



WACO, TEXAS

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**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**AND**

**INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION**

**SPCH 1321.O080**

**DR. TRAVIS COX**

**NOTE: This is an Online 16-week course.**

### Course Description:

Study and application of communication within the business and professional context. Special emphasis will be given to communication competencies in presentations, dyads, teams, and technologically mediated formats.

### Prerequisites and/or Corequisites:

There are no official course prerequisites. The student should, however, be able to speak, listen, and write in English, employing at least a high school level vocabulary and correct grammar. Writing, reading, and speaking skills are necessary for completing assignments. To improve inadequate skills for the level of this course, the student may take advantage of the college's reading and developmental English courses.

### Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: Travis Cox

MCC E-mail: tcox@mclennan.edu

Office Phone Number: 254-299-8919

Office Location: Faculty Office Building (FO) 114

Student Office Hours: M/W 9:00 am – 9:30 am, T/R 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, & by appointment

- If these **office hours** do not work with your schedule, I am also available at many other times throughout the week and scheduling an appointment is the best way to find an alternative time to communicate with me outside the classroom and these scheduled hours.
- **Email** is a great option if you have a question or would like to schedule a meeting. If you email me, **please use your MCC student Gmail address** (this assures that I will receive the email and can confirm that it is really you that is emailing me) and include your name, course number, and section number. I will try to respond as quickly as possible, but in some cases (particularly if you email me during the weekend) please give me up to 24 hours to respond to your messages. Additionally, please refrain from last-minute, late-night messages and plan accordingly.
- If you would prefer to talk via **Zoom**, to make scheduling a time to meet with me easier, please click on the following link and select a time that works for you: <https://calendly.com/face-to-face-time/face-to-face-time>. After selecting a time, you will receive a confirmation email with Zoom instructions for our meeting. If none of the available times will work for you, please let me know and we can work something out!

### Required Text & Materials:

A PDF of *Business Communication for Success* is available on Brightspace in the “Instructor Plan and Course Documents” folder. This textbook is free and will be used as needed in this course.

MCC Bookstore Website: <http://www.mclennan.edu/bookstore/>

### Methods of Teaching and Learning:

Lecture, oral presentations, group projects, written papers, in-class activities, online discussion posts, and other types of work.

### Course Objectives and/or Competencies:

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board requires that all courses in the Foundational Component area of Communication teach these four Core Objectives:

- Critical Thinking Skills (CT): “to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.”
- Communication Skills (COM): “to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.”
- Teamwork (TW): “to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.”
- Personal Responsibility (PR): “to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.”

### Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate communication competence and critical thinking through an understanding of the foundational communication models. (CT, COM)
- Demonstrate essential public speaking skills in professional presentations. (COM)
- Demonstrate written and oral competencies as it relates to employment (including job searches, interviews, interpersonal interaction, conflict management, leadership, and performance appraisals.) (COM, TW, PR)
- Apply essential dyadic and small group processes as they relate to the workplace. (TW, PR)
- Utilize various technologies as they relate to competent communication. (CT, COM)
- Demonstrate effective cross-cultural communication. (CT, COM, TW, PR)
- While specific assignments will vary with each instructor, the following assignments, having an organizational focus, are required for all students taking Speech 1321: Informative presentation, Persuasive presentation, Employment interview, Team presentation, PowerPoint designed media aid presentation.

### Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations

- The Instructor Plan, assignment sheets, and other documents are available on Brightspace. Check back frequently to ensure you are up to date on course content.
- Online learning requires a great deal of personal discipline and planning. Please make sure you are doing what you need to stay on top of assignments and projects.
- I am here to help! If you need clarification or would like me to look at a project or outline, please do not hesitate to ask. It is up to you to take initiative and ask for help.

## Assignments

### Project 1: Simulated Interview

For this project, you will be paired with a partner and will conduct 2 simulated interviews. Each student will participate in one interview as the interviewer and one interview and the interviewee. Prior to conducting the interviews, each student will locate a job description for a job/internship they are individually interested in, prepare appropriate interview documents, and develop a schedule of questions for interviewing their partner for their selected position.

### Project 2: Group Facilitation of a Meeting

For this project, you will work with a group to identify a problem that can be presented and addressed during a problem-solving meeting. During this meeting your group will provide relevant information about the problem, facilitate discussion to generate potential solutions for the selected problem, and finally work to reach consensus on the best solution. For this project your group will also be preparing a meeting agenda and report that outlines the processes that will be used during the meeting.

