

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point  
Division of Communication

# Communication 345: Small Group Communication

Section 1: Tuesday/Thursday  
9:30am – 10:45am CAC 237

**Instructor:** Cade Spaulding, Ph.D.

**Office:** CAC 323

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Note: I respond to email M-F until 5pm.

**Office Phone:** 715-346-3925

**Office hours:** Tuesday/Thursday 11am – 12pm (noon), and by appointment

## Course Outcomes:

In this course, students will study communication theories, practices, and skills used in organizations as part of group/team process. Includes group meeting skills, decision making, and group leadership.

## Required Materials

Beebe, S & Masterson, J. (2014). *Communicating in Small Groups* (11<sup>th</sup> Edition). New York: Allyn & Bacon. (available via text rental)

## Course Assignments and Grading

Grade Item	% Final Grade
<b>Group Activities</b>	<b>70%</b>
Mini Group Experiences	30%
Final Project Group	40%
<b>Exams</b>	<b>30%</b>
Exam 1 (Chapters 1-6)	15%
Exam 2 (Chapters 7-12)	15%

**Mini Group Experiences:** Students will engage in two mini-group experiences to practice specific group work skills and to prepare for a successful Final Project Group experience. Mini groups are pass/fail as follows:

### Mini-Group #1: Dinner and Game Group

Group Members: My Choice ☺ (5 members)

Activity: Plan a homemade sit-down, cooked, dinner (no fast-food) as a group that includes a main course, two side dishes, a drink, and a dessert. Play a game or do an activity everyone will enjoy and can participate in (board games, card games, steal the flag, basketball, rock-climbing wall, etc.)

For the dinner and game experience groups must:

- Spend at least 2 hours together (between dinner and activity)
- Prepare at least one part of the dinner as a group (salad, dessert, etc.)
- Keep costs low - \$10-\$20 limit
- Ensure each group member has an assignment
- Take amazing pictures of the dinner and game/activity and use them in your power point presentation

### Mini-Group #1 Debrief Presentation Requirements

- upload group presentation .PPT file via D2L drop box group folder before class.
- 7-8 minute time limit
- all group members must be present and participate
- answer the following prompts within your presentation:
  - Explain each group member's contributions to this project:
    - What was each group member's responsibility?
    - How many hours did they put into their portion of this activity?
  - Answer the following initial questions:
    - What did you hope to accomplish during this group experience?
    - How did you plan to reach those goals?
    - What went according to plan?
    - What didn't go according to plan?
      - How did group members respond to this unexpected change?
      - If everything went according to plan, what do you think made this possible?
    - What was the easiest thing about this group activity for your group?
    - What was the hardest thing about this group activity for your group?
    - How would you do things differently if you were asked to plan a dinner and game/activity with a committee like this in the future?
  - Explain how your group experienced the 5 stages of Tuckman's Group Development Model: *forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning* (describe the characteristics your group experienced and share specific examples to illustrate each stage)
- In Class: complete and submit a confidential performance review by each group member for all other group members.

### Mini-Group #2: Community Service Group

Group Members: Your Choice (3 members)

Group Tasks: Try to think outside the “box” on this one. Brainstorm as many ways of doing things for other people as you can and then see how many of them you can do within 3 hours of time. Consider community members, other students on campus, roommates, those who are sick (temporary or chronic), the elderly, those suffer, children, trash cleanup, etc.

The project must:

- get written/email permission to do the service from the person/group receiving the service
- take at least 3 hours of group worktime to complete (can be spaced out over several days or done all at once)
- all group members must participate for all 3 hours
- no \$ cost to any member of the group. If tools or materials are needed to carry out your project you must either already have them (shovels, hammers, etc.), it must be provided by the individual/group you are serving, or it must be donated by someone else. You cannot engage in any unsafe projects without experienced professionals willing to assist (don't offer to cut down trees for someone unless you're a professional tree-cutter, etc.)
- take amazing pictures of your group experience and use them in your power point

Take pictures of your group throughout the experience to use in your debrief.

### Mini-Group #2 Debrief Presentation Requirements

- upload group presentation .PPT file via D2L drop box group folder before class.
- 7-8 minute time limit
- all group members must be present and participate
- answer the following prompts within your presentation:
  - Explain each group member's contributions to this project:
    - What was each group member's responsibility?
    - How many hours did they put into their portion of this activity?
  - Answer the following initial questions:
    - What did you hope to accomplish during this group experience?
    - How did you plan to reach those goals?
    - What went according to plan?
    - What didn't go according to plan?
      - How did group members respond to this unexpected change?
      - If everything went according to plan, what do you think made this possible?
    - What was the easiest thing about this group activity for your group?
    - What was the hardest thing about this group activity for your group?
    - How would you do things differently if you were asked to plan a dinner and game/activity with a committee like this in the future?
  - Explain how your group experienced the 5 stages of Tuckman's Group Development Model: *forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning* (describe the characteristics your group experienced and share specific examples to illustrate each stage)
    - Compare and contrast how group development took place during your first group experience compared to this one.
    - Was anything different during this second group activity?
      - If so, what was different? Why do you think this happened? (*try to use principles from the course to make sense of these differences*)

- If not, why do you think nothing changed? *(try to use principles from the course to make sense of nothing changing)*
- In Class: complete and submit a confidential performance review by each group member for all other group members.

