blackboard every few days.

Course Description and Purpose

Welcome to SPCH1321-Business & Professional Communication! It is my sincere hope that 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.

Core Objectives Satisfied

- Communication Skills - to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- Critical Thinking - 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
- Social Responsibility - to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
- Personal Responsibility - to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate proficiency in the following areas:

1. **Communication Process:** Understand and apply the communication process.
2. **Communication Systems and Cultures:** Develop an awareness and understanding of communication systems and cultures.
3. **Verbal Communication:** Identify, prepare, and deliver clear messages and presentations.
4. **Nonverbal Communication:** Understand, define, utilize, and interpret various categories of nonverbal communication.
5. **Listening:** Understand the causes of poor listening and realize the organizational and personal benefits of active listening.

6. **Interviewing:** Identify several types of interviews, evaluate effective interview skills, prepare job interview documents, and conduct an effective information gathering interview.
7. **Small Groups:** Identify the characteristics of small groups, identify the steps used for problem solving, and understand leadership tasks and functional and dysfunctional team behaviors.
8. **Public Speaking:** Successfully prepare and deliver multiple credible, confident presentations. Evaluate the speaking skill and content of other speakers.

Course Requirements

1. To read the information assigned, you will be tested on this material, in addition to class lecture/discussion materials on scheduled exams.
2. To take thorough notes and study all lecture material, informational handouts, and assigned readings.
3. To actively participate in class discussions and group activities.
4. To show maturity and professionalism in preparation of assignments and in classroom behavior.
5. To show courteousness to fellow classmates/speakers.
6. To initiate consultations with the instructor whenever assistance is needed regarding class assignments.
7. To 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. To initiate withdrawal from the course if absences become excessive.

Required Course Textbook

Fox, J. & Finley, K. (2019). From Entry Level to Executive: All Communication Counts. Fountainhead Press.

You will need to purchase directly from the publisher for the lowest price. If you need additional time to wait for financial aid, please see your instructor for the 14-Day Free Trial Instructions. Make sure to communicate with your instructor if you use the trial service and purchase the text as soon as possible.

You may click on the following link: <https://app.tophat.com/e/600697>

JOIN CODE: **600697**

SPC Blackboard Portal

The Blackboard software used to manage this class monitors student logins, tracking when and where the student has been in the course. Accessing this course regularly is extremely important to meet the objectives. Ideally, students should daily check the “Announcements” tab in Blackboard for the most up-to-date information. Students should also frequently reference their SPC student e-mail inbox and Blackboard “Messages” for direct communication with the instructor.

This course is not 100% self-paced—there will be deadlines assigned at the beginning of the term. You will feel more at ease with the materials if you stay in touch with what is going on. This course is 3 semester credit hours. Students should plan to work on about one (1) full chapter per week to successfully complete the material. It is very easy to put off participation and deadlines, but don’t wait until the last minute.

Technical Requirements

- Desktop or laptop computer
- High speed internet access
- SPC E-mail
- Microsoft Office

Technical Skill Requirements

Be comfortable with the following

- Microsoft Word or word processor that can save Word compatible files (.doc)
- Using email for communication, attaching documents

- Internet search engines and browsers
- The ability to download video files, or to stream files.

Grading

You can access your grades on the Blackboard Course Menu (My Grades). 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 895 points
- To earn a B, you need 795 points
- To earn a C, you need 695 points
- To earn a D, you need 595 points
- If your point total is 594 points 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 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 on 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 submit all assignments through their designated submission link in Blackboard. You are required to title your assignment files in the following format: "lastname_firstname_assignmentname.doc."

Attendance and Tardy Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes to be successful in a course. All students enrolled for this course are expected to attend class regularly, be on time, and remain until dismissed. Roll will be taken at each class meeting. If a student is tardy, he/she must see the instructor after class to have the absence mark removed. The student may be administratively dropped from the course when a student has more than 4 absences.

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 as determined by the instructor.

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. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate, and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

Specific Attendance Policy Restated

1. All students enrolled for this course are expected to attend class regularly, be on time, and remain until they are dismissed.
2. Roll will be taken at each class meeting.
3. If a student is tardy, he/she should speak with the instructor after class to avoid having tardies count toward absences.
4. Two (2) tardies will constitute an absence.
5. If a student leaves class prior to dismissal of the class, he/she will be counted absent.
6. Whenever absences become excessive and minimum course objectives cannot be met, the student should initiate withdrawal from the course.
7. "Excessive absences" can be defined as more than FOUR (4) unexcused absences through the course of the semester.
8. The only absences labeled as "excused" are those absences due to participation in school functions, or documentable absences due to illness (doctor's note required in the next class period), or a death in the family requires the student to be in attendance of a funeral (proof required).
9. The instructor will administratively drop a student due to excessive absences.
10. Students are responsible for all classwork covered during absences from class even in cases in which they can satisfy the instructor that the absence was unavoidable.
11. Absences one day over your allotment may lower your final course total by 10 points.
12. Each subsequent absence may lower your final course total by 5 points.
13. If minimum objectives cannot be met, the student should withdraw from the course.

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

For online/hybrid sections, you MUST attend face-to-face meetings and complete online coursework. If you have more than 1 unexcused absence or miss more than 2 major assignments, you may be dropped from the course.

