

COM 220 – Small Group Communication
Point Loma Nazarene University
Department of Communication and Theatre

Instructor: Dr. Kathleen C. Czech

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Required Texts:

Rothwell, J. D. (2013). *In Mixed Company: Communication in Small Groups and Teams*. (8th ed) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Canvas: All assignments and handouts will be posted to Canvas. You will have to access Canvas for course materials.

Learning Outcomes:

1. To develop a theoretical understanding of the elements embedded in task oriented group processes.
2. To develop greater proficiency in applied task group dynamics.
3. To work within an organizational setting and experience the interaction of several task groups in a company or organization.
4. To enhance communication skills through interpersonal experiences, written reports, and oral presentations, and the use of Power Point technology.

Course Description:

The ability to effectively manage group behavior derives both from knowledge of theoretical insights and research findings and also from practice at organizing to accomplish tasks through coordinated effort. This course is designed to integrate theory and practice in such a way as to stimulate introspection and self-awareness as well as participation and cooperation with others.

This course will include a combination of lectures, structured group exercises, and oral class presentations, which will provide an opportunity to recognize and employ the variables you are reading about in the text and experiencing in your small groups.

By the end of this semester you should be able to objectively analyze your own effectiveness as a task group participant and as a member of a group within a larger system of groups in an organization. You should be able to make defensible and theoretically grounded recommendations concerning group process and practice.

Assignments:

All assignments must be typed and double spaced. All assignments should utilize one inch margins and 12 point New Times Roman font. All assignments are due when specified in the syllabus. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. The specific assignments include:

- **Group Dynamics Inc:** Group Dynamics Inc. is an organization for the development, practice, and understanding of the small, task-oriented group. The general goal of GDI is to select and actually market an idea or product to a specific population.

Purpose of the Organization:

1. To provide a framework for organizing, scheduling and providing the facilities for a series of work group meetings.
2. To provide a method of gathering basic information about group methods, discussion, techniques, and the results of small group research.
3. To provide a method of comprehensive evaluations of the individual and group work within the context of the organization.
4. To provide a laboratory organization that members of the class can study to discover the relationship between small task oriented groups and organizational structure and efficiency.

Structure of the Small Groups:

1. The basic division of GDI is the small task oriented group. There will be four groups competing against one another for their product endorsement or service. There will be five to six members in each group. Each group will have members performing the general functions of an organization. The group will create an organization and produce an event or service proposal and evaluate their idea. The class will vote on the best proposal granting that group 20 extra points. Each member of your group must be present for your group to win the 20 points. If any member fails to show up for all presentations that group will be out of the running.
2. Each group should have members working in the following five areas which will be present in your final proposal:

Production: Production has the responsibility of actually constructing the idea or

product chosen by GDI to market. Additionally, Production is responsible for making the time line for the project and assignment of tasks. Production functions also include all meeting agendas and documentation of the group.

Research and Development: Research and Development generates change and new ideas in the system. R and D is in charge of researching the feasibility of the production and how development should take place. R and D decides whether to implement a given activity or project to enhance the success of the GDI project or for learning principles of group communication. R and D is responsible for evaluating the practicality, usefulness, and desirability of projects and to determine how these projects can best be implemented. The groups must research at least three possibilities for the R & D portion of their proposal. The group will pick on and justify why this one was chosen over the other two.

Human Resources: HR has the responsibility of developing techniques to evaluate individual and group performance both within the task area of the organization and within the internal maintenance area. HR will decide on techniques for making evaluations of member contributions of work projects and for making evaluation of the effectiveness of the group as a task oriented group.

Advertising/Public Relations: Adv/PR is in charge of the creation and implementation of an advertising/public relations campaign for the promotion of both the product/idea and GDI organization generally. Adv/PR will design a logo and or slogan for GDI and for the product or idea. Advertising and PR is responsible for all copy and contacts.

Marketing: Marketing is in charge of generating and executing plans for the distribution of the product/idea chosen for the GDI product. Marketing will be in charge of conducting research design to determine the target population of the product/idea and work with Adv/PR in an effort to reach that target population.

