



**COMS 1311 Section O1E
Studies in Human Communication
Commerce Campus**

Tues-Thurs 2:00-3:15 PM

COURSE SYLLABUS: **FALL 2026**

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Jason Bickle (Dr. B)

Department: History & Liberal Studies

Office/Classroom Location: Room 143

Office Hours: Scheduled as needed & online meetings – MS Teams/Other

Department Phone: 903.886.5226

Phone: (469) 277-6125

University Email Address: jason.bickle@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email (jason.bickle@etamu.edu)

Communication Response Time: within minutes-hours, Monday–Friday

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

COMS 1311: This course addresses theories and related skills for evaluating types of communication including a survey of computer mediated communication, nonverbal communication, political communication, gender communication, small group communication, as well as strategies used in informative, persuasive, and ceremonial communications. Recommended for students pursuing careers in sales, training and development, human resources, teaching, law, the ministry, politics, event planning, corporate training, upper-management or other professions requiring communication skills.

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required Texts:

1) Communication in the Real World: An Introduction to Communication Studies (OER, free). University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing. Read online:

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

<https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/communication-in-the-real-world-an-introduction-to-communication-studies>

2) Maltz, Maxwell. *Psycho-Cybernetics*. (free online) – will discuss access in class

Student Learning Outcomes

As a Core Curriculum requirement, this class focuses on four common Student Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking** - Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art.
2. **Oral/Visual Communication** - Students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion with an evident message and organizational structure.
3. **Personal Responsibility** - Students will understand and practice academic honesty.
4. **Social Responsibility** - Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or civic issues.

COMS 1311: SLO Assessment Map

1. Critical Thinking — Reading quizzes, the midterm and final exams, and the audience-analysis and research components of the speech assignments.
2. Oral/Visual Communication — discussion, speeches and presentations.
3. Personal Responsibility — academic-integrity expectations on all work and the reflective book and class responses.
4. Social Responsibility — the Group Project (community/civic focus) and discussions of culture, media, and communication ethics.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods and Assessment

Instructional Methods: This course combines lecture and discussion, in-class experiential exercises and role-play, small-group problem solving, individual and group presentations, guided reading of the texts, self-assessments, and analysis of communication. Learning is assessed through exams, graded presentations, reading and book quizzes, a group project, and participation.

Assignments, Student Responsibilities, Expectations, and Tips for Success

Speech (Speech #1 & 2): Both speeches are researched, organized individual presentations with a required manuscript & outline, although you will present from a brief speaking outline only. Attendance is mandatory on both presentation days.

Group Project & Presentation: A team project applying small-group problem solving and leadership concepts.

Midterm & Final Exams: List, define, and describe concepts and answer questions on provided exams covering lectures, readings, and course activities. Bring a pen and your brain.

Reading & Book Quizzes: Periodic quizzes over assigned readings.

Participation & Professionalism: Active, respectful engagement in discussion and exercises; attendance and preparation expected at every session.

Tips for success: *We are in this collaborative course together. It's more interesting when you're engaged and creative.*

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GRADING

Graded Items	Weight	Points Possible
Speech #1	15%	100
Speech #2	15%	100
Group Project & Presentation	20%	100
Midterm Exam	15%	100
Final Exam	15%	100
Group Project & Presentation	20%	100
Quizzes & Participation	20%	100

Letter grades follow the scale shown above: A = 90–100, B = 80–89, C = 70–79, D = 60–69, F = 59 or below.

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale to assign final letter grade:

Grade	Range (%)	Min Points (out of 600)	Max Points (out of 600)	Grade Calc
A	90% – 100%	540	600	4.0
B	80% – 89%	480	539	3.0
C	70% – 79%	420	479	2.0
D	60% – 69%	360	419	1.0
F	Below 60%	0	359	0.0

Final Grade

Letter grades will be assigned for all assignments. Following the criteria below:

A = Excellent Work that goes above the minimum requirements. Showed innovation, creativity, and polished work.

B = Good Work. All requirements met. Strong understanding of the objectives and material are demonstrated.

C = Satisfactory Work. Only minimum requirements were met and needs improvement.

D = Missing requirements and poor work.

F= Unacceptable work. Minimum requirements are missing. Little or no effort evident in assignment.

Numeric grades will be assigned based on a 4-point scale (like GPA) (Total Points for all Assignments/Participation)

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course Outline / Calendar Overview: This is a snapshot of our weekly topics and assignments. A more detailed weekly schedule with readings can be found in MyLeo LMS on the first day of class.