****You may be exempt from the final exam if you have perfect attendance or have 850 points at the end of the semester. (When all assignments are completed). ****

Make-Up Policy

Make-up work is NOT guaranteed. 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. If a student must be absent to represent the college, she/he should advise the instructor beforehand and should have a signed permit from his/her coach or sponsor. In such cases, it is the student's responsibility to complete work missed within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the instructor. Each student must make an appointment with the instructor to decide on make-up work. **Late work may not receive full credit.** An absence on the day that you are scheduled for oral presentations or examinations will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. **If, according to the instructor's discretion, the student is allowed to make up such a presentation or exam, the student will automatically receive a grade drop for the assignment (25-point grade reduction).**

Learning Assessments

Speeches-400 points

Introduction Speech-50 points
 Informative Speech-100 points
 Persuasive Speech-100 points
 Impromptu- 50 points

Group Speech-100 points

Peer & Self Evaluations-150 points

Introduction Peer-Evaluation-20 points
Introduction Self-Evaluation-20 points
Informative Peer-Evaluation-20 points
Informative Self-Evaluation-20 points
Persuasive Peer-Evaluation-20 points
Persuasive Self-Evaluation-20 points
Group Peer-Evaluation-20 points
Group Self-Evaluation-10 points

Career Development-200 points

Career Research Report-50 points
Resume- 50 points
Cover Letter- 50 points
Mock Interview- 50 points

Exams-250 points

Exam 1-100 points
Exam 2-100 points
Final Exam- 50 points

Course Work

1. Exams-There will be 3 major exams during the semester. You MUST take the exam in blackboard by the deadline.
2. Speeches-Completion of 4 presentations (speeches) is a requirement for passing this class. On your scheduled speech dates, you will be presenting several types of presentations. You must be an attentive audience member for other presentations given during your scheduled group time, and you must complete all speeches to pass this course. Points will be deducted from your presentation if you are late, and not an attentive and respectful audience member. The two individual speech assignments are explained in the Assignments section of Blackboard. Additional information can be found within the Module sections for the correct chapters.
3. Activities -You will be asked to engage in discussions and to do learning activities throughout the semester. These assignments and discussion boards count as participation grades.
4. Other Assignments: You will also complete a career development essay, submit a resume & cover letter, and complete a mock job interview.

Withdrawal Policy

The last day to withdraw/drop with a grade of “W” is April 27th. 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 twice each week, and guidance will be provided throughout the term to help students decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php>.

Instructors Expectations of the Student

- You will be expected to log into the Blackboard course **daily** to be aware of announcements/reminders and to pace your progress in the course.
- Students are expected to maintain an environment conducive to learning, which includes “netiquette” (Internet etiquette). More importantly ensure that your verbal communication, e-mail messages,

discussion board postings, and other electronic communications are thoughtful. We will welcome diverse opinions in this course, and you are expected to demonstrate an open mind and courtesy when responding to the thoughts and ideas of others. Civility in the Online Classroom (**the following are prohibited**):

- making offensive remarks in e-mail or the discussion board,
 - using inappropriate language or discussing inappropriate topics online,
 - spamming,
 - hacking,
 - using SPC or Blackboard e-mail or discussion board for commercial purposes,
 - using all caps (considered shouting in online communications), or
 - cyber-bullying or online harassment of any type.
- Inappropriate behavior shall result in consequences ranging from a request to correct the problem, to removal from the course or even the university, depending on the severity of the behavior. Disciplinary actions will be taken according to the SPC Student Handbook.
 - Note that students from other institutions are still bound by SPC policies in the course.

Course and Technical Help

Do not hesitate to call or e-mail 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) over the weekend.

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

Please realize that this is not a computer class, so our content is business and professional communication, not Windows or Word processing. I can answer any questions about the course content or assignments, but I will be no help with technical problems.

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
Information Systems
Ext. 2600
Direct: 806-716-2600
blackboard@southplainscollege.edu
helpdesk@southplainscollege.edu

Academic Honesty

It is my expectation and the institution's that appropriate citation and documentation be given for materials and information obtained from other sources. Cases of plagiarism will be treated as will any case of academic dishonesty, with at least a failing grade for the assignment/examination. In addition, the student may be dropped from the course with a failing grade. See the *SPC Student Handbook* for more information.

Disabilities Statement

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Lubbock Centers (located at the Lubbock Downtown Center) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302.

Nondiscrimination Policy

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

Campus Concealed Carry

Texas Government Code 411.2031, et al. authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php>

Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement

If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Health and Wellness Center. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or email dburleson@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.

CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team

South Plains College is committed to ensuring the safety, health, and well-being of its students and community. To support its campus community SPC has a CARE Team. This is a dedicated group of campus professionals responsible for assessing and responding to students who could benefit from academic, emotional, or psychological support, as well as those presenting risk to the health or safety of the community. If you see someone experiencing challenges, appearing distressed, posing a threat to their safety or someone else's safety, or causing a significant disruption to the SPC community, please submit a CARE Team referral. You may also submit a referral for yourself if you would like additional support. NOTE: In cases where a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911.

Covid-19 Policy Statement

South Plains College is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy learning and work environment for students, faculty and staff as the SPC Texan Community returns to campus amid the COVID-19 pandemic. To accomplish this goal, it is imperative that everyone join together to do their part. SPC has developed a Return to Campus Plan that outlines how the college will operate and the measures that will be implemented to help protect you and your loved ones. We look forward to welcoming you back to campus, as we continue to emphasize the following points:

All students, faculty and staff should monitor their health and notify appropriate personnel and their health care provider if they experience any symptoms related to COVID-19.

All students, faculty and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 should contact DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN in Health Services at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or at (806) 716-2376.

Cleaning and sanitization process will be emphasized in every area of our campus.

Take time to review the plan along with other resources found on this webpage. We want your experience at SPC to be positive and safe as we all return to campus. SPC will continue to provide the best possible educational experience.

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Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.