**Final Project Group:** During the second half of the semester, students will self-select their own team members and choose a problem on campus and/or in the community to solve. This project needs to have a solution that can be implemented and evaluated. In other words, the team needs to do more than recommend a course of action they must create a solution.

10%	Final Project Presentation (15 minutes)
20%	Professional Report (8 pages)
10%	Team Member Performance Reviews

For this project, each team will need to:

1. Identify a meaningful problem either on or off campus that affects UWSP students
2. Learn more about the problem and identify possible causes by talking to decision-makers and those with first-hand knowledge of the problem and/or causes.
3. Determine the criteria needed for a successful solution
4. Decide on which solution will work best
5. Get feedback on and permission from decision-makers to implement your plan from those with first-hand knowledge of the problem and causes
6. Gain approval to implement plan
7. Implement the plan
8. Evaluate ROI (Return on Investment) for the client and overall effectiveness of the implementation effort.
9. Provide next-step recommendations to client

Final Project teams will submit weekly progress reports and a performance evaluation of each team member via D2L dropbox. During Weeks 15 & 16 teams will present their projects to the rest of the class in a 15-minute presentation. An 8-page professional report will be due on the day of each team's presentation. Please bring one copy for me and submit a digital copy on D2L dropbox.

**EXAMS:** There will be two exams covering chapter readings and in-class handouts/discussion notes. These exams will include a combination of short essays, multiple-choice, and true-false questions. I reserve the right to implement chapter quizzes as a graded item in this course if students show they are falling behind in the assigned readings each week.

## Grade Percentage Distributions

<b>A</b>	= 95% and up	<b>C+</b>	= 78% - 79.9%
<b>A-</b>	= 90 – 94.9%	<b>C</b>	= 75% - 77.9%
<b>B+</b>	= 88% - 89.9%	<b>C-</b>	= 70% - 74.9%
<b>B</b>	= 85%-87.9%	<b>D</b>	= 60 - 69.9%
<b>B-</b>	= 80% - 84.9%	<b>F</b>	= 59.9% or less

## Course Policies

**Attendance:** Class attendance is expected and is part of the final participation grade you receive. I allow for 2 personal days during the semester but any activities missed on those days cannot be made up or turned in late. Exceptions to this rule are available only for emergency (ER worthy) situations and handled on a case-by-case basis and are subject to a review of your participation, previous attendance, and overall course contributions.

**Make-up Work:** If you miss class you miss any activities scheduled for that day. Avoid missing class. Each student has the responsibility to get discussion notes or calendar updates from another student if absent.

### Students with Disabilities

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact/visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, Room 609 Learning Resources Center (Library), 715-346-3365, or email [datctr@uwsp.edu](mailto:datctr@uwsp.edu) or logon to: [www.uwsp.edu/disability](http://www.uwsp.edu/disability)*

### Academic Integrity

Be honest in what you do in this class. Do your own work and hold yourself to the highest standard of integrity and hard work. I do not tolerate plagiarism. Students who plagiarize will either receive a “0” on the assignment or a “0” in the course, depending on the nature and severity of the offense in accordance with Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” (<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>).

# COMM 345 Class Calendar

(Subject to change by notification of instructor)

Assignments listed in the Due column should be completed before class on the day scheduled below

