

CMN 130
Small Group Communication

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Required Reading

The Group in Society by John Gastil (Sage, 2010)

ISBN: 978-1-4129-2468-9

Course Overview and Objectives.

Welcome to small group communication. Two broad objectives guide the course: (1) To survey and apply diverse theoretical perspectives and concepts related to small group communication; and (2) to provide students with opportunities to practice specific skills that increase their effectiveness as participants and leaders in groups. After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of small group communication theory and processes;
2. Apply group communication theories and concepts to everyday communication situations;
3. Explain the nature of social roles and the process of role emergence when working as a member of a project team;
4. Explain leadership styles and rules and strategies for exerting leadership;
5. Identify communication patterns, norms, and role functions as they develop and change over the course of a team project;
6. Use decision-making and problem-solving skills effectively in group meetings.

Group Work: You will be required to participate in a task group which will require meeting outside of class to fulfill the demands of the assignment. Be aware of this requirement as you make decisions regarding the appropriateness of this course. If you have little to no flexibility in your schedule, you may want to consider taking this course when your schedule can accommodate group meetings.

Computers/Phones/Mobile Devices: Students are welcome to bring laptops and other electronic device to class for taking notes or productively using the web. But as you know, there is tremendous potential for disruption and distraction for yourself and others with texting, emailing, and web-surfing during class. Any texting, emailing, or non-class related electronic activities must happen outside of class time.

Written Assignments: Written work should be typed, double-spaced, using 12-point font. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Written work may not be turned in electronically. Late work WILL NOT be accepted.

Make-up Exams: There are no make-up exams without a valid, compelling reason. I consider few events compelling enough to warrant a make-up.

Presentations: Each group will have two in-class presentations. You are responsible to show up on the date of the presentation. There are NO opportunities for make-up presentations. I am going to be stern, rigid, and fierce in implementing this policy. Arranging makeup presentations is very difficult—show up, even if you don't feel great.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism, cheating, and other misconduct are serious violations of your contract as a student. I expect that you will know and follow the University's policies on cheating and plagiarism. Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be handled according to University regulations. I strongly encourage you to visit the Office of Student Judicial Affairs' web page addressing the definition of plagiarism and strategies for avoiding plagiarism (<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/avoid.htm>). Ignorance about plagiarism and cheating is NOT an acceptable excuse.

ASSIGNMENTS AND THEIR POINT VALUES

Exams 3 @ 30 points each	90 points
Group Project	
Proposal	20 points
Project Presentation	100 points
Completion Form	10 points
<u>Group Communication Analysis and Journal</u>	<u>60 points</u>
Total	280 points

Exams: There will be three exams with 30 questions each. The exams will cover 3-4 chapters of book material and will not be cumulative. On exam days, please bring a UCD 2000 scantron with you.

Grade Break Downs (in percentage points):

98+ = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
93-97 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-

Turkey Clause: Group work is challenging, and it can be frustrating when a group member does not do his/her work or skips group meetings. I expect each of you to participate fully, and I also expect you to work through conflicts as they arise. Each team is expected to work *proactively* to ensure full participation by all members. This means being open to giving and receiving constructive feedback, particularly when it comes to members who are behaving counterproductively. If your group has a problem with a member not pulling his or her weight, the group should openly address this with the non-participating team member in order to give him or her an opportunity to change. As a last resort, you may submit to me **a written, detailed account of the member's behavior and how your group has attempted to address the issue, and I will mediate the situation.** If appropriate, the offending group member may be dismissed from the group, resulting in a zero for the assignment. Be aware that the entire group's actions in such a situation will be taken into account when I determine grades for the assignment.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Is there anything I can do to change my grade?

A: No. I wish I could offer each student who asks the opportunity to write an extra paper, be my research assistant, detail my car, etc. so that everyone could get the grades they want or need. However, to maintain fairness, I do not offer extra credit opportunities for individuals outside of those I offer to the entire class.

Q: Do you round up? If I have an 82.9 is that an 82% or an 83%?

A: Yes, I do round up using standard rules of rounding. That means an 82.4 or below is rounded to an 82 and 82.5 and above is rounded to an 83.

Tentative Schedule for CMN 130

Topic and Assigned Reading

Week 1	Introduction to groups. New York Magazine article posted on Smartsite (<i>What Google Learned from its Quest to Build the Perfect Team</i>). Small Groups up Close. Forming workgroups. Chapter 1
Week 2	Groups in Society. Chapter 2 Making Group Decisions. Chapter 3
Week 3	Exam 1. Work Time. Proposals Due
Week 4	Establishing Discussion Procedures. Chapter 4 Guiding the Flow of Information and Ideas. Chapter 5
Week 5	Leading the Team. Chapter 6 TBA
Week 6	Exam 2. Work Time. Forging Group Bonds. Chapter 7
Week 7	Shifting Social Identities. Chapter 8 Learning and Growing. Chapter 9
Week 8	The Power of Knowledge. Chapter 10 Exam 3. Work Time. Completion Forms Due.
Week 9	Workday. Group Communication Analyses Due. Presentations
Week 10	Presentations Presentations