

**Important Note:** This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to check Canvas and your UWSP Email regularly for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in a Canvas course announcement and/or through Email.

**Course Information**

Study communication theories, practices, and skills used in organizations as part of group/team process. Includes group meeting skills, decision making, and group leadership. Course offered TR 2 – 3:15 PM, in CAC 202, October 28 – December 20 (last 8 weeks of the semester). Course has a required online component housed in Canvas.

**Instructor Information**

**Instructor:** Dr. Rhonda Sprague

**Office:** CAC 208

**Office Telephone:** 715.346.2812 (office phone cannot receive text messages)

**Email:** [rsprague@uwsp.edu](mailto:rsprague@uwsp.edu) or [Rhonda.Sprague@uwsp.edu](mailto:Rhonda.Sprague@uwsp.edu) (preferred mode of contact)

**Office Hours:** Unless I tell you differently, I will be in my office on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:30 – 3:30 and Tuesdays from 12:30 – 1:30. However, I am here most days from 8-4. If you want to *meet with me*, please send me an email at least 24 hours in advance to make an appointment. You can send me an Email at any time, but please be sure it follows the guidelines below.

**Instructor Contact Etiquette**

I expect that you will communicate with me in a professional manner at all times. To that end, please attend to the following hints for engaging in professional communication with me (and all your university instructors):

| <b>DO:</b>   | <b>DO NOT...</b>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be polite. Say please when you ask for help and thank you when you receive it.</li> <li>• Be brief and clear.</li> <li>• Include an informative <i>subject line</i> in Emails. I will not even open emails without a subject specified.</li> <li>• Include a <i>salutation</i> (such as Dear Professor Sprague, Greetings, or Hello) and a <i>signature</i>.</li> <li>• Specify the <i>course and section</i> about which you are writing or calling.</li> <li>• Be patient. I should respond within 24 hours.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contact me to ask about something you could find out easily on your own (e.g., something on the syllabus, on the CANVAS site, or the like).</li> <li>• send Emails that read like text messages. Watch grammar, spelling, and formality.</li> <li>• make demands. Instead, <i>ask</i> for help.</li> <li>• send Email about anything complicated. Make arrangements to see me in person to discuss complicated issues.</li> <li>• put anything into an Email message that you would not be willing to say in person.</li> </ul> |

**I know you are inundated with Email from around campus, but it is very important that you attend to Emails from me and your other instructors. Most of us are not going to send Emails containing superfluous information. At the start of each semester, it will be helpful for you to [set up a rule](#) in your UWSP Email account that filters Email from your instructors into a special folder that you check regularly. If you remember to change the names of your instructors in that folder every semester, you should never miss an important message.**

**Expected Instructor Response Times**

1. I will attempt to respond to student emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours, please resend your email. At that point, you have my permission to add one of those obnoxious exclamation points to your message, to identify it as important to you.
2. I will attempt to grade submitted work within one week; however, longer written assignments may take me longer to read and evaluate.

\*\*\*If you have a general course question (not confidential or personal in nature), please post it to the Course Q&A Discussion Forum found on the course homepage. I will post answers to all general questions there so that all students can view them. Students are encouraged to answer each other's questions too.

## Course Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing this course should be able to do the following:

1. Explain factors associated with effective group processes;
2. Apply communication skills associated with effective group processes; and
3. Apply skills related to group decision making for effective team-based performance.

### Learning Outcomes for the Communication Major (any emphasis)

By the time they complete all major requirements, students will have gained the following competencies:

1. communicate effectively using appropriate technologies for diverse audiences;\*
2. plan, evaluate and conduct basic research;\*
3. use appropriate theories to understand and solve problems;\*
4. apply historical perspectives to contemporary issues and practices; and
5. apply principles of ethical decision making in communication contexts.\*

\*Outcomes supported by this course. You should produce materials related to these learning outcomes in this course. Save these materials for use in your capstone course.

### Text:

Beebe, S. A., & Masterson, J. T. (2017). *Communicating in small groups: Principles and practices* (11<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson. This text is required and available from text rental.

## Graded Assignments:

**Syllabus Quiz (1% of course grade):** You will take a quiz (in Canvas) over the contents of this syllabus. You must attain a score of 100% on this quiz before the deadline to receive credit for this portion of your grade.

**Unit Quizzes (30% of course grade):** You will take three quizzes over material presented in the textbook and in class. Quizzes will be taken in Canvas, and will contain a combination of matching, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and similar questions. Quiz questions will be based upon the assigned learning outcomes. *Each quiz will be available for 24 hours.*

**Mini-Group Assignments (19% of course grade):** You will participate in two (2) activities designed to help you understand specific course principles. The group will receive a single group grade (assigned by me) and individual member grades determined by rating one another's contributions to the overall process.