Wk	Date	Topic	Due
1	01/22	Orientation, Syllabus, Schedule	Read: Chapter 1
	01/24	Group Development <i>Discussion: Dinner &amp; Game Group</i>	Read: Chapter 3 <b>Active Group:</b> Dinner & Game
2	01/29	Group Development	Read: Chapter 3 <b>Active Group:</b> Dinner & Game
	01/31	Interaction and Relationships	Read: Chapter 5 <b>Active Group:</b> Dinner & Game
3	02/05	Group Climate	Read: Chapter 6 <b>Active Group:</b> Dinner & Game
	02/07	Managing Conflict	Read: Chapter 8 <b>Active Group:</b> Dinner & Game
4	02/12	Managing Conflict	Read: Chapter 8 <b>Active Group:</b> Dinner & Game
	02/14	<b>Dinner &amp; Game Group Debrief Presentations</b> <i>Discussion: Community Service Group</i>	<b>Group Debrief:</b> Dinner & Game <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
5	02/19	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	02/21	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
6	02/26	Group Discussion & Collaboration	Read: Chapter 4 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	02/28	Communication Skills for Groups	Read: Chapter 7 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
7	03/05	Communication Skills for Groups	Read: Chapter 7 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	03/07	<b>No Class - Group Work Day</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
8	03/12	<b>No Class - Group Work Day</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	03/14	<b>Community Service Group Debrief Presentations</b> <i>Discussion: Final Project Groups</i>	<b>Group Debrief:</b> Community Service <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
9	03/19	Spring Break – Be safe and enjoy the break!	
	03/21		
10	03/26	Review for Exam 1 (Chapters 1-6)	
	03/28	<b>No Class – Take Exam 1</b>	<b>Exam 1 opens 03/22 at 12am and closes 03/23 at 11:59pm</b>

11	04/02	Decision Making in Groups <i>In-Class Group Work</i>	Read: Chapter 10 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups Due: Final Project Group Problem
	04/04	Decision Making in Groups <i>In-Class Group Work</i>	Read: Chapter 10 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
12	04/09	Problem-Solving Techniques <i>In-Class Group Work Day</i>	Read: Chapter 11 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	04/11	Problem-Solving Techniques <i>In-Class Group Work Day</i>	Read: Chapter 11 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
13	04/16	Group Leadership Principles <i>In-Class Group Work</i>	Read: Chapter 9 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	04/18	Group Leadership Principles <i>In-Class Group Work</i>	Read: Chapter 9 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
14	04/23	Creativity in Groups <i>In-Class Group Work</i>	Read: Chapter 12 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	04/25	Creativity in Groups <i>In-Class Group Work</i>	Read: Chapter 12 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
15	04/30	<b>No Class</b> - Group Work Day	<b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	05/02	<b>No Class</b> - Group Work Day	<b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
16	05/07	Final Group Presentations (all groups)	
	05/09	Review for Exam 2 (Chapters 7-12)	
17	05/14	<b>Finals Week – Exam 2</b>	
	05/16	Exam 2 opens in D2L Monday, May 13 at 12am and closes Friday, May 17 at 11:59pm	

## COMM 345 (adjusted) Class Calendar

Wk	Date	Topic	Due
4	09/24		
	09/26	In-class presentations and group experience debrief	<b>Group Debrief:</b> Dinner & Game <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
5	10/01	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	10/03	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
6	10/08	Group Discussion & Collaboration	Read: Chapter 4 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	10/10	Communication Skills for Groups	Read: Chapter 7 <b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
7	10/15	<b>No Class - Group Work Day</b>	
	10/17	<b>No Class - Group Work Day</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
8	10/22	Community Service Group Presentations	<b>Active Group:</b> Community Service
	10/24	In-class presentations and group experience debrief	<b>Group Debrief:</b> Community Service <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
9	10/29	Review for Exam 1 (Chapters 1-6)	
	10/31	<b>No Class – Take Exam 1</b>	<b>Opens 03/22, 12:00am/closes 03/23, 11:59pm</b>
10	11/05	<b>In-Class Group Work Day</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	11/07	Problem-Solving Techniques	Read: Chapter 11 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
11	11/12	<b>In-Class Group Work Day</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	11/14	Decision Making in Groups	Read: Chapter 10 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
12	11/19	Decision Making in Groups	Read: Chapter 10 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	11/21	<b>No Class – Group Work Day</b>	
13	11/26	Group Leadership Principles	Read: Chapter 9 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	11/28	Creativity in Groups	Read: Chapter 12 <b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
14	12/03	<b>No Class – Group Work Day</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
	12/05	<b>TBA</b>	<b>Active Group:</b> Final Project Groups
15	12/10	<b>Final Group Presentations</b>	
	12/12	<b>Review for Exam 2</b> (Chapters 7-12)	
16	Finals Week <b>Exam 2 Opens 12/17, 12:00am/closes 12/21, 11:59pm</b>		



### Mini-Group #1 Confidential Peer Performance Reviews

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: You have \$100 (total) to divide up among the members of your group (excluding yourself) based on their contributions to achieving the goals (both to task and relationship issues) of this mini-group experience.

<b>Group Member Name</b>	<b>Pay Earned</b> (Their "cut" of \$100)	<b>Reasons for Pay Earned</b> Clearly describe why they earned this amount.

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## Mini-Group #2 – Group Debrief Report

Directions: As a group discuss and respond to each of the questions below.

Group Member Names:	
What did you plan to do?	
What went according to plan?	
What problems did you face?	
What did you do well as a group?	
What would you change?	
How can you make these changes happen to improve your next group experience?	

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