

Course Syllabus
Fall 2001
Small Group Communication (Comm35550/001)
T/R 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Instructor: Robyn E. Parker, Ed.M.
Office: MSP D302A
Office hours: M, 12-1p.m.; T, 2-3 p.m.;
W, 12-1:30 p.m.; R, 9-10:30 a.m.

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Required Texts: Brillhart, J., Galanes, G., & Adams, K. (2001). Effective group discussion (10th Ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Course Description: This course is designed to initiate students into Small Group Communication theory and practice. Additionally the course is designed to facilitate improvement in group participation skills through practice.

Course Objectives:

1. Introduce students to Small Group Communication concepts and theories.
2. Advance student ability to function within small group contexts through practice.
3. Enhance student ability to analyze group process and recommend appropriate changes.
4. Introduce students to the concept of team-building.

Course Requirements:

1. Small group projects: You will complete 3 group mini-projects. For each project you will be assigned to a different group. All group members will receive the same grade for the project. You will be randomly assigned to groups and expected to conduct your projects outside of class using whatever means the group deems appropriate (e.g. face-to-face meetings, e-mail, phone conferences).
2. Project paper: You will individually write a position paper about small group participation based upon your experiences during the mini-projects. Describe the group process, highlighting differences from one group to another. Analyze problems that occurred. Make recommendations for improving the process.

3. Group facilitation project: You will be asked to form a small group. Together you will plan and lead a class session covering some aspect of the course material, subject to instructor approval. Your aim in these sessions is to facilitate whole-class interaction in discussing/applying important concepts. You will receive separate instructions and specific grading criteria for this assignment.
4. Exams. There will be a mid-term and a final examination. All course material (text readings and in class presentations and discussions) is "testable".

Evaluation:

2 Exams	1 = 200, 2 = 250 pts.	45% of course grade
Small group mini-projects	150 points	15% of course grade
Project paper	150 points	15% of course grade
Group facilitation project	250 points	25% of course grade

Course Policies:

Regarding excused absences. Excused absences will not negatively affect your final course grade. A reasonable absence is one due to illness, travel for athletics, religious observance, or a field trip/academic conference. You must be able to document the legitimacy of the absence before it will be considered excused. 2 points will be deducted from your final course average for each unexcused absence beyond 2. You may not, however, miss any GFP presentation sessions. Your fellow students are depending upon your participation, therefore unexcused absences on those dates will result in a lowering of your final average. You have 1 week from the date of absence to produce required documentation to have your absence excused.

Regarding grading: Grades are an assessment of your mastery of the subject matter. The more you put into the course, the more you'll get out of it in terms of grades and knowledge. Don't short change yourself by expecting higher grades than you've earned. Commit to putting in the effort.

Scale:

- A = Earn 90 – 100 percent of course points
- B = Earn 80 – 89 percent of course points
- C = Earn 70-79 percent of course points
- D = Earn 60-69 percent of course points
- F = Fewer than 60 percent of course points

Regarding Students with Disabilities: In accordance with University policy, if you have documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) in the Michael Schwartz Student Services Center (330) 672-3391.

Student Conduct. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct as outlined in the University Policy Register available on-line (<http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/archive.asp?ChapterID=5>). Pay particular attention to policy number 3342-3-07 regarding cheating and plagiarism (search word cheating).

Regarding the Course Outline. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the course outline as dictated by student learning needs. If changes to examination dates or GFP facilitation sessions need to be made, students will receive the change in writing at least two weeks prior to the originally scheduled date.

Proposed Course Outline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
8/28	Course Introduction	
8/30	Introduction to small groups	Chap. 1-2
9/4 – 9/6	Small Group Communication processes Non-verbal signals	Chap. 3-4
9/11 - 9/13	Effects of culture	Chap. 5
9/18 - 9/20	Small Group membership First mini-project assigned 9/20	Chap. 6
9/25 - 9/27	Norms and roles	Chap. 7
10/2 –10/4	Small Group leadership First mini-project due 10/2 GFP groups formed 10/4	Chap. 9, 10
10/9 10/11	Group Cohesiveness Mid-term exam	Chap. 8
10/16 – 10/18	Problem solving Second mini-project assigned 10/16	Chap. 11
10/23-10/25	Decision making Second mini-project due 10/25	Chap. 12
10/30	Conflict Third mini-project assigned	Chap. 13
11/1	No class meeting, NCA annual convention, work on group projects	
11/6 - 11/8	Conflict continued Third mini-project due 11/6	
11/13-11/15	Group Facilitation Project presentations	
11/20 11/22	Project paper due; Consulting No class (Thanksgiving)	Chap. 15
11/27 – 11/29 12/4 - 12/6	Group Facilitation Project presentations Group Facilitation Project presentations	