### Project 3: Training Presentation

For this project, you will work individually to develop a presentation that will functionally train the class how to perform a specific skill or process of your choice. As part of this presentation, you will use both outside support and visual aids to enhance the effectiveness of your instructional material. For this project you will also be submitting a full-sentence outline of your presentation.

### Project 4: Persuasive Podcasting

For this project, you will work individually to develop, record, and edit a podcast episode designed to persuade your audience. You will have the option to either create a podcast that persuades the audience on the best way to manage a specific business communication problem or create a podcast that persuades the audience to buy/support a product/organization you create. Your podcast episode will be submitted remotely to Brightspace. For this project you will prepare a brief reflection paper.

## Attendance Assignments

To ensure that you are keeping up with course content and to help solidify your understanding of various topics that are used throughout this course, there will be online attendance assignments that you will need to complete each week a project is not due. These will typically take the form of a discussion board post, but they might also include other work depending on the topic. These assignments will be ungraded, however, since they are linked with attendance, failure to complete these assignments can result in being dropped from the course or a penalty to your grade.

\*Note: More details about each of these projects, including specific guidelines and grading rubrics, will be discussed in class and available on Brightspace.

### Course Grading Information:

Each assignment in this course will receive a score out of the following possible points.

- Project 1            100
- Project 2            100
- Project 3            100
- Project 4            100

Your grade for the course will be based on your cumulative score out of a possible 400 points.

- A            360 and above
- B            320 – 359
- C            280 – 319
- D            240 – 279
- F            below 240

### Grading Notes:

- **Completion of each of the 4 major projects is necessary** to receive a passing grade in the course.
- Since there are no exams in this course, **project grades are designed to evaluate and reflect both your performance of the required communication skills associated with the project as well as your understanding of the course concepts that relate to each project.** As a result, attention to technical project details and course concepts in your development of these projects is just as important as demonstrating/performing effective communication skills.
- Evaluation of written project documents will be factored into your total project grade.
- Assignment guidelines and grading rubrics for all projects will be available ahead of time so you can make sure you are meeting project requirements.
- While your attendance assignments are not graded, failure to complete these assignments will often lead to missing information that is critical to your overall success on course projects.
- **Extra credit** is never offered on an individual basis. **If you need to achieve a specific grade in this class,** I highly suggest you talk with me early in the term to discuss what you will need to do rather than asking for more points later in the term.

## Course Policies

### Attendance, Late Work, and Make Up Work Policies

Attendance is **mandatory** and will be taken based on your presence in class and completion of required attendance associated activities and projects.

- If a student is not in attendance in accordance with the policies/guidelines of the class as outlined in the course syllabus as of the course census date, faculty are required to drop students from their class roster prior to certifying the respective class roster. A student's financial aid will be re-evaluated accordingly, and the student will only receive funding for those courses attended as of the course census date.
- Before the 60% point of the semester, a student who is absent for 25% (4) or more of a face-to-face or blended course or who misses 25% or more of assigned work for an online course will be withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. A student may also request to be withdrawn with a grade of W before the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point of the semester, the student may request to be withdrawn if the student is passing or be assigned the final grade earned at the end of the semester after grades have been updated to reflect missing work.
- If you are absent from class and your reason for being absent is recognized by MCC as **excused**, please let me know ahead of time and email satisfactory documentation to me within 2 days of the absence. It is your responsibility to make up any course material missed.
- Regarding **late work**, it is your responsibility to make sure that your work is completed on time. Submit assignment documents early to ensure that if you experience technical issues they can be addressed before assignment deadlines. If you are not going to be able to complete an assignment by the scheduled due date, it is your responsibility to contact me **before the due date**. I am often willing to give students extra time for full credit, but only if they take the initiative and actively communicate with me in advance. If I do not hear from you before the due date, you will either receive a 10% penalty to your grade on the project upon completion or I will not accept your project for credit depending on the severity of project incompleteness and lack of communication.

(<https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html>)

Click on the link above for the college policies on attendance and absences.

### Decorum

As an adult and college student, you are expected to present/conduct yourself appropriately. You are expected to demonstrate consistent maturity, respect, and positivity in your communication with myself and other students. As this is a shared communicative context, it is imperative that all exchanges be appropriate, civil, and constructive, and that the educational environment be tolerant and supportive.

### Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is always expected. As such, plagiarism and cheating of any kind (including the use of AI) will not be tolerated. If you are caught in the act of cheating or turn in an assignment that is plagiarized in **ANY** way, you will receive an "F" for the assignment and be prosecuted according to the

full extent of MCC guidelines. Click the following link for information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating. ([www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity))

### Grading Philosophy

Grades are earned by you and assessed by me based both on 1) the caliber of scholarship that is demonstrated/submitted and 2) the extent to which it meets/exceeds established criteria. Therefore, while desire, motivation and effort are all highly prized attributes often necessary for academic advancement, it is only the measurable manifestation of these qualities that I can and will evaluate.

