

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Division of Communication

Communication 345: Small Group Communication

Section 1: Monday/Wednesday
2:00PM – 3:15PM CAC 202

Instructor: Cade Spaulding, Ph.D.
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Office Phone: 715-346-3925
Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 9:15am – 10:15am, 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* (11th Edition). New York: Allyn & Bacon. (available via text rental)

Course Assignments and Grading

Grade Item	% Final Grade
Group Activities	70%
Mini Group Experiences	30%
Final Project Group	40%
Exams	30%
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: 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
 - Confidential performance review by each group member for all other group members.

Mini-Group #2: Academic Research and Presentation Group

Group Members: Student Choice (3 members)

Group Tasks: Develop a presentation on a chapter concept/concepts (no longer than 15 minutes) that includes the following: (1) a brief presentation on the concept(s) using power point, (2) a class activity that allows class members to experience and/or practice the concept(s), (3) a 1-page handout related to the research you found on your concept(s).

No two groups may present on concepts from the same chapter. Take pictures of your group throughout the experience to use in your debrief.

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
 - 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.

30 pts. Team Presentation (15 minutes)

60 pts. Professional Report (8 pages)

10 pts. Team Member Performance Reviews

For this project, each team will need to:

1. Choose a meaningful problem happening on campus or in the community
2. Learn more about the problem (*how did the problem start?, who does it affect?, has anyone tried to solve it?, did previous efforts to solve the problem solve it completely/partially?, identify likely causes, potential solutions, etc.*) by talking with those connected to it (Department Chairs, Administrators, Professionals, Community Leaders, etc.), those affected by it, or individuals/groups who have tried to resolve it in the past.
3. Identify likely causes,
4. Develop plan to reduce/eliminate problem causes (plan, time commitment, expected budget, etc.),
5. Submit plan for instructor and client approval,
6. Make necessary adjustments to plan based off feedback,
7. Gain approval to implement plan
8. Implement the plan,
9. Evaluate ROI (Return on Investment) for the client and overall effectiveness of the implementation effort.
10. 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

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 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>).

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		Labor Day	
	09/05	Orientation, Syllabus, Schedule	Read: Chapter 1
2	09/10	Group Development	Read: Chapter 3 Active Group: Dinner & Game
	09/12	Interaction and Relationships	Read: Chapter 5 Active Group: Dinner & Game
3	09/17	Group Climate	Read: Chapter 6 Active Group: Dinner & Game
	09/19	Managing Conflict	Read: Chapter 8 Active Group: Dinner & Game
4	09/24	In-class presentations and group experience debrief activity	Group Debrief: Dinner & Game Active Group: Academic
	09/26	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 Active Group: Academic
5	10/01	Small Group Communication Theory	Read: Chapter 2 Active Group: Academic
	10/03	Group Discussion & Collaboration	Read: Chapter 4 Active Group: Academic
6	10/08	Communication Skills for Groups	Read: Chapter 7 Active Group: Academic
	10/10	No Class - Group Work Day	
7	10/15	Academic Group Presentations	Active Group: Academic
	10/17	Academic Group Presentations	Active Group: Academic
8	10/22		Group Debrief: Academic Active Group: Final Project Groups
	10/24	No Class - Group Work Day	
9	10/29	Review for Exam 1 (Chapters 1-6)	
	10/31	No Class – Take Exam 1	Exam 1 opens 03/22 at 12:00am and closes 03/23 at 11:59pm
10	11/05	In-Class Group Work Day	Active Group: Final Project Groups
	11/07	Problem-Solving Techniques	Read: Chapter 11 Active Group: Final Project Groups
11	11/12	In-Class Group Work Day	Active Group: Final Project Groups
	11/14	Decision Making in Groups	Read: Chapter 10 Active Group: Final Project Groups
12	11/19	Decision Making in Groups	Read: Chapter 10 Active Group: Final Project Groups
	11/21	No Class – Group Work Day	
13	11/26	Group Leadership Principles	Read: Chapter 9 Active Group: Final Project Groups
	11/28	Creativity in Groups	Read: Chapter 12

			Active Group: Final Project Groups
14	12/03	No Class – Group Work Day	Active Group: Final Project Groups
	12/05	TBA	Active Group: Final Project Groups
15	12/10	Final Group Presentations	
	12/12	Review for Exam 2 (Chapters 7-12)	
16			