**Group Problem-Solving Assignment (40% of course grade):** Over the course of the class, you will participate in a group whose purpose is to help offer solutions to a problem you see occurring on campus or in the community. You will produce a group paper and conduct a group presentation of the results.

**Class Participation (10% of course grade):** This portion of my grade is based solely upon my perception of your overall attitude, attentiveness, and activity during class.

### Course Evaluation:

|               |               |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 94 – 100% = A | 90 – 93% = A- | 87 – 89% = B+ | 84 – 86% = B  |
| 80 – 83% = B- | 77 – 89% = C+ | 74 – 76% = C  | 70 – 73% = C- |
| 67 – 69% = C+ | 60 – 66% = D  | Below 60% = F |               |

## Course Technology Requirements

1. **Prepare Yourself for an Online Course.** UWSP has a helpful site you can use to learn what to expect in an online learning environment. It can be found at [www.uwsp.edu/online](http://www.uwsp.edu/online). On the left navigation pane, select "student links" and then "online student orientation." There are 6 short "quizzes" you can take to determine your readiness to be a successful online student.
2. **Technology Needs for COMM 345.** To be successful in this course, you will need to be able to access UW-Stevens Point's Canvas online learning management system. You will use your UWSP account to login to the

course from the [Canvas Login Page](#). You also will use those to access your *UWSP student Email account*, which you should check *every day*. I might send out notices via Email, as well as post Announcements in Canvas. A high-speed internet connection is optimal, but most Canvas features are available on the mobile app.

3. **Course Materials and Learning Activities Will Be Posted in Canvas.** If you are new to the Canvas learning environment, you can take a brief [course](#) to learn to navigate the Canvas environment. Click on the [Student Guides](#) or [Video Guides](#) links on the [Canvas Login Page](#), or click on the Help button from most areas within Canvas itself.
4. **Basic Computing Skills Needed.** You should be able to access Canvas, download and edit documents in Microsoft Word, and upload materials back into Canvas. You also should be able to search for information through the library and on the Internet, and use an Email program competently.
5. **Use Microsoft Word for Word Processing.** If you use Mac Pages or a knock-off Word program (like the ones you can get for free online) for word processing, use Office 365. You have FREE access to Microsoft programs using your student account. Information about this option can be found at <https://www.uwsp.edu/office/Pages/default.aspx>. A less-preferred option is to save every assignment as a .pdf file before submitting it to the dropbox.  
***I cannot grade what I cannot read, and I cannot read documents in .pages format or those formatted with knock-off Word programs. You will receive a grade of zero if I cannot read what you submit.***
6. **Technical Assistance.** If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas you can:
  1. Click on the “Help” button from almost anywhere in Canvas
  2. Visit with a [Student Technology Tutor](#)
  3. Seek assistance from the [IT Service Desk](#)
    - a. IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
    - b. IT Service Desk Email: [techhelp@uwsp.edu](mailto:techhelp@uwsp.edu)

## Course Policies

### Attendance Policy

This course is about learning to work in groups effectively. It will be more hands-on than other courses I teach, so attendance is expected. *Any unexcused absence will result in a 1/3 letter-grade deduction from your final grade* (for example, from a B+ to a B). Excused absences will be granted on a case-by-case basis, but may be given for compelling circumstances as described below. *Unless circumstances completely prevent it, you must tell me you will be absent before the start of class to have any chance of being excused.*

### Late Work Policy

You are expected to meet all deadlines for submitting required coursework. Work that is not submitted before its deadline will not be eligible to receive credit. *Unless circumstances completely prevent it, you must tell me you will not be able to meet a deadline BEFORE the actual deadline to have any chance of being allowed to make up missed work.*

Allowable Extensions: “Compelling circumstances” include University-sponsored activities, illness, attendance at a funeral, family emergency, etc.

### Grade Appeal Policy

If you feel your work did not receive a fair evaluation, you may request a reconsideration of the grade you received. However, you must observe the following:

1. The appeal must be in writing, 1-2 pages in length. You must submit it via Email.
2. The appeal cannot be made before 24 hours after the grade has been posted, but must be made within 72 hours of that time.
3. You must state the grade you think you should have received and the reasons why you think you should have received that grade. Your statement must make it clear that you have read the instructor’s feedback thoroughly. Your reasons must conform to the standards used on the grading rubric.