### Assignment Feedback and Grade Questions

If you would like feedback on an assignment prior to turning it in, I would be happy to look at your work. Please allow adequate time for material to be reviewed so that substantive comments can be provided. Grades and feedback will typically be posted on Brightspace within a couple days of each submission deadline (if more time is needed to grade projects, you will be notified in advance). Legitimate, substantive, and timely grade questions may be discussed privately and after at least one full day has passed since the respective graded material and feedback is returned to you. Be prepared to share with me your thoughtful, specific grade question(s) in a calm and respectful manner. An inquisitive versus accusative attitude/approach will be of much greater benefit to you.

### Useful Links

- McLennan Community College Library: <http://www.mclennan.edu/library/>
- Student Support Services: <http://www.mclennan.edu/student-support-services/>
- Technology Support Desk: <http://www.mclennan.edu/tech-support/>

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1 – Sending & Receiving Messages**

- Introductions forum posts (Thursday, 1/11 and Sunday, 1/14)
- Attendance Assignment 1 (Sunday, 1/14)

### **Week 2 – Directional Communication & Leadership**

- Attendance Assignment 2 (Sunday, 1/21)

### **Week 3 – Interviewing**

- Attendance Assignment 3 (Sunday, 1/28)

### **Week 4 – Being Interviewed**

- Attendance Assignment 4 (Sunday, 2/4)

### **Week 5 – Project 1**

- **Project 1 (Sunday, 2/11)**

### **Week 6 – Collaborating in Teams & Conflict Management**

- Attendance Assignment 5 (Sunday, 2/18)

### **Week 7 – Organizational Culture & Enhancing Team Meetings**

- Attendance Assignment 6 (Sunday, 2/25)

### **Week 8 – Project 2**

- **Project 2 (Sunday, 3/3)**

### **Week 9 – Understanding Your Audience & Presentation Organization**

- Attendance Assignment 7 (Sunday, 3/17)

### **Week 10 – Finding & Using Support**

- Attendance Assignment 8 (Sunday, 3/24)

### **Week 11 – Visual Aids & Delivery**

- Attendance Assignment 9 (Sunday, 3/31)

### **Week 12 – Project 3**

- **Project 3 (Sunday, 4/7)**

### **Week 13 – Persuasion & Refutation**

- Attendance Assignment 10 (Sunday, 4/14)

### **Week 14 – Reasoning & Fallacies**

- Attendance Assignment 11 (Sunday, 4/21)

### **Week 15 – Monroe's Motivated Sequence**

- Attendance Assignment 12 (Friday, 4/26)

### **Week 16 – Project 4**

- **Project 4 (Monday, 4/29)**



**Schedule Notes:**

- Unless otherwise stated, all Attendance Assignments and Projects are **due by 11:59 pm on the date listed above**. If your schedule will make it difficult for you to complete an assignment by the noted date and time, please finish your assignment early (All content and assignments will be made available well ahead of the deadline to give you adequate time to complete your work on your schedule).
- Days that are marked in **bold** indicate that a major course Project is due that day.
- While much of this course is self-paced and can be done independently on your own time, for Projects 1 and 2 you are required to work with and record with other students. As a result, for these projects you will be required to find a time to be available to work/record with your partner/s. While I will make efforts to pair you with students that have similar schedules to ease this process, ultimately it is your responsibility to make sure you are available with enough flexibility to complete these projects. ‘
- Any changes/modifications to this schedule will be posted on Brightspace.

10/09/2023



## **ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES**

### **Accommodations/ADA Statement:**

Any student who is a qualified individual with a disability may request reasonable accommodations to assist with providing equal access to educational opportunities. Students should contact the Accommodations Coordinator as soon as possible to provide documentation and make necessary arrangements. Once that process is completed, appropriate verification will be provided to the student and instructor. Please note that instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations to students until appropriate verification has been provided by the Accommodations Coordinator. For additional information, please visit [www.mclennan.edu/disability](http://www.mclennan.edu/disability)

Students with questions or who require assistance with disabilities involving physical, classroom, or testing accommodations should contact:

[disabilities@mclennan.edu](mailto:disabilities@mclennan.edu) (254)299-8122  
Room 319, Student Services Center

