

**COMM 4635: SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION
AUTUMN 2016**

INSTRUCTOR: KRISTIE SIGLER

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OFFICE HOURS: WED. 10:30 AM—12:30 PM / THURS. 12:00 PM—2:00 PM / BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the discussion and collaboration processes at work in successful small groups. Contemporary theory and research in small group communication provide a foundation for our areas of study: (1) understanding empirical research on the properties of groups and group functioning; (2) understanding the role of communication practices in accomplishing the group tasks of leadership, influence, and decision-making; and (3) developing class members' group leadership and teamwork skills.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who complete this course will:

1. Develop knowledge about small groups and approaches to group analysis.
2. Enhance understanding of group development and structure.
3. Learn ways to develop group cohesion.
4. Learn how to influence using deliberative argument practices.
5. Develop leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.
6. Explore common group communication challenges and potential solutions.
7. Learn ways to manage conflict.
8. Develop capacity to engage in dialogue and build collaborative agreements.

REQUIRED TEXT

Galanes, G. J., & Adams, K. (2013). *Effective group discussion: Theory and practice* (14th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As you may expect, the overall design of the course requires a tremendous amount of group work. As such, 25% of your overall grade will be determined by the collaborative work of your group on meeting reflections and a project/presentation. The remaining 75% is based on your individual work on quizzes, exams, online discussions, an analysis paper, and attendance/participation.

* A detailed description of each assignment is also on Carmen and will be discussed in class.

GRADING

Following are the point values for each assignment:

Assignment	Points
Quizzes	100
Exams	100
Online Discussions	100
Group Meeting Reflection	25
Group Project/Presentation	100
Analysis Paper	50
Participation	25
TOTAL	500

Grade	Percent	Points
A	93-100	465-500
A-	90-92	450-464
B+	87-89	435-449
B	83-86	415-434
B-	80-82	400-414
C+	77-79	385-399
C	73-76	365-384
C-	70-72	350-364
D+	67-69	335-349
D	60-66	300-334
E	Less than 60	299 points or less

POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Attendance: Attendance is expected at all class sessions, but you may miss two classes without penalty. For every class you miss beyond two, your final grade will be lowered by 1%. University approved absences are exempt from this policy. Absences due to medical concerns will be excused with appropriate documentation, provided the documentation is submitted *within one week* of the absence. Attendance will be taken at each class session.

Missed or Late Exam: You are required to take the exam on the scheduled day and time (see schedule below). If you do not take the exam, you will receive 0 points for the exam. The exam may only be made up when approved by the instructor for one of the following reasons: (a) the absence is a university excused activity, necessary documentation is provided, and arrangements for make up are made in advance; or (b) the absence is due to a medical or family emergency, necessary documentation is provided, and arrangements for make up are made within 24 hours of the missed exam. If the requirements for (a) or (b) are not fully met, you will receive 0 points for the exam. If you arrive after the first person has completed and/or left the exam, you will receive 0 points for the exam.

Late Assignments: Assignments must be submitted as indicated below (see Written Assignments) *no later than 11:59 p.m.* on the assigned due date. Some assignments may be accepted late via email but will receive a grade penalty based on the following:

Assignment submission date	Maximum grade (% of total possible points)
1 day late	80%
2 or more days late	No credit

Written Assignments: In-class assignments may be handwritten, but all other work must be typed and must conform to APA formatting, citing, and referencing guidelines (see <http://www.apastyle.org/> and <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Unless otherwise noted, assignments must be uploaded to the dropbox *no later than 11:59 p.m.* on the assigned due date.

Communications: I will post class updates, extra credit opportunities, and/or additional materials as announcements on Carmen/Canvas and/or to your OSU email. Please check Carmen/Canvas and read your email regularly (at least 2-3 times per week) because you are responsible for this information, just as you are responsible for information in class.

Classroom Civility: We want to build a classroom climate that is comfortable for everyone. In a communication class, it is especially important that we (1) display respect for all members of the classroom, including the instructor and students; (2) pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities; (3) avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.); and (4) avoid racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom. This is not an exhaustive list of behaviors; rather, they represent the minimal standards that help make the classroom a productive learning environment for all concerned.

Punctuality: Class begins on time every day to guarantee that all scheduled discussions and activities are completed, particularly on days when your fellow students are speaking or presenting. You are expected to be punctual. If you are late for class, do not enter the classroom while another student is speaking or presenting. Please wait outside until there is a break between speeches or presentations.