Failure to follow any of these rules will result in immediate dismissal of the challenge.

I will respond to your appeal within one week. Recognize that you will be requesting that I re-grade your work. At the conclusion of that exercise, I will do one 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.

### **Accommodations Policy**

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start. The Disability and Assistive Technology Center is located in 609 Albertson Hall and can be contacted by phone at (715) 346-3365 (Voice) (715) 346-3362 (TDD only) or via email at [datctr@uwsp.edu](mailto:datctr@uwsp.edu)

#### **Statement of Policy**

UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

*If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform the instructor and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center in 609 ALB, or (715) 346-3365.*

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

*Every assignment you submit in this class must be original work. Except for group papers, you cannot "work together" to complete assignments or take tests.*

I will not tolerate academic dishonesty of any sort. *If you are found guilty of engaging in academic misconduct, you will fail this course and I will report you to appropriate university personnel for further disciplinary action.*

#### **UWSP Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures**

UWSP 14.01 Statement of principles

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the university of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the university of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

#### **UWSP 14.03 Academic misconduct subject to disciplinary action.**

(1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student does any of the following:

- (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- (c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- (d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- (e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
- (f) Assists other students in any of these acts.

(2) Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of

those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

### Religious Beliefs Policy

Relief from any academic requirement due to religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03, with notification within the first three weeks of class.

### Course Schedule

This schedule is not likely to change; if a change is necessary, you will receive notice.

| WEEK  | DATE                           | UNIT  | READINGS   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>Unit One: Groups form for specific reasons and in predictable ways.</b>                    |                                |   |            |
| 1   | T Oct 29                       | Orientation to Group Communication  | Chapter 1  |
|   | <i>W Oct 30</i>                | <i>Syllabus Quiz due by 11:59 PM</i>  |            |
|   | <i>R Oct 31</i>                | Orientation to Group Communication, cont.<br><i>Last day to Clear Drop the Course (no W grade earned)</i> | Chapter 2  |
| 2   | T Nov 5                        | Group Formation   | Chapter 3  |
|   | R Nov 7                        | Group Discussion  | Chapter 4  |
|   | <i>F Nov 8</i>                 | <i>Unit One Quiz due by 11:59 PM</i>  |            |
| <b>Unit Two: Group members fulfill necessary roles and contribute to the group's climate.</b> |                                |   |            |
| 3   | T Nov 12                       | Group Roles, Norms, and Power   | Chapter 5  |
|   | <i>R Nov 14</i>                | Group Leadership<br><i>Dinner &amp; Game Group Presentations due by 2:00 PM</i>                           | Chapter 9  |
|   | <i>F Nov 15</i>                | <i>Dinner &amp; Game Group Peer Reviews due by 11:59 PM</i>   |            |
| 4   | T Nov 19                       | Group Climate   | Chapter 6  |
|   | <i>R Nov 21</i>                | Group Conflict<br><i>Problem-Solving Groups Check-in 1 Due</i>  | Chapter 8  |
|   | <i>F Nov 22</i>                | <i>Unit Two Quiz due by 11:59 PM</i>  |            |
| <b>Unit Three: Creative groups can be a valuable tool for solving problems.</b>               |                                |   |            |
| 5   | T Nov 26                       | Group Decision-Making   | Chapter 10 |
|   | <i>R Nov 28</i>                | <i>NO CLASS MEETING – THANKSGIVING RECESS</i>   |            |
| 6   | <i>M Dec 2</i>                 | <i>Last Day to Drop Course with a W Grade</i>   |            |
|   | T Dec 3                        | Group Problem-Solving   | Chapter 11 |
|   | <i>R Dec 5</i>                 | Group Problem-Solving, cont.<br><i>Problem-Solving Groups Check-in 2 Due</i>                              |            |
| 7   | <i>T Dec 10</i>                | Group Creativity<br><i>Group Meeting Observation Presentations due by 2:00 PM</i>                         | Chapter 12 |
|   | <i>W Dec 11</i>                | <i>Group Meeting Observation Peer Reviews due by 11:59 PM</i>   |            |
|   | <i>R Dec 12</i>                | <i>NO CLASS MEETING – GROUP WORK DAY</i>  |            |
|   | <i>F Dec 13</i>                | <i>Unit Three Quiz due by 11:59 PM</i>  |            |
| 8   | <i>W Dec 18</i><br>2:45 – 4:45 | <i>Group Problem-Solving Presentations due by 2:45 PM</i>   |            |
|   | <i>R Dec 19</i>                | <i>Group Problem-Solving Peer Reviews due by 11:59 PM</i>   |            |