### **Title IX:**

We care about your safety, and value an environment where students and instructors can successfully teach and learn together. If you or someone you know experiences unwelcomed behavior, we are here to help. Individuals who would like to report an incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@mclennan.edu](mailto:titleix@mclennan.edu) or by calling, Dr. Claudette Jackson, (Accommodations/Title IX) at (254) 299-8465. MCC employees are mandatory reporters and must report incidents immediately to the Title IX Coordinator. Individuals may also contact the MCC Police Department at (254) 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at (254) 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>

Additionally, Title IX provides rights and protections for pregnant and newly parenting students. Go to McLennan's Title IX webpage at [www.mclennan.edu/titleix/](http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix/). It contains more information about definitions, reporting, confidentiality, resources, and what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence or the crimes of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence, or domestic violence.

**Student Support/Resources:**

MCC provides a variety of services to support student success in the classroom and in your academic pursuits to include counseling, tutors, technology help desk, advising, financial aid, etc. A listing of these and the many other services available to our students is available at <http://www.mclennan.edu/campus-resource-guide/>

Academic Support and Tutoring is here to help students with all their course-related needs. Specializing in one-on-one tutoring, developing study skills, and effectively writing essays. Academic Support and Tutoring can be found in the Library and main floor of the Learning Commons. This service is available to students in person or through Zoom. You can contact the Academic Support and Tutoring team via Zoom or email ([ast@mclennan.edu](mailto:ast@mclennan.edu)) by going to our website (<https://www.mclennan.edu/academic-support-and-tutoring/>)

College personnel recognize that food, housing, and transportation are essential for student success. If you are having trouble securing these resources or want to explore strategies for balancing life and school, we encourage you to contact either MCC CREW – Campus Resources Education Web by calling (254) 299-8561 or by emailing [crew@mclennan.edu](mailto:crew@mclennan.edu) or a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing [success@mclennan.edu](mailto:success@mclennan.edu).

Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff. To schedule an appointment, go to <https://calendly.com/paulannespantry-mcc/15min>.

The CREW, Success Coaches, and Paulanne's Pantry are all located on the second floor of the Student Services building in Success Coaching Services.

**MCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund:**

Unanticipated expenses, such as car repairs, medical bills, housing, or job loss can affect us all. Should an unexpected expense arise, the MCC Foundation has an

emergency grant fund that may be able to assist you. Please go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/scholarships-and-resources/emergencygrant.html> to find out more about the emergency grant. The application can be found at [https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency\\_Grant\\_Application.pdf](https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf)

**MCC Academic Integrity Statement:**

Please view our [Academic integrity statement](#) for more information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating. The unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) for classwork can be a violation of the College's General Conduct Policy. Whether AI is authorized in a course and the parameters in which AI can be used in a course will be outlined by each instructor.

**Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace:**

Go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty-and-Staff-Commons/requirements.html> for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

**Minimum Technical Skills:**

Students should have basic computer skills, knowledge of word processing software, and a basic understanding of how to use search engines and common web browsers.

**Backup Plan for Technology:**

In the event MCC's technology systems are down, you will be notified via your MCC student email address. Please note that all assignments and activities will be due on the date specified in the Instructor Plan, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

**Email Policy:**

McLennan Community College would like to remind you of the policy (<http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/E-XXXI-B.pdf>) regarding college email. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use their McLennan email addresses when conducting college business.

A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails. For more information about your student email account, go to [www.mclennan.edu/studentemail](http://www.mclennan.edu/studentemail).

**Instructional Uses of Email:**

Faculty members can determine classroom use of email or electronic communications. Faculty should expect and encourage students to check the college email on a regular basis. Faculty should inform students in the course syllabus if another communication method is to be used and of any special or unusual expectations for electronic communications.

If a faculty member prefers not to communicate by email with their students, it should be reflected in the course syllabus and information should be provided for the preferred form of communication.

**Email on Mobile Devices:**

The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails. If you need assistance with set-up, you may email [Helpdesk@mclennan.edu](mailto:Helpdesk@mclennan.edu) for help.

You can find help on the McLennan website about connecting your McLennan email account to your mobile device:

- [Email Setup for iPhones and iPads](#)
- [Email Setup for Androids](#)

**Forwarding Emails:**

You may forward emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may be lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

For more helpful information about technology at MCC, go to [MCC's Tech Support](#) or email [helpdesk@mclennan.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mclennan.edu).

**Disclaimer:**

The resources and policies listed above are merely for informational purposes and are subject to change without notice or obligation. The College reserves the right to change policies and other requirements in compliance with State and Federal laws. The provisions of this document do not constitute a contract.