

## COMM 4635 Communication Dynamics in Groups (Hybrid)

Fridays: 10:20-12:10 JRN 106

**Professor:** Dr. Hillary Shulman  
**Email:** [Shulman.36@osu.edu](mailto:Shulman.36@osu.edu) or [hillaryshulman@gmail.com](mailto:hillaryshulman@gmail.com)  
**Office:** 3140 Derby Hall  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays: 10:20 – 12:10 or by appointment  
**Required Text:** All readings will be provided on Carmen, so no book or reader is required. It is recommended, however, that students print out the readings as this helps with comprehension.

### A Note about Carmen Access

Carmen is the lifeline of the class given the hybrid format. If you cannot commit to accessing Carmen regularly, you should not be enrolled in this type of class. No excuses about access will be tolerated and it is your responsibility to ensure and maintain access even when technological issues arise. This is why students have access to all materials and assignments for several days and why procrastination is discouraged.

### What is a Hybrid Course?

This class will be taught using a hybrid delivery style (HY). A hybrid course is designed to have somewhere between 1-74% of class activities completed online, or from a distance. The benefit of this style is to allow students an opportunity for both independent learning outside the classroom, and peer and instructor centered learning within the classroom. Also, given this class will require group work the hybrid format allows extra time for your group to meet outside of class. Because this model includes both in-class and out-of-class activities, **students must be particularly attentive to the class schedule, the Carmen website, and this syllabi** in order to stay on top of class assignments. Please note that some topics or graded items discussed in the classroom will NOT be mentioned online and that some topics or graded items in the online component will NOT be discussed in the classroom. Thus, students are responsible for keeping on top of all activities, online and off, because they cannot rely upon reminders from the instructor or their peers. Please be mindful of this responsibility throughout the semester.

### Organization of this Course

This course will be taught in topic modules. By organizing the class by modules, students will be able to adjust better to the hybrid delivery and will be better able to adapt and anticipate online and offline activities. There will be 10 modules in the class. Some modules will be longer than others. For each module students can expect at least one reading and reflection paper.

### Expected Learning Outcomes

The overall goal of COMM 4635 is to develop the knowledge and skills required to become a more effective group member and leader.

1. Students will understand and apply factors that shape the communication process in groups.
2. Students will understand and apply relevant principles, theories, and research findings associated with group communication to their own lives and various leadership contexts.
3. Students will understand and apply basic communication competencies needed by individuals to be more effective leaders.
4. Students will understand and apply the communication skills needed to function within task-oriented groups and teams.
5. Students will have the opportunity to design and implement a project that serves the community.

### Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

### Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

### Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

### Academic Misconduct

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/>

### Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

#### *Requesting Accommodations*

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know **via email immediately** so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu) ; 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu) ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

### Religious Holidays

Students who will be observing a religious holiday on a class date or exam date must provide date/event written notification to the instructor **within the first three weeks** (no later than class on 9/6) of the semester so that alternative arrangements can be made.

### SOC 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.

**Title IX**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)

**Policies and Expectations**

*Classroom Civility:* It is expected that you participate thoughtfully and respectfully to class discussions. There will likely be many opinions in this class, some of which may be different than your own. Please be respectful when sharing your thoughts and responding to others, and avoid using language that may unnecessarily exclude members of the campus or classroom. Racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language will not be tolerated; if you choose to engage in such behavior, you may be asked to leave the class and will lose any points associated with that lecture. Additionally, please avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g. private conversations, using the internet for non-class purposes, texting, etc.). If your use of technology is interfering with the class climate in any way, the instructor may ask you to either stop using your electronic device, turn it off, or in extreme cases leave the classroom.

*Group Civility:* As important as it is to be a thoughtful and contributing participant in class, it is equally important that students are present and respectful of their group members. Given that this class is about groups, issues that commonly arise with group projects will be the responsibility of the group to fix. The professor will only get involved in the most extreme circumstances. As such, maintaining constant communication about expectations is of critical importance so no one gets blindsided once assignments are due or member evaluations (and grades) are announced.

