

Communication Studies 2064 Section 7

Small Group Communication

Fall 2018

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 8-9 am; Thursday, 10:30-11:30 am; Other times by appointment only

Required Textbook

Working in Groups: Communication Principles and Strategies, 7th Edition by Engleberg & Wynn

Course Objective:

The purpose CMST 2064 is to help students come to a basic understanding of small group communication. We live, work, and play in groups; therefore, it is important to understand how to most effectively and efficiently communicate in these groups. Through a combination of lectures, activities and discussions, this class will help you become a more effective group member. In this class we discuss the following ideas:

1. Theories of small group communication
2. Group cohesion
3. Group dynamics and roles
4. Functions of groups
5. Problem-solving in groups
6. Conflict in groups
7. And much, much more!!

Student Requirements:

Laptop policy: To help students avoid the temptation of checking Facebook, email, surfing the web, and all the many other distractions the web provides, students will not be allowed to take notes on laptops (with the exception of those students working as a note taker for a classmate with a letter from ODS). Except for specific days, laptops in class will not be necessary.

Notes: Lectures will frequently include material that is not in the textbook. You will be expected to know this material for the exams and assignments.

Exams: Two exams will be given during the semester, a mid-term exam and a final exam. The date of the mid-term exam is listed on the course schedule and the final exam date is listed in the course schedule book.

You **must** take your exam on time unless you are traveling with a university-sanctioned organization or have a major health or family emergency. Major emergencies include severe illness, hospitalization, or death in the family. Medical

conditions such as a cold or a headache are not sufficient reasons to postpone an exam. The common excuses of having airline reservations prior to or work scheduled during an exam time are *not* acceptable grounds for taking an exam early. Please make appropriate arrangements now, while you still have months to plan.

If you need to reschedule an exam due to illness, you must receive my approval **prior to** the time of the exam (unless, of course, you are medically incapacitated). Furthermore, for any rescheduled exam, you must provide written documentation of the authenticity of your excuse.

Student honesty: Plagiarism is a completely unethical and unacceptable practice that will not be tolerated on any level. It is an egregious offense to the owner of the material that has been plagiarized, as well as a dishonest form of communication to the audience of a plagiarized piece of work. The University's Code of Student Conduct defines "academic misconduct" as including, but not limited to "cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student" (LSU's Code of Student Conduct, section 5.1, found on Judicial Affairs webpage August 17, 2004).

The penalty for plagiarism or cheating may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or expulsion from the University. All acts of suspected plagiarism will be investigated and will be handled through the proper University channels.

Assignments:

Case Studies: Two group papers will be assigned during the semester asking you to apply what we have discussed up to that point in the semester.

Sales presentation: At the end of the semester, each group will present a video and live presentation in which they will attempt to sell an original product/service to the class. Several components will comprise the points, and more details will be provided closer to the assignment, but each group member must participate in each section of the presentation.

Quizzes/Participation activities: Five 2-point quizzes and five 2-point participation activities will be given throughout the semester. These quizzes will generally be unannounced (read "pop" quiz) and will typically serve as review quizzes from lectures covered since the previous quiz. **Missed quizzes cannot be made up. This includes quizzes that are missed because a student comes in late to class after a quiz has been taken up. Valid university excuses must be submitted the day the student returns to class in order to make up a missed quiz.**

Participation points from in-class activities cannot be made up either. If you miss a participation activity because of a university excused absence, you must provide documentation the NEXT day you are in class in order for those points to be excused.

Social activity: The first assignment you will be given is a group assignment, and has been a very popular assignment in previous semesters. You must meet with your group outside of class for a social activity that encourages communication. After the activity, each person will turn in a short paper detailing her or his experience during the activity,

as well as any initial perceptions gained through the activity. This assignment is worth 5 points.

Group evaluations: Groups are inherently interdependent in nature; this means that that the actions of one group member impacts the entire group. Much of the work done in this class will be done in your groups and will require the full participation of all the group members. Unfortunately, this does not always happen in groups, as many students have realized due to negative group experiences. One group member may have trouble delegating tasks, takes control, and does most of the work. Another group member may slack off, not contribute to group quizzes or group meetings, knowing that the others will pick up the slack. Other numerous problems may occur. All of these problems have negative impacts on groups.

Chapter summaries: For five of the chapters (of your choice), you must write a one paragraph summary of the chapter and 3-4 open-ended questions about anything that was confusing in the chapter or 3-4 open-ended questions to spur deeper discussion on chapter concepts.

Make up and late policy: I understand that emergencies occur on days when assignments are due and in these situations you should contact me immediately. Email me and include your phone number so I can contact you and we can discuss the situation. Be sure to do this immediately so we can make new arrangements for turning in an assignment at a later time. **Additionally, you must present valid documentation (doctor's note, etc.) the first day you return to class. If you are able to present a valid university excuse, your grade will not suffer. However, you will not be able to turn in an assignment late for full credit without a valid university excuse.**

Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitations Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive the accommodations letters, **please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss the provisions of these accommodations.**

Grading:

A total of 100 points are available in this class. The following will explain the breakdown of the final grade:

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|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Social activity | 5 points |
| 2. Case Study #1 | 10 points |
| 3. Case Study #2 | 10 points |
| 4. Participation activities | 10 points |
| 5. Chapter Summaries | 10 points |
| 6. Group Quizzes | 10 points |
| 7. Sales Presentation | 15 points |
| 8. Exam 1 | 10 points |
| 9. Exam 2 | 10 points |
| 10. Group evaluation | 10 points |

I do NOT round up grades.

Plus/Minus Grading scale (based on final percentages):

97-100—A+	(97-100%)
93-96—A	(93-96%)
90-92—A-	(90-92%)
87-89—B+	(87-89%)
83-86—B	(83-86%)
80-82—B-	(80-82%)
77-79—C+	(77-79%)
73-76—C	(73-76%)
70-72—C-	(70-72%)
67-69—D+	(67-69%)
63-66—D	(63-66%)
60-62—D-	(60-62%)
Below 59—F	(59% and below)