

**COMM 2310**  
**Introduction to Strategic Communications**

**Instructor:** Ms. Jennifer Skinner

**Office:** DAL2 200E

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**Office Hours:** M&W: 1-3pm; T: 3-4pm

**Phone:** (972) 338-1781

\*Best way to contact me is via email. If you don't receive a reply within 24-48 hours, either re-send the email or call me.

**REQUIRED READING:**

Hamilton, Cheryl (2011). *Communicating for Results: A Guide for Business and the Professions (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.)*. Boston: Wadsworth.

Select readings assigned in class.

**REQUIRED SUPPLIES:**

1. Email address that you check regularly (preferably your UNT Dallas account)
2. Access to a computer with Internet Access (you have this through any of the campus computer labs).
3. Your motivation, energy, excitement, curiosity, and hard work.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Introduction to Strategic Communications emphasizes understanding and communicating with an organization's major stakeholders including employees, customers, investors or donors, government, non-governmental organizations and other associations. Communications practices are covered for the individual and both traditional and digital media platforms. Students will learn how to develop key messages to enhance the brand, to develop programs which improve the organization's sustainability and reputation, and to prepare for and respond to crises.

**OBJECTIVES:** By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Display and master invention, disposition, style, and delivery skills in the presentation of informative, persuasive, and invitational messages to effectively impact a given audience.
2. Prepare for and conduct informative and selection interviews.
3. Understand the small group process.
4. Understand and describe basic communication challenges and opportunities present in the workplace.
5. Understand the basic ethical concerns associated with professional communication.

**EXPECTATIONS:** We all approach courses with certain expectations. The following are what I will expect of you during the course of this semester:

1. *Work hard* – learning requires constant read, research, think, discuss and work with me and your classmates to learn. Everyone has something important to contribute. My job is to present new information, and prepare a climate where you can contribute your own special knowledge. Your job is to be prepared and ....
2. *Participate* – you have to be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
3. *Be there* – Attendance is vital, and is a part of my expectations and your evaluation.

**Four** absences are allowed. Any more than four absences will reduce your grade by five percentage points. See the current UNT Dallas catalog for the university's policy on student responsibility for missed classes and assignments. Be familiar with the university's drop policy. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the **second** class meeting. **If a student must be absent the day an exam is scheduled, he/she must notify the instructor at least a week before.**

**Note regarding student absence due to religious observance:** Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of such absences.

**Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:** If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

4. *Have access to technology* – I will use Blackboard to communicate, post assignment sheets, present some feedback, and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I will also post any extra readings on Blackboard. You need to check Blackboard regularly.
5. *Be responsible* – practice academic integrity and accept responsibility for your actions and choices.

Academic misconduct – includes, but is not limited to, cheating, unattributed use of others' work (including test and paper 'banks'), disruption of class, and discourtesy to, or harassment of, other students or your instructor.

Academic Honesty Policy: Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a "0" for that assignment

and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker's or writer's indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

6. *Be respectful* – treat others with respect and courtesy. Turn off all electronic devices including cell phones and MP3 players. No text messaging or checking your cell phone during class. Keep these devices in your back pack during class.

Do not use computers during class for reading/writing e-mail, surfing the Web, playing games, working on assignments for other classes, or writing letters. You may use a laptop computer only for taking class notes. If you use your laptop for any other purpose, I will require you to immediately close the computer.

**RESOURCES:** You need to take advantage of the different resources available to you at UNT Dallas:

**Writing Center:** Take advantage of writing help. The UNT Dallas Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: DAL1 301. Appointments: 972.338.1755. For more information, please see <http://www.untdallas.edu/wc>.

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services office in DAL2 204, or call (972) 338-1777. Additional information is available at <http://www.untdallas.edu/disability>.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

**State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:** Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the 12th day of class (See Schedule of Classes for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

**Social Security and FERPA Statement:** It is the policy of The University of North Texas at Dallas to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**Emergency Exits and Evacuation:** Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

**Bad Weather Policy:** On those days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas Campuses main voicemail number (972) 780-3600 or search postings on the campus website [www.untDallas.edu](http://www.untDallas.edu). Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information, so they will receive this information automatically.

**Diversity/Tolerance Policy:** Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive & inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses, will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Life as the instructor deems appropriate. This course is designed to be a safe open forum so that we may critically analyze and discuss crime theories. Thus, please adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

### **Students Rights and Responsibilities**

You will find your Student Rights and Responsibilities including the Student Code of Conduct in the Academic Catalog. The link to the Academic Catalog is on the homepage at [www.untDallas.edu](http://www.untDallas.edu). The direct link can be found here: <http://dallascatalog.unt.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=145>

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

- A. Exams (100 points each x 3)
- B. Presentations: (100 points each x 3)
  - 1. Informative and persuasive speeches (50 pts each).
  - 2. Elevator Speech
  - 3. Group training presentation.
- C. Interviews (100 points)
  - 1. Individual mock interview with Career Services
- D. Class participation and activities (includes participation in any Blackboard discussions, etc.) (200 points)
- E. Assignments/Quizzes (25 points each x 4)

## **GRADING POLICIES:**

- A. Assignment Policy:
  - 1. Assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to, class lectures, handouts, workbook and textbook reading assignments.
  - 2. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
  - 3. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. This does not mean that merely completing all assignments guarantees the student will pass the course.
  - 4. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class.
  - 5. **ALL PAPERS MUST BE TYPED OR WORD-PROCESSED USING: 1" margins, 12pt Times-New Roman or Arial Font, double-spaced, APA citations.**
  - 6. SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND NEATNESS COUNT!
  - 7. Multiple pages must be stapled or paper clipped together. It is your responsibility to see this is accomplished.

8. NOTE: I am more than happy to review papers BEFORE they are turned in. To get my review, you must send me the paper 48 hours or more before the assignment is due.

B. *Late Assignments*: Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified.

C. *Incomplete Grades*: Incompletes are given only in cases of severe illness, emergencies, or other significant or catastrophic events or circumstances.

**Grades:**

Assignments/Quizzes	100
Exams	300
Presentations	300
Interviews	100
Participation (including attendance!)	<u>200</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 pts</b>

To get full points, the assignment is expected to be exceptional and practically perfect. I grade your work with the following assumptions:

A Exceptional work; thoughtful, complete mastery of material and performance

B Demonstrate thoughtful, complete mastery of material and better than normal performance

C Demonstrate fundamental mastery of material and acceptable/normal performance

D Demonstrate minimal mastery of material and below average performance.

F Inability to successfully deal with course material, and inadequate performance.