

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Division of Communication

Communication 345: Small Group Communication

Section 1: Monday/Wednesday
2:00 AM – 3:15 PM CAC 237

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Office hours: T/R 1-2, 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

- Fujishin, R. (2013). *Creating Effective Groups* (3rd Edition). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Additional readings will be posted on D2L and announced in class.

Course Assignments and Grading

Group Activities	50%
Problem Solving Group	
Community Service Group	
Movie-making Group	
Academic Presentation Group	
Dinner & Game Group	
Individual Assignments	50%
Mid-Term E-portfolio	
Final E-portfolio	
Exams	Included only if students demonstrate they are not prepared for in-class discussion of principles covered in text.

Grade Percentage Distributions

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

Course Policies

Attendance: Class attendance is expected, recorded, 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 or logon to: 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>).

Community Rights and Responsibilities

As a UWSP student you have the right to receive fair and equitable evaluations based on course objectives outlined in the syllabus and without reference to personal or political views. You have the right to expect timely and accurate information and feedback about your progress and achievements in this course.

You also have the responsibility to participate fully in the learning experience and to complete all course requirements. Please refer to the following link for more specific rights and responsibilities available to you as a UWSP student: <http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsCommBillRights.pdf>.

Assignment Descriptions

Group Activities

You will experience group work first-hand by participating in several out-of-class group experiences during this semester. These experiences provide opportunities to practice what you are learning, identify areas for improvement, and become a better communicator and a better group member/leader. All group members must participate fully in the entire activity.

Problem-Solving Group

Group Members: Assigned (5 members)

Group Tasks: Choose a campus department or facility and identify a meaningful problem they are experiencing. Develop a plan (approved by decision makers and instructor) to solve the problem, and execute your plan. Must spend at least 6 hours researching and solving the problem. Take pictures of your group throughout the process and distribute to each group member to include in their e-portfolio assignments.

Deliverables:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief on the process and final solution to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief via D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation
- Each group member must submit a personal evaluation of their group experience, assign \$75 of merit pay, and provide an explanation for how this pay was distributed (submit individually to D2L)

Community Service Group

Group Members: Student Choice (5 members)

Group Tasks: Identify a community member or organization in need of help. Participate in 3 hours of service as a group.

Deliverables:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief to D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation
- Each group member must submit a personal evaluation of their group experience, assign \$50 of merit pay, and provide an explanation for how this pay was distributed (submit individually to D2L)

Dinner and Game Group

Group Members: Assigned (5 members)

Group Tasks: 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 board game or active sport together as a group. The dinner and game should involve at least 2 hours of group member interaction.

Deliverables:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief to D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation

- Each group member must submit a personal evaluation of their group experience, assign \$30 of merit pay, and provide an explanation for how this pay was distributed (submit individually to D2L)

Academic Presentation Group

Group Members: Assigned (5 members)

Group Tasks: Develop a presentation on a chapter concept/concepts no longer than 15 minutes that includes the following: a lecture on the concept(s), handout related to the concept(s), and a class activity geared to teach the chapter concept(s). No two groups may present on concepts from the same chapter. Take pictures of your group throughout the process.

Deliverables:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief to D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation
- Each group member must submit a personal evaluation of their group experience, assign \$75 of merit pay, and provide an explanation for how this pay was distributed (submit individually to D2L)

Movie Making Group

Group Members: Student Choice (5 members)

Group Tasks: As a group you will make a short movie (no more than 5 minutes in length) that is either a trailer for an actual film OR an "As Seen on TV" commercial on a new product or service.

Deliverables:

- Present a 5-minute oral debrief to the rest of the class (all group members must participate).
- Upload a written group debrief to D2L prior to your oral debrief consisting of:
 - Pictures of group members throughout this activity, formal and action
 - A detailed description of what was accomplished
 - A summary of time spent (per group member) and group members' responsibilities
 - A group evaluation
- Each group member must submit a personal evaluation of their group experience, assign \$75 of merit pay, and provide an explanation for how this pay was distributed (submit individually to D2L)

Merit Pay

Group members assign one another "merit pay" at the end of each group activity based on the performance of each person within the group. This is how I understand what happens behind the scenes and how you reward those who do a good job. You cannot give yourself any – only other members. All available merit pay for each activity must be distributed among other group members or you will receive "0" merit pay yourself.