3. The final unit of GDI is the director, the class instructor. The director sets overall policy, evaluates organizational performance at a general level and ultimately evaluates the job performance of each individual in the organization with a letter grade.
- Group Analysis Papers (100 pts):** This is an individual assignment in which you confidentially evaluate and analyze yourself, group members, and group process during the course of the semester. You will be given 5 group analysis assignments that will be handed out to you throughout the semester. These reflections will serve as a way to evaluate how well you can apply theoretical concepts to what is currently happening in your group.
 - Group Process Note Book (100 pts):** Each group will produce a notebook that will contain all the project requirements. The notebook should also contain any other information necessary to your group and projects. This should be a professional looking portfolio of your groups' cumulative work.

- ❑ **Group Presentation (100 pts):** Each group will present a 30 minute presentation that summarizes the groups process throughout the semester. The presentation is also the sales pitch to the class about the product or service.
- ❑ **SYMLOG Field Diagrams (40 pts):** You will produce two SYMLOG field diagrams on your small group at various points in the semester.
- ❑ **Negotiation Simulation (30 pts):** There will be one in class negotiation. Each member of the class will participate on a negotiation team for points. This activity cannot be made up if absent.
- ❑ **Group Grade (30 pts):** Your group will develop the evaluation for group members to evaluate one another. Each member of your group will evaluate you individually. This evaluation should be based off the criteria set in your small group contract. This evaluation should not be shared with group members.
- ❑ **Exams (200 pts):** You will have two exams over the Rothwell text. These exams will be worth 100 points each and will be objective in nature.



Grading:

	Points Possible	Points Received
GDI Group Presentation	100 pts	

GDI Group Note Book	100 pts	
Group Analysis Papers	100 pts	
SYMLOG Diagrams	40 pts	
Negotiation Simulation	30 pts	
Group Grade	30 pts	
Exams	200 pts	

Total Points 600 pts

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percent	Points	Grade	Percent	Points
A	93-100	556 – 600	C	73-76	435 – 458
A-	90-92	538 – 555	C-	70-72	417 – 434
B+	87-89	519 – 537	D+	67-69	399 – 416
B	83-86	495 – 518	D	63-66	375 – 398
B-	80-82	477 – 494	D-	60-62	357 – 374
C+	77-79	459 – 476	F	0-59	0 – 356

Grading Standards:

“A’s”are awarded for work that is highly exceptional and goes beyond all minimal requirements.

“B’s”are awarded for work that is above average and goes beyond minimal requirements.

“C’s”are awarded for work that meets basic standards and requirements.

“D’s”are awarded for below average work that usually lacks minimal requirements.

“F’s”are awarded for work that clearly does not meet minimal standards, or is not completed.

Grade Concerns:

If you feel that you were unjustly evaluated on any assignment, please talk with me within 1 week after the assignment has been returned. An appeal is welcome by scheduling an appointment or coming to my office hours. Please do not immediately approach me after

class! Please come with a well reasoned and written explanation of why the grade should be changed, and I will be happy to discuss it with you. Please note: Asking for an appeal and defending your case does not secure, nor imply a change of grade. If at any point during the course you are concerned with your overall class grade or other issues in the course, please feel free to make an appointment or stop by my office. I want to help you learn and succeed in this course.

Attendance Policy:

This course is a course in group communication and organizational structure. In order for groups and organizations to operate members must be present in class regularly. Attendance will be taken every day so that the instructor can maintain a record of attendance. Attendance will influence your grade in this class in several ways. There will be allotted **2 excused or unexcused** absences. The third absence will result in the lowering of your final grade by half a step (An "A" would become an "A-"). For each absence after that another half step deduction will be taken from your final grade.

In the tragic event that you do miss class, you will be expected to get notes from someone in class. Please do not ask me for my lecture notes!! You are responsible for missed material and should try to make a friend or two in this class that you can count on. I will provide students with any missed handouts or assignments. Attendance in class means that you are fully attending to the course. This means that if you are engaging in disruptive conversations, studying for another class, reading the paper, or even sleeping, you will be counted absent for that day! Please take this policy seriously and come to class awake and ready to participate. Plan your schedules based on the daily syllabus and I will do my best to honor the schedule in the syllabus.

Furthermore, your group members will evaluate you. You will play a crucial role in this group process. Members will expect you to be present and your grade will suffer as a result of your groups' perception of your participation and attendance.

