

Com. 345: Small Group Communication

Instructor: Earl Winger

Office: CAC 331

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Hours: MW 9:30-11 a.m.

- Required text:
- B - Beebe, Steven A. and Masterson, John T. (2015). *Communicating in Small Groups: Principles and Practices* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson. (electronically scanned excerpts labeled: B1, B2, B3, etc.)
 - E - Ellis, Donald G. and Fisher, B. Aubrey. (1994). *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
 - Gal - Galanes, Gloria A. and Adams, Katherine. (2010). *Effective Group Discussion: Theory and Practice* (13th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill. (electronically scanned excerpts labeled: Ga1, Ga2, Ga3, etc.)
 - G - Goodall, H. L. (1990). *Small Group Communications in Organizations* (2nd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Publishers.

Date	Lesson	Topic	Reading
1/25		Intro to the course - syllabus/ Weick	-----
1/27	1	Intro to Groups - form groups	G1pp.4-12, E2
2/01	2	Intro to virtual groups	B1, Gal
2/03	3	Group roles and rules	G4, E5
2/08	4	Leadership in small groups	E7, G: pp136-142
2/10	5	Decision Making/Problem Solving	G-6, B3, E9
2/15	6	Group Failures	B2
2/17	7	Groupthink & brainstorming	E4
2/22		Group Day	-----
2/24	8	Participate/ groups in orgs.	G4
2/29		Group Day	-----
3/02	9	Effectiveness/Application	E9, G:pp327-327
3/07		Catchup day	-----
3/09		Group Presentations	-----
3/14		Group Presentations	-----
3/16		Debriefing/short paper /Review for test	Journals due

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3/21		Spring break	-----
3/23		Spring break	-----
3/28		Midterm examination	-----
3/30	10	Conflict and negotiation in groups	B4, E8
4/04		Group day	Minor paper due
4/06	11	group discussion rules	handout
4/11		Group day	-----
4/13	12	Observe & Evaluate Groups /Major Paper	E:pp283-301, G10
4/18	13	Writing Evaluative Reports	-----
4/20		Group day	-----
4/25		Group Presentations	-----
4/27		Group Presentations	-----
5/02		Group Presentations	-----
5/04		Debrief/workshop	Journals Due
5/09		Catch-up day	Major paper due
5/11		Review for final exam	

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 18th 14:45-16:45

Course Objectives

This course is designed to give you both theoretical and practical knowledge concerning how to work in small groups. A focus on applying your knowledge of small groups will be evident throughout the entire semester, with emphasis on learning about small groups, applying what you have learned in your own groups, and then analyzing what happened in those groups (figuring out whether you can really practice what you preach). The ultimate objective of the course is to get you to be more knowledgeable, thoughtful, and skilled in making decisions in small group settings. Course examinations, exercises, and the final paper all reflect the emphasis on teaching you how to apply what you know. In addition, the course will emphasize the difference between what groups members are told should happen in small groups versus what really happens in group settings.

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Assignments	Points
Minor paper	100 pts.
Group Presentation I	100 pts.
Group Presentation II	200 pts.
Major Paper	200 pts.
Mid-Term Exam	150 pts.
Final Exam	50 pts.
Student Journals	
Journal #1	75 pts.
Journal #2	150 pts.
	Total 1000 pts.
Extra Credit Possible (on written assignments only)	≤ 50 pts.

Grading
966 - 1000 = A
900 - 965 = A-
866 - 899 = B+
833 - 865 = B
800 - 832 = B-
766 - 799 = C+
733 - 765 = C
700 - 732 = C-
666 - 699 = D+
633 - 665 = D
600 - 632 = D-
≤599 = F

COURSE POLICIES

1. Because of the nature of this course and the time the course meets, an attendance policy will be enforced. Each person gets two “personal days.” Personal days are for absences for any reason including sickness, attending a family event, sleeping late, etc. A third absence results in 60 points being deducted from the final grade, and an additional 60 points will be deducted with each successive absence. Thus, a person missing 6 classes would have a total of 180 pts deducted from their final grade - three full letter grades. **Students who accumulate seven absences have earned a failing grade for the course.** Additionally, a person with more than two absences in the course will also receive less consideration for a borderline grade being raised at the end of the semester. Please see me before a planned absence.

