

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Division of Communication

Communication 345: Small Group Communication

Section 1: Monday/Wednesday
11:00 AM – 12:15 PM CAC 237

Instructor: Cade Spaulding, Ph.D.
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Office hours: MW 11-12, and by appointment

Course Outcomes:

In this course, students will study communication theories, practices, and skills used in organizations as part of group/team process. Includes group meeting skills, decision making, and group leadership.

Required Materials

Beebe, S & Masterson, J. (2014). *Communicating in Small Groups* (11th Edition). New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Course Assignments and Grading

Grade Item	% Final Grade
Group Activities	70%
Mini Group Experiences	30%
Final Project Group	40%
Exams	30%
Midterm Exam (Chapters 1-6)	15%
Final Exam (Chapters 7-12)	15%

Mini Group Experiences: Students will engage in two mini-group experiences to practice specific group work skills and to prepare for a successful Final Project Group experience. Mini groups are pass/fail as follows:

Mini Group #1: Dinner and Game Group

Group Members: Assigned (5 members)

Group Tasks: Plan a homemade sit-down, cooked, dinner (no fast-food) as a group that includes a main course, two side dishes, a drink, and a dessert. Play a board game or active sport together as a group. The dinner and game should involve at least 2 hours of group member interaction.

Deliverables:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief to D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation

Mini-Group #2: Academic Research and Presentation Group

Group Members: Student Choice (3 members)

Group Tasks: Develop a presentation on a chapter concept/concepts (no longer than 15 minutes) that includes the following: a lecture on the concept(s), 1 handout related to the concept(s), and a class activity geared to teach the chapter concept(s). No two groups may present on concepts from the same chapter. Take pictures of your group throughout the experience to use in your debrief.

Deliverable:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief to D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation

Final Project Group: As mentioned earlier, you will work on actual projects that matter in this course. Students submit proposals for members of their own teams for this final project group and for their final projects idea. Please read through the details for this project below and we will discuss any additional questions you have during class on Monday of Week 2.

20 pts. Team member performance reviews

30 pts. Team Presentation (15 minutes)

50 pts. Professional Report (8 pages)

During the second half of the semester, students will self-select their own team members and choose a problem on campus and/or in the community to solve. This project needs to have a solution that can be implemented and evaluated. In other words, the team needs to do more than recommend a course of action they must create a solution.

For this project, each team will need to:

1. Analyze/research the problem,
2. Identify likely causes,
3. Develop plan to reduce/eliminate problem causes (plan, time commitment, expected budget, etc.),
4. Submit plan for instructor and client approval,
5. Make necessary adjustments to plan based off feedback,
6. Gain approval to implement plan
7. Implement the plan,
8. Evaluate ROI (Return on Investment) for the client and overall effectiveness of the implementation effort.
9. Provide next-step recommendations to client

Final Project teams will submit weekly progress reports and a performance evaluation of each team member via D2L dropbox. During Weeks 15 & 16 teams will present their projects to the rest of the class in a 15-minute presentation. An 8-page professional report will be due on the day of each team's presentation. Please bring one copy for me and submit a digital copy on D2L dropbox.

EXAMS: There will be two exams covering chapter readings and in-class handouts/discussion notes. These exams will include a combination of short essays, multiple-choice, and true-false questions. I reserve the right to implement chapter quizzes as a graded item in this course if students show they are falling behind in the assigned readings each week.

Grade Percentage Distributions

A	= 95% and up	C+	= 78% - 79.9%
A-	= 90 – 94.9%	C	= 75% - 77.9%
B+	= 88% - 89.9%	C-	= 70% - 74.9%
B	= 85%-87.9%	D	= 60 - 69.9%
B-	= 80% - 84.9%	F	= 59.9% or less

Course Policies

Attendance: Class attendance is expected and is part of the final participation grade you receive. I allow for 2 personal days during the semester but any activities missed on those days cannot be made up or turned in late. Exceptions to this rule are available only for emergency (ER worthy) situations and handled on a case-by-case basis and are subject to a review of your participation, previous attendance, and overall course contributions.

Make-up Work: If you miss class you miss any activities scheduled for that day. Avoid missing class. Each student has the responsibility to get discussion notes or calendar updates from another student if absent.

Students with Disabilities

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact/visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, Room 609 Learning Resources Center (Library), 715-346-3365, or email datctr@uwsp.edu or logon to: www.uwsp.edu/disability

Academic Integrity

Be honest in what you do in this class. Do your own work and hold yourself to the highest standard of integrity and hard work. I do not tolerate plagiarism. Students who plagiarize will either receive a “0” on the assignment or a “0” in the course, depending on the nature and severity of the offense in accordance with Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” (<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>).

COMM 345 Class Calendar

(Subject to change by notification of instructor)

Assignments listed in the Due column should be completed before class on the day scheduled below

Wk	Date	Topic	Due
1	01/23	Orientation, Syllabus, Schedule	Read: Chapter 1
	01/25	Group Development	Read: Chapter 3 Active Group: Dinner & Game
2	01/30	Interaction and Relationships	Read: Chapter 5 Active Group: Dinner & Game
	02/01	Group Climate	Read: Chapter 6 Active Group: Dinner & Game
3	02/06	Managing Conflict	Read: Chapter 8 Active Group: Dinner & Game
	02/08		Group Debrief: Dinner & Game Active Group: Academic
4	02/13	No Class - Group Work Day	
	02/15	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 Active Group: Academic
5	02/20	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 Active Group: Academic
	02/22	Group Discussion & Collaboration	Read: Chapter 4 Active Group: Academic
6	02/27	Communication Skills for Groups	Read: Chapter 7 Active Group: Academic
	03/01	No Class - Group Work Day	
7	03/06	Academic Group Presentations	Active Group: Academic
	03/08	Academic Group Presentations	Active Group: Academic
8	03/13		Group Debrief: Academic Active Group: Final Project Groups
	03/15	No Class - Group Work Day	
9	03/20	Review for Midterm Exam (Chapters 1-8)	
	03/22	No Class – Take Midterm Exam	Midterm Exam available via D2L
10	03/27	Spring Break	
	03/29	Spring Break	
11	04/03	In-Class Group Work Day	Active Group: Final Project Groups
	04/05	Problem-Solving Techniques	Read: Chapter 11 Active Group: Final Project Groups
12	04/10	Decision Making in Groups	Read: Chapter 10 Active Group: Final Project Groups
	04/12	Decision Making in Groups	Read: Chapter 10 Active Group: Final Project Groups
13	04/17	No Class – Group Work Day	
	04/19	Group Leadership Principles	Read: Chapter 9 Active Group: Final Project Groups

14	04/24	Creativity in Groups	Read: Chapter 12 Active Group: Final Project Groups
	04/26	In-Class Group Work Day	Active Group: Final Project Groups
15	05/01	No Class – Work on Project	Active Group: Final Project Groups
	05/03	Final Group Presentations	
16	05/08	Final Group Presentations	
	05/10	Review for Final Exam	
17	Final Exam Opens 05/14, Closes 05/18 Take anytime during this week via D2L.		