Make-ups & Extra Credit:

All assignments are due on the date specified in the syllabus. I am not responsible for turning in your assignments on time – YOU ARE! Please be responsible and figure out how you will get the assignment done and turned into me. In the event of an unexpected and unavoidable scheduling conflict, it is your responsibility to make prior arrangements (well in advance) with me to resolve problem. Excuses after the assignment dates are unacceptable with the exception of extreme circumstances. Extra credit is not available, so please do well on the assignments in the course.

Classroom Conduct:

While I enjoy a relaxed classroom atmosphere, with lots of discussion and jokes, disrespect will not be tolerated. All students need to respect their peers and the instructor!! While challenges to class ideas are welcome remember to challenge the idea and not the person! I

appreciate a lively and bit disordered class that allows communication to happen. Your participation is highly encouraged in class and will affect your attendance grade. While the course will encounter lots of opinions and views, it is everyone's responsibility to keep an open mind, and avoid character attacks, stereotypes, and racist or sexist language.

Presentations:

Presentations can be a nervous experience for some. Please NEVER walk in on a presentation under any circumstances. Do not leave either, but simply wait until you hear applause and then enter the classroom quietly and quickly. Furthermore, when presentations are occurring this is not the time to talk with your neighbor, read the paper, or rearrange your backpack.

Appearance:

Your physical appearance on presentation days is important. You should be neatly groomed and dressed in a way that suggests you expect to be taken seriously. At a minimum this means a dress shirt and dress slacks for men, and dress skirt or dress slacks and blouse for women. Please do not wear hats, tennis shoes, shorts, or chew gum during your presentations. Physical appearance has been shown to affect the credibility of public speakers and as a result will also affect yours in this class!

Academic Accommodations:

All students are expected to meet the minimum standards for this course as set by the instructor. Students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should first discuss options and services available to them in the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of the semester. The ASC, in turn, will contact professors with official notification and suggested classroom accommodations, as required by federal law. Approved documentation must be provided by the student and placed on file in the ASC prior to the beginning of the semester.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts, as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Therefore, cheating and/or plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course.

Technology:

The use of electronic devices during class is NOT permitted. This includes cell phones, i-pods, and laptops! This means you should bring something else to take notes on! Students are not permitted to listen to music while taking a test or to use their cell phones during tests. Use of these technology devices during any class period will count in your absence for the class period.

Daily Syllabus

Date	Class Topic/Activity	Reading
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R Sept. 4	Introduction to Small Group	
T Sept. 9	Defining Small Group Communication	Chp. 1
R Sept. 11	Group Development & Climate	Chp. 3
T Sept. 16	Group Mission & Norms	Chp. 4
R Sept. 18	Small Group Theories/Form GDI Groups	
T Sept. 23	Systems Theory <i>Analysis One Due!</i>	Chp. 2
R Sept. 25	Group Meetings	
T Sept. 30	Systems Theory <i>Contracts Due!</i>	
R Oct. 2	Effective Teams	Chp. 6
T Oct. 7	Effective Teams <i>Analysis Two Due!</i>	
R Oct. 9	SYMLOG	
T Oct. 14	SYMLOG	
R Oct. 16	SYMLOG	
T Oct. 21	Exam One	
R Oct. 23	Group Meetings <i>SYMLOG Due!</i>	
T Oct. 28	Power & Status in Groups	Chp. 9
R Oct. 30	Power & Status in Groups	

Daily Syllabus

Date	Class Topic/Activity	Readings
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T Nov. 4	Decision Making	Chp. 7 & 8
R Nov. 6	Decision Making	
T Nov. 11	Conflict <i>Analysis Three Due!</i>	Chp. 10
R Nov. 13	Negotiations	
T Nov. 18	Negotiation Simulation	
R Nov. 20	Group Meetings	
T Nov. 25	Leadership	Chp. 5
R Nov. 27	No Class – Happy Thanksgiving	
T Dec. 2	Review <i>Analysis Four Due!</i>	
R Dec. 4	Exam Two	
T Dec. 9	Presentations	
R Dec. 11	Presentations	

FINAL EXAM —Thursday, December 18, 2014 - 1:30-4:00 pm
Notebooks, SYMLOGS, Final Evals, & Analysis Five Due.