*Attendance Policy:* According to U.S. News & World Report, one of the Top 3 secrets of college success is to ATTEND CLASS. Although there is no formal attendance policy in this course, I do highly recommend that you come to class! Students who show up prepared and engaged perform better in the course. That being said, the decision is yours. On a related note, I realize that sometimes unexpected events occur that may potentially interfere with your course performance. When these events arise, please feel free to make the professor aware of your situation. We hope that by working together we can come up with a strategy that allows you to deal with your situation without having to sacrifice your grade in the course.

*Challenging Grades:* You have a **two-week period** after the graded assignment is posted to challenge grades (with the exception of the final assignment). After this time has passed, no changes will be made. Grade challenges will be made in writing via email. If challenges are not made according to this process, challenges will not be considered. All grades will be posted within a week on Carmen. This allows students to monitor their grades throughout the semester in order to ensure that all assignments are posted correctly.

**PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF (Mental Health Statement)**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting [ccs.osu.edu](https://ccs.osu.edu) or calling 614--292--

5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24 hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**Assignments****Mandatory Syllabus Quiz:**

\*\*\*All students who wish to take this course MUST take the syllabus quiz posted online. At the end of the quiz, all students must sign their name indicating they understand and agree to course policy. Students taking the quiz before **10:00am on 9/13** can earn up to **5 extra credit points** (point total subject to quiz performance). Feel free to have your syllabi in hand while you take the quiz to improve performance. There will, however, be a one-hour time limit. Students who enroll late or take the quiz after this date will not earn any extra points but still must take (and sign) the quiz before exam 1 to participate in the course. If you haven't taken this quiz you will NOT be allowed to take the first exam. This quiz is viewed as your acceptance of a class contract and is very important for creating a cooperative and fair class environment.

1. **2 Exams (2 In-Class Exams, 50 points each = 100points).** You will have two exams in this course (taken individually, not in groups). The exams will contain multiple-type test questions, possibly including: True/False, Multiple Choice, Matching, and Open-Ended Questions. Exams questions will be generated from the material covered in class lectures and readings. **Please note that the in-class exams will NOT take the full class-time so material will still be covered on those days.**

2. **Group Project (70 points).** Each person will be required to apply the knowledge gained during the semester to a group project. The grade students receive on this project will come from two sources; one objective and one subjective. The first source will be based on objective group task performance. The second will be based on group members' subjective evaluation of your performance. More formal instructions for this project can be found on Carmen.

3. **10 Reflection Papers (5 points each = 50 points).** These exercises are meant for you to critically reflect on the material you learned from the readings and in-class and apply these ideas to your on-going group project. Although this assignment category is called "reflection papers", the form and structure of these assignments will vary. Please make sure to read the instructions for each assignment very carefully to ensure you are doing the activity properly. Unless otherwise specified, these will be submitted individually. Where appropriate students are free to work with their group members. The deadlines and instructions for turning these assignments in are posted in the class calendar. These assignments cannot be made up because students have several days to complete them, so turning them in late is unacceptable.

4. **4 Reading Comprehension Papers (5 @ 5 points each, lowest score dropped = 20 points).** Rather than a textbook, students will read classic research articles to learn the material in this course. Although this will be difficult at first, this assignment was designed to help you learn how to read a research article more effectively (and quickly!). For any research article (denoted by an \* on the course calendar), students can elect to complete one of these worksheets (a blank worksheet is posted on Carmen). At the end of the term, at least four (but no more than five) must be submitted. If more than five are completed, the first five turned in will count towards your grade. Please note that reading comprehension sheets are **DUE by 10:00am on the classroom day that follows the online session in which the reading was assigned.** The online submission will be shutdown after this time has passed so no exceptions. Note that these articles are front-loaded so DON'T WAIT!