E-Portfolio Assignments:

Students will submit a mid-term and final e-portfolio that consists of the following materials organized under the headings listed below:

- **Group Activities**
 - Written group debrief for each group activity you have completed to date
 - Personal evaluation of the group experience and assignment of available merit pay for each activity.
 - Explanation of what you learned from this activity and specific group dynamics that worked/didn't work (200 word limit)
- **Textbook Chapters**
 - Application of 3 principles from each chapter to your group activity experiences.
 - Write up of 2 individual/group exercises you've engaged in (located at the end of each chapter) for each chapter completed.

COMM 345 Tentative Course Calendar

(Subject to change by notification from the instructor)

Assignments/reading **due** on the day scheduled below

Wk	Date	Topic	To Do
1	09/05	No Class	
	09/07	Course Overview Introductions	
2	09/12	Topic: <i>Working in Groups</i>	F – Ch. 1 Schedule of Assigned Groups Active Group: Dinner & Game
	09/14	Topic: <i>Understanding Yourself</i>	F – Ch. 2 Active Group: Dinner & Game
3	09/19	Topic: <i>Effective Communication</i>	F – Ch. 3 Active Group: Dinner & Game
	09/21	Topic: <i>Effective Communication</i>	F – Ch. 3 Group Debrief: Dinner & Game Active Group: Academic
4	09/26	Topic: <i>Listening</i>	F – Ch.4 Active Group: Academic
	09/28	Group Work Day (in-class)	Active Group: Academic
5	10/03	TBA	Active Group: Academic
	10/05	Topic: <i>Group Presentation Strategies</i>	F – Ch. 6 Active Group: Academic
6	10/10	Comm Week Guest Speakers	Bring 5 typed questions for presenters that focus on group/team best practices, career advice, etc.
	10/12	Academic Group Presentations	Active Group: Academic
7	10/17	Academic Group Presentations	Active Group: Academic
	10/19	Open Work Day (no class session)	Midterm E-Portfolios due via D2L
8	10/24	Topic: <i>Problem Solving in Groups</i>	F – Ch. 5 Group Debrief: Academic Active Group: Problem-Solving
	10/26	Topic: <i>Problem Solving in Groups</i>	F – Ch. 5 Active Group: Problem-Solving
9	10/31	Group Work Day (in-class)	Active Group: Problem-Solving
	11/02	Group Work Day (in-class)	Active Group: Problem-Solving
10	11/07	Topic: <i>Facilitating Group Discussion</i>	F – Ch. 7 Active Group: Problem-Solving
	11/09	Topic: <i>Facilitating Group Discussion</i>	F – Ch. 7 Active Group: Problem-Solving

11	11/14	Group Work Day (in-class)	Group Debrief: Problem-Solving Active Group: Community Service
	11/16	Group Work Day (in-class)	Active Group: Community Service
12	11/21	Topic: <i>Leading a Group</i>	F – Ch. 8 Active Group: Community Service
	11/23	Open Work Day (no class session)	
13	11/28	Topic: <i>Leading a Group</i>	F – Ch. 8 Group Debrief: Community Service Active Group: Movie
	11/30	Topic: <i>Building Cohesion & Unity</i>	F – Ch. 9 Active Group: Movie
14	12/5	Topic: <i>Building Cohesion & Unity</i> Movie Making Group Debriefs	F – Ch. 9 Active Group: Movie
	12/7	Topic: <i>Managing Conflict</i>	F – Ch.10 Active Group: Movie
15	12/12	Topic: <i>Managing Conflict</i>	F – Ch.10 Group Debrief: Movie
	12/14	Open Work Day (no class session)	
	12/16	Scheduled Final Exam Time 2:45 – 4:45	Final E-Portfolios due via D2L

Writing Research Papers and Literature Reviews

A superior research paper will contain the following organizational and stylistic components:

- A. Introduction.
- B. Statement of purpose or thesis.
- C. Preview of the sections of the essay or how the argument is organized within the essay.
- D. In literature review papers, a presentation of the themes distilled from the literature rather than a source-by-source summary of what was read. Do not over rely on any one source for the majority of information in your paper. An excellent paper is a distillation of concepts you draw from many sources.
- E. Summary statement that concludes the paper.
- F. Do not over rely on any one source for the majority of information in your paper. An excellent research paper is a distillation of concepts you draw from many sources.
- G. Definition and documentation of all key terms to professional sources (not general-purpose dictionaries). Define key terms at first usage rather than in a "glossary" section.
- H. Proper documentation of information. It is the student's responsibility to understand the rules of documentation for both quotation and summarized materials.
- I. Only cite sources you have personally read and had the original source in your hands. Indirect sources should be cited using the "cited in" convention discussed in the MLA or APA style manuals.