

# Business and Professional Speaking (Fall 2009)

COM 282.09                      3 credit hours  
TTh 11:00-12:20              DRB 326  
Professor: Dr. Brandau-Brown  
Office Location: Dan Rather Bldg. 212  
Telephone: 294-4668    E-mail: FBB@shsu.edu

## Required Course Text

Adler, R. B., & Elmhorst, J. M. (2008). *Communicating at work: Principles and practices for business and the professions*. (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

## Course Objectives

The ability to communicate effectively is essential to success in contemporary work force. This course is designed to develop both a theoretical and practical understanding of concepts, theories, and research findings on various issues found in an organizational context. Students should be able to understand theory and research and make practical application of the course content. In addition, students will learn specific skills that will increase their communication effectiveness in the business world.

## Course Policies

1. **Attendance.** Instruction in this course is lecture and participation based, therefore regular attendance is required. All students start with an attendance grade of 100 points. You are allowed to miss **3 class hours** (e.g. MWF 3 absences; **TTH 2 absences**) without penalty and all absences after that will result in a ten point deduction from the attendance grade. Students missing **six or more class hours** will receive an "F" in the course. Students will not be dropped from the course due to absences, therefore you are responsible for attending or dropping. **I do not accept excuses!** You are allowed to miss 3 class hours without penalty, use them wisely. (Meaning, on your fourth class hour absence points will be deducted because you have already used your 3 "free" class hour absences.) If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what work you missed (either from another student or myself) and complete all assignments by the due date. You are responsible for signing the class attendance sheet for each class session. Your signature becomes official documentation that you were in class; if you do not sign-in you will be considered absent!

You will be considered absent if you do not attend the entire class period. That is, staying for only half of the class, or coming in 15 minutes before the end of class, or consistently coming 5-10 minutes late does not mean that you attended class. Two tardies will count as one absence. (This pattern continues in increments of two.) Those students sleeping during class will be considered absent.

**Note:** An undetermined number of unannounced quizzes may be used to encourage attendance. These quizzes will be given at the beginning of the class period and there will be no make-up quizzes for late students.

2. **Late Examinations.** If you miss an examination and have a **legitimate** reason for doing so, you must make it up within a reasonable time (normally 1 week or less). All arrangements for missing an examination must be made **prior** to the time the examination is scheduled. If such arrangements are not made, then no make-up examination will be given and you will receive a zero for that examination. All make-up exams will be strictly essay.

Note: You must be on time for all exams.

Students more than 15 minutes late will not be allowed to take the exam.

**3. NO late assignments will be accepted. No late speeches will be allowed. However, if you are incapacitated (aka in the hospital) and provide an excuse you will be allowed to make up the speech with a 25 point penalty.**

You are responsible for turning in assignments on time. Keep up with the course activities and due dates to ensure you do not miss a deadline.

ALL assignments must be typed. Failure to type assignments will result in a significant point deduction.

**4. Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is defined as “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work” (Dictionary.com). All work must be the original composition of each student. Although you must use outside sources, you must cite them appropriately. Plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment. Assignments will be checked for plagiarism by **any and all means available**, including electronic checking services (i.e. Turnitin.com). The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

**5. Americans with Disabilities Act.** If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students at 294-1720.

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

**6. Religious Holidays.** Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

**7. Classroom Visitors.** Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU

identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. It is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

8. **IDEA System.** Students are asked to complete an IDEA evaluation of the course and the instructor at the end of the semester. Participation is voluntary.

9. Speeches may be videotaped.

10. **Classroom conduct.** Free discussion, inquiry, and expression is encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of beepers, mobile phones, or other electronic devices; IMing via computer or phone; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking or arguing in a way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line". In the event of a situation where a student legitimately needs to carry a beeper/phone to class, prior approval of the instructor is required.

Students are expected to read and abide by all rules and policies in the SHSU Student Handbook. The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline is found at the following link: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>. Section 5.2.22 defines classroom disturbances.

#### Assignments and Requirements

The scale for determining grades is: A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79%  
D = 60 -69% F = 59% and below

Mini Exam I	20%	Presentation I	15%
Mini Exam II	20%	Presentation II	20%
Mini Exam III	20%	Attendance	5%

#### Instructor's Notes

My office is in the Communication building room 212. If there is something you do not understand or need help with please come see me. I encourage you to make an appointment even if it is during office hours because I may step out of my office for a few minutes.

My office hours are tentatively scheduled as:

**WF** 10:00-12:00 & 1:00-2:00

I am in my office much more than the posted office hours if you need to see me at another time please make an appointment.

**Continuation of enrollment in this course indicates acceptance of the terms and requirements of this syllabus.**

## Speaking Assignments

### General Comments

The course instructor may add additional requirements if desired. Students are to speak in a extemporaneous mode. That is, one or two note cards which contain a key-word outline of their speech. The **typed formal outline** is to be turned in to the instructor on the day of the speech. You must cite your sources in the outline. If you use direct quotation in the speech, you must use quotation marks and provide the proper citation. A typed bibliography (APA format) is required. If you fail to submit a bibliography **10 points** will be deducted from your grade. If the topic selected is not appropriate for the assignment even a well prepared speech will receive a low grade.

**The following topics are not allowed: abortion, death penalty, and prayer in schools.**

**\*\*ALL Speech topics must be approved. Failure to get topic approval can result in a failing grade.\*\***

Speaking within the time limits is very important, not only for the efficient running of the class but also because speakers in the "real world" are expected to adhere to time limits. There is a grace period of 30 seconds over the time limit. There is no grace period for speeches that do not meet the time limit.

### Speech I

Students are to present a **5-7 minute** informative speech on a current, substantive topic related to a business issue of state, regional, national or international importance. The topic should be one about which the class needs to be informed. The speech should present a balanced and unbiased presentation of both sides of the topic. You must use a variety of supporting material from a variety of sources. Appropriate (APA format) citation is required in the outline and in the bibliography. A visual aid is required for this speech.

### Speech II

Students are to present a **6-8 minute** persuasive speech on a current, substantive topic related to a business issue of state, regional, national or international importance. The speech should contain main points designed to persuade the audience to accept your thesis. You must use a variety of supporting material from a variety of sources. Appropriate (APA format) citation is required in the outline and in the bibliography. A visual aid is required for this speech.

Communication Apprehension: This course is designed to help you become more comfortable with public speaking. If you suffer from extreme communication apprehension please come talk to me. I will be happy to help you in any way I can, but first I have to know there is a problem.

**Important Note about Sources:** I realize we are in an Internet world however, that is not the only source of information. Many times the information on the Internet cannot be verified. It is also important that you can find a variety of information. **You may use Internet sources in your presentations but they will not count as part of the required sources.** The library has many paper and electronic data bases that provide better information and they are easier to use. **Students will be randomly selected and required to submit their research material to the instructor.** This is to ensure material is properly cited from acceptable outlets. **If you cannot provide the research material you will receive a zero for the assignment.**

**Late speeches are not allowed.** You must go on the day you are assigned. If you miss you assigned day and can provide a valid excuse (aka a hospitalization record) then you will be allowed to make up the speech with a **25 point penalty regardless of excuse provided.**