Week: Days	ETAMU COMS 1311 Studies in Human Communication Schedule Overview
Week 1: Aug 20	Course Introduction & Syllabus Review Telling the Story Your Want to Tell: Your Brain, Inspirations, and Creativity
Week 2: Aug 25 & 27	Communication Models & Application Assign: Speech #1
Week 3: Sep 1 & 3	Perception, Self-Image, and Self Concept Intrapersonal Communication Speech Research & Organization
Week 4: Sep 08 & 10	Verbal/Non-Verbal Communication Power of Research Speech #1 Check In Readings Quiz 1
Week 5: Sep 15 & 17	Listening & Interpersonal Communication Speech Delivery Draft Speech #1 Reviews: Bring outline & drafted manuscript
Week 6: Sep 22 & 24 & 29	SPEECH DAYS Speech #1 DUE – attendance required (Tue & Thu & Tue)
Week 7: Thur, October 1	Communication in Relationships Assign Speech #2
Week 8: Oct 06 & 08	Culture & Identity Persuasion: Building an Argument Midterm Review Readings Quiz 2
Week 9: Oct 13 & 15	Tuesday, Oct 13 - MIDTERM EXAM (Just a pen and your brain) Small Group Communication Assign Group Project
Week 10: Oct 20	Leadership & Small Group Communication Speech #2 Workshop / Prep - Bring outline / manuscript
Week 11: Oct 27 & 29 & Nov 3	Speech #2 DUE – attendance required (Tue & Thu & Tues)
Week 12: Thur, Nov 05	Creative Problem Solving Group Project Workshop
Week 13: Nov 10 & 12	Professional Communication & New Media Readings Quiz 3
Week 14: Nov 17 & 19	Visual Communications & Presentations Group Project Workday
Week 15 Nov 24	Tues, Nov 24 - Group Project Prep / Rehearsal Thur, Nov 25 - THANKSGIVING — NO CLASS
Week 16: Dec 01 & 03	Group Project DUE – attendance required (Tues & Thur)
Finals: Tues, Dec 8 1:15 PM	Final Exam – per University Registrar exam schedule - (Bring a pen and your brain)
Detailed reading and course schedule on MyLeo LMS .	

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. See **Student Life and Other Struggles** policy below.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Course-Specific Policies:

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all Tuesday/Thursday sessions, arrive on time, and stay for the full class. Roll is taken at the start. Excessive tardiness accrues toward absences. Excused absences (documented illness, university-sponsored activity, religious holy day, or family emergency) require documentation within two class days of returning. It is best to discuss your absence and reasoning with

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professor if possible.

Generative AI Usage: Artificial intelligence is a part of our personal and academic lives. It can be a valuable tool, however, generating content and turning it as your own is prohibited. Along with bibliography/references page, marked up copies of original full-text references for article and book pages, website references and other sources will need to be submitted along with assignments.

Presentation days: Attendance on scheduled speech/presentation days is mandatory. Missing a scheduled speech day lowers the course grade by one letter grade unless documented and excused.

Late work: Assignments are due on the assigned date. Late work is not accepted for credit except in documented, excused circumstances; technology failures are not excused—keep backups of all files.

Make-up work: No make-up for exams or presentations except with appropriate documentation for an excused absence.

Classroom conduct & devices: Phones are silenced and out of sight during class except for documented emergencies. Behavior that disrupts learning results in a warning and, if continued, referral per the Student Code of Conduct.

Recording of class sessions is prohibited: As the focus of this course is student communication, Students may not make audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, screen captures, or transcriptions of any class session—whether in person or online—without the prior written consent of the instructor, except as an approved accommodation arranged through Student Disability Services. Class lectures, discussions, presentations, and materials are the intellectual property of the instructor and the University. Any authorized recording is solely for the individual student's personal educational use and may not be copied, shared, posted, published, distributed, or uploaded (including to social media or file-sharing or AI platforms) without the instructor's written permission. Unauthorized recording or distribution will result in grade reduction or failure of the course.

Grade concerns: Questions about a specific grade must be raised within two (2) class days of the graded work being returned. After that time, grades should be considered final.

Religious holy days: Per Texas Education Code §51.911, notify the instructor in writing within the first fifteen days of the semester to arrange excused observance.

Student Life and Other Struggles: If you are struggling with life, work, or school issues, before disappearing or dropping the course, work with Dr. Bickle to work out a plan on how to finish assignments and the course.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Interaction with Instructor: I am available by ETAMU email, MS Teams, or other online channels, and typically respond within minutes to hours on weekdays. Questions about readings, assignments, or presentations can often be answered before or after class.

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Syllabus/Schedule Change Policy

The syllabus and schedule is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus and schedule during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance and posted in MyLeo LMS.

Statement on Student Grievances

Students who have questions or concerns about the instructor's course policies or the conduct either of the instructor or a classmate should first consult with the instructor. In the event of a lack of resolution or satisfaction on the matter, the student may bring their concerns to the head of the History and Liberal Studies Department, Sharon Kowalsky (Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu). If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion to the matter, students may bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Dean of Students per procedures outlined on pp. 15-19 of the Student Guide Book.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

AI Use Policy

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East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there may be legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructor's guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.etamu.edu/counsel



<http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>