5. **Final (Individual) Assignment (35 points).** Throughout the online portion of the class you have been completing reflection assignments designed to help you apply the group concepts being taught to your

actual group experience. Now that you have had a couple of weeks to reflect, this assignment asks you to go back and look at each of these reflection papers and answer each of the questions asked on this worksheet. In addition to this reflection, this assignment ends with your own reflection on “The Romance of Teams” debate. More formal instructions for this assignment will be provided online closer to the due date.

**Grade Assignment (Out of 275 points)**

>93% = A      >90% = A-      >87% = B+      >83% = B      >80% = B-  
 >77% = C+      >73% = C      >70% = C-      >67% = D+      >63% = D      <63% = E

**Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency, please carefully follow the directions of the teaching staff or, if deemed prudent by your own judgment, contact 911 or the University Police at 292-2121.

Tentative Nature of this Syllabus

This syllabus represents a contract in the works. Events that transpire over the term may require me to modify the administration of the course and therefore the syllabus. In the event I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification in class and post the revised syllabus to Carmen. Ultimately it is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications and be aware of current policies, deadlines, etc. I recommend routinely checking the syllabus.

Module Checklist (in task order)	Date	Reading	Online/In-Class Topic
<b>Module 1: Syllabi and Hybrid Delivery Introduction; Introduction to Groups</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read syllabus <input type="checkbox"/> Take syllabus quiz (due: 9/13 by 10:00am for points) <input type="checkbox"/> Read article	8/23	Course Syllabi (Carmen)  Jordan & Zanna (2006)	Syllabi and Definition of Groups  <i>How to read academic articles</i>
<b>Module 2: Group Composition and Communication Dynamics</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Gruenfeld <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #1 (due: 8/30 by 10:00am) <input type="checkbox"/> Read Tziner & Eden <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #2 (due 9/6 by 10:00am; print and bring to class)	Online 8/30 Online 9/6	Gruenfeld et al. (1996)*  Tziner & Eden (1985)*	<i>Reflection Paper #1</i> How to compose a group? <i>Reflection Paper #2</i> Picking group activity
<b>Module 3: How Communication Norms Shape Group Structure</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Marques et al. <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #3 (due: 9/13 by 10:00am) <input type="checkbox"/> Finish syllabus quiz by 9/13 at 10:00am for points	Online 9/13	Marques et al. (2001)*	<i>Reflection Paper #3</i> Cultivating productive comm. norms and roles  Organization preapproval form due Sunday 9/15 by 11:59pm

<b>Module 4: Group Cohesion through Communication</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Craig & Kelly <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #4 (due: 9/20 by 10:00am) <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #5 (due: 9/25 by 11:59pm)	Online 9/20 Online	Craig & Kelly (1999)*  NONE	<i>Reflection Paper #4</i> Task Types and Cohesion  <i>Reflection Paper #5</i>
	9/27	EXAM 1 during first half  Group meetings with professor during second half of class	Bring pencil, BuckID, and arrive on-time  Project goals determined in-class
<b>Module 5: Group Communication Processes</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Weingart <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #6 (due: 10/4 by 10:00am; print and bring to class)	Online 10/4	Weingart (1992)*	<i>Reflection Paper #6</i> Process analysis, Temporal midpoints, and Project Check-in
<b>Module 6: Conflict</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Latane <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #7 (due: 10/9 by 11:59pm)	Online 10/11	Latane et al. (1979)*	<i>Reflection Paper #7</i> Sources of conflict and addressing these sources
<b>Module 7: Communication Styles that Lead to Decision-Making Bias</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Brauer <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #8 (due: 10/18 by 10:00am) <input type="checkbox"/> Read Stasser <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #9 (due: 10/25 by 10:00am) <input type="checkbox"/> Read chapter <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Paper #10 (due: 11/1 by 10:00am)	Online 10/18 Online 10/25 Online 11/1	Brauer et al. (1995)*  Stasser & Titus (1985)*  Forsyth (2010, ch.11)	<i>Reflection Paper #8</i> Decision-making biases <i>Reflection Paper #9</i> Decision-making biases <i>Reflection Paper #10</i> Biases continued
	11/8	EXAM 2  Group meetings with professor during second half of class	Bring pencil, BuckID, and arrive on-time  Optional meetings to discuss project