2. A student engaging in plagiarism will receive a failing grade for the course, an option available to professors as stipulated in the University of Wisconsin System procedures regarding academic misconduct. Additional actions, as allowed by UW system procedures, may also be taken. Plagiarism is when you use someone else's ideas without properly citing them as the source. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. Make sure you reference the handout on plagiarism given in class to assure yourself that you are not plagiarizing.

3. **All** assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in this course. **All written assignments should be turned in using “Book Antiqua” font.** Late assignments will have 10% deducted from the grade immediately with 5% deducted for

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each additional day the assignment is late. For example, a paper due in an eight o'clock class is due that day at 8:00 a.m. Any papers handed in past that time are considered one day late. Any papers handed in past 8:00 the next day will have their grade reduced by 10%, the third day 15% and so on. A person who does not plan for "unexpected" problems such as losing a paper on a disk or for computer lab printers not working properly will suffer the consequences of handing the paper in late. Students missing a scheduled exam, if allowed to make-up the exam, will have 20% deducted from their exam grade. In addition, when a circumstance arises where you will miss an exam or hand in an assignment late, I expect to be notified before you miss the assignment (in person or via e-mail). People who hand in an assignment late or miss an exam without notifying me prior to when the assignment due will have an **additional** 10% deducted from the grade for that assignment.

4. Borderline grades will be raised or lowered based on overall attendance, class participation, attendance for group meetings and overall consistency of grades.

5. Midterm and final exams will be given at the time scheduled. No exceptions will be made for students who have made "other plans" such as parents buying airline tickets during finals week, people accepting a job that starts during/prior to finals week, etc. Be sure to plan your schedule around the exam times. Students who miss a scheduled exam, if allowed to make-up the exam, will have 20% deducted from their test grade.

6. A group member who fails to adequately participate in their group can receive a grade lower than the other group members receive for the group presentation. However, this lower grade will only occur if (1) the other group members agree on the need for the grade reduction, (2) the person who is not participating is told by the group they are considering such an action (and thus given adequate time to change their behavior), and (3) that I as the instructor of the course am informed that the group is considering asking for a group member to receive a lower grade than other members. This option, used at my discretion, is to keep a member of group who fails to participate in the group from being rewarded for the group's efforts. Also, obviously, a person who does not fully participate in their group will have a difficult time writing the final paper – and will thus see an effect on their grade for their paper as well.

7. The grading in this course will be based on the following criteria. A grade of "D" will be given for work which was adequately prepared but did not show a good understanding of the material to be learned for that assignment. A grade of "C" will be given for work which shows a good understanding of the material and is what I consider to be competent work. A grade of "B" will be given for work which shows interesting insight into the subject discussed or tested, and a grade of "A" will be given for outstanding work. **Extra Credit:** An "A+" is possible, and will be given to exceptional efforts on written work.

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8. Students in my classes are not allowed to use cell phones, unless directed to by the instructor, during class for any reason. If you feel you must answer a text, please leave the room to do so. In such cases, I will assume it was an emergency and you should not return for the rest of that class period. Laptop computers are also not allowed (with appropriate exceptions) since they are a distraction for others. It is important for people to be engaged in class content and discussion (just as in the job world during meetings, presentations, etc.).

9. A person discovered to be "texting" or looking at their cell phone during class will receive one "warning." The second time the same student is discovered texting/using their cell phone during class that person will receive a ½ grade deduction from their final grade for the course. The third offense results in a full letter grade deduction, the fourth 1 and ½ grade deduction, etc.

10. Please feel free to come and talk with me concerning assignments, exams, a grade you received, problems you are having in the course, or just to talk.

11. How to contest a grade earned:

If you feel that you did not receive a fair evaluation or if you wish for your instructor to reconsider a grade, you may contest the grade you earned. However, you must observe the following rules:

- a. The contestation must be in writing (typed, not hand written).
- b. You must wait a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours to talk to me in person about contesting a grade. Questions of how a grade was determined, or of a possible calculation error, may be asked immediately.
- c. You must present the contestation to me within seventy-two (72) hours from the time the grade is posted.
- d. You must state the grade you believe you should have earned and the reasons for believing you should have earned this grade.

I will respond to your challenge within seventy-two (72) hours of receiving it. Failure to follow any of these rules will result in immediate dismissal of the challenge.

A challenge will result in one of three outcomes. I may do any of the following: a) adjust your grade to a higher grade; b) adjust your grade to a lower grade; or c) not adjust your grade. All responses to challenges will contain written explanation of the actions taken.