Challenging a Grade: I am always willing to discuss your grades with you, but I will not do so during class time. To challenge a grade, you must meet me during office hours or make an appointment *within one week* of the assignment being returned to you. When we meet, you must present your concerns in writing and attach the graded speech, paper, or exam. Please note that a challenge may result in grades being raised or lowered.

Extra Credit: You will not have an opportunity to earn extra credit in this course.

Academic Misconduct: Cheating and plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3325-23-04) defines academic misconduct as "any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process" (p. 2). Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). If COAM determines you have violated the University's *Code of Student*

Conduct, the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about this policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact me or visit <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html>.

Writing Center: All students, especially those who have difficulty writing, are encouraged to visit the *OSU Writing Center*. Their web address is <https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center> and their phone number is 688-5865. The Writing Center offers two kinds of tutorials: 1) Scheduled, 50-minute tutorials in 4120A Smith Lab and 2) Drop-in, 20-minute tutorials at our satellite centers (First floor Thompson Library and 114 Smith-Steeb Residence Hall).

School of Communication Diversity Statement: The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall / 113 W. 12th Ave; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

DISCLAIMER

The information provided in this syllabus constitutes a list of basic class policies. I reserve the right to modify this information when deemed necessary for any reason. You will be notified in class, via email, and/or on Carmen if and when any changes occur.

TENTATIVE DAILY SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignment(s) Due
Week 1	W 8/24 F 8/26	<i>The Small Groups in Everyone's Life</i>	Chapter 1	
Week 2	W 8/31 F 9/2	<i>Human Communication Processes in the Small Group Context</i>	Chapter 2	Group Meeting Reflection A (8/30) Ch 2 Quiz (8/30)
Week 3	W 9/7 F 9/9	<i>The Small Group as a System</i>	Chapter 3	Ch 3 Quiz (9/6) Online Discussion #1 (Post 9/4; Respond 9/6)
Week 4	W 9/14 F 9/16	<i>Diversity and the Effects of Culture</i>	Chapter 4	Ch 4 Quiz (9/13) Group Meeting Reflection B (9/13)
Week 5	W 9/21 F 9/23	<i>The Members and Their Roles</i>	Chapter 5	Quiz (9/20) Online Discussion #2 (Post 9/18; Respond 9/20)
Week 6	W 9/28 F 9/30	<i>Communication and Group Culture: Tensions, Fantasy, Socialization, Norms, and Climate</i>	Chapter 6	Quiz (9/27) Online Discussion #3 (Post 9/25; Respond 9/27)
Week 7	W 10/5 F 10/7	<i>Leading Small Groups: Theoretical Perspectives</i>	Chapter 7	Quiz (10/4) Group Activity Pictures (10/4)
Week 8	W 10/12 F 10/14	Exam FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)		Online Discussion #4 (Post 10/9; Respond 10/11) Exam: Chapters 1-7

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignment(s) Due
Week 9	W 10/19 F 10/21	<i>Leading Small Groups: Practical Tips</i>	Chapter 8	Quiz (10/18)
Week 10	W 10/26 F 10/28	<i>Problem Solving and Decision Making in Groups: Theoretical Perspectives</i>	Chapter 9	Quiz (10/25) Group Meeting Reflection C (10/25)
Week 11	W 11/2 F 11/4	<i>Problem Solving and Decision Making in Groups: Practical Tips</i>	Chapter 10	Quiz (11/1) Group Activity Pictures (11/1)
Week 12	W 11/9 F 11/11	<i>Managing Conflict in the Small Group</i> VETERANS DAY (NO CLASS)	Chapter 11	Quiz (11/8) Group Meeting Reflection D (11/8)
Week 13	W 11/16 F 11/18	<i>Tools for Assessing and Evaluating Groups</i>	Chapter 12	Quiz (11/15) Online Discussion #5 (Post 11/13; Respond 11/15)
Week 14	W 11/23 F 11/25	Exam THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)		Group Meeting Reflection E (11/22) Exam: Chapters 8-12
Week 15	W 11/30 F 12/2	TBD TBD		Group Presentations
Week 16	W 12/7	Make-up Presentations		
Finals	Sa 12/12 4:00pm			Final Paper