<b>Module 8: Execution</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Finish group projects!	<b>Online</b> 11/15	Work on projects!!	None
<b>Module 9: Performance</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Finish group project and presentation	<b>Online</b> 11/22	None	Present group projects; celebrate success
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete group member ratings	<b>Online</b>	PROJECT DUE DATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> Begin working on final paper	11/29	Romance of Teams 1-4	
<b>Module 10: Reflections on Group Work</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Read all 4 articles a	<b>Online</b>	Finish reading and writing	Final paper
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete final paper based on ALL reflection papers AND romance of team readings			
Final Paper Due by Sunday December 8 <sup>th</sup> , 11:59pm (submitted online, the dropbox will be available beginning at December 4 <sup>th</sup> , 10:0am)			

## Reference List

- Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (2006). Appendix: How to read a journal article in social psychology. In J. M. Levine & R. L. Moreland (Eds.), *Small groups: Key readings*, (pp. 515-524). New York: Psychology Press.
- Gruenfeld, D. H., Mannix, E. A., Williams, K. Y., & Neale, M. A. (1996). Group composition and decision making: How member familiarity and information distribution affect process and performance. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 67(1), 1-15.
- Tziner, A., & Eden, D. (1985). Effects of crew composition on crew performance: Does the whole equal the sum of its parts?. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 85.
- Marques, J., Abrams, D., & Seródio, R. G. (2001). Being better by being right: Subjective group dynamics and derogation of in-group deviants when generic norms are undermined. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 81(3), 436.
- Craig, T. Y., & Kelly, J. R. (1999). Group cohesiveness and creative performance. *Group dynamics: Theory, research, and practice*, 3(4), 243.
- Weingart, L. R. (1992). Impact of group goals, task component complexity, effort, and planning on group performance. *Journal of applied psychology*, 77(5), 682.
- Latané, B., Williams, K., & Harkins, S. (1979). Many hands make light the work: The causes and consequences of social loafing. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 37(6), 822.
- Brauer, M., Judd, C. M., & Gliner, M. D. (1995). The effects of repeated expressions on attitude polarization during group discussions. *Journal of Personality and Social psychology*, 68(6), 1014.
- Stasser, G., & Titus, W. (1985). Pooling of unshared information in group decision making: Biased information sampling during discussion. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 48(6), 1467.
- Forsyth, D. R. (2010). Chapter 11: Group processes (pp. 313-350). In *Group processes*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Fiedler, F. E. (1965). The contingency model: A theory of leadership effectiveness. In H. Proshansky & B. Seidenberg (Eds.), *Basic studies in social psychology* (pp. 538-551). New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Moreland, R. L. (1999). Transactive memory: Learning who knows what in work groups and organizations. In L. L. Thompson, J. M. Levine, & D. M. Messick (Eds.), *Shared cognition in organization* (pp. 3-31). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Romance of Teams 1 thru 4**
- Allen, N. J., & Hecht, T. D. (2004). The 'romance of teams': Toward an understanding of its psychological underpinnings and implications. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 439-461.
- Meindl, J. R., & Becker, B. (2004). The romance of teams: Is the honeymoon over?. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 463-466.
- West, M. A., Brodbeck, F. C., & Richter, A. W. (2004). Does the 'romance of teams' exist? The effectiveness of teams in experimental and field settings. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 467-473.
- Cordery, J. (2004). Another case of the Emperor's new clothes?. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 481-484.