Contact Information
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Office hours: T - 9:30 – 11:30; 12:30 – 1:45 or by appointment

Course Information
Course number: 2333_B01
CRN: 21379
Meeting times: T 2:00 – 3:15 pm
Course location: OCNR 132

Course Overview

Course Description.
This course is designed to increase students’ understanding of group communication concepts and theories and to help prepare students to be competent members of a variety of different groups, including problem-solving, planning, and decision-making task groups. This course examines a variety of topics central to improving group communication skills including problem solving techniques, leadership, team building, and conflict resolution. Relevant theory and research are examined. Students will also have the opportunity to work in a small group and apply course concepts.

Student Learning Outcomes.
At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:
• Apply small group communication theories and research.
• Demonstrate skills for participating in groups.
• Describe the connection between communication and small-group functioning.
• Explain how to overcome challenges that interfere with productive group functioning.
• Understand the role of ‘real-world’ groups in society.
• Evaluate small group communication processes and recommend changes.

Course Materials.
2) Additional readings will be placed on Blackboard (http://bb9.tamucc.edu). These will be announced in class.

Course Policies, Procedures, and Expectations

Classroom Expectations.
As the instructor, I pledge to do my best to present course materials in an interesting and engaging manner, to actively listen to and consider the ideas of every student in the classroom, and to be fair in grading all assignments.

Students are expected to:
• Abide by the Course Policies, Contract, and Academic Honesty Statement outlined in this course
• Arrive for class on time.
• Bring readings to class and be prepared to discuss them.
• Complete assignments, formal and informal, prior to the start of class.
• Actively listen, consider, and reflect on the ideas of everyone in the classroom.
• Participate in class, on-line, and small-group discussions by sharing ideas and encouraging others to share ideas.
• Generate a respectful and safe class atmosphere.
• Wait until class is finished before “packing up.”
- Turn off cell phones; do not text.
- Use laptops only to take notes, not surf, IM, email, shop, Facebook, etc.

Not following these policies will adversely affect the student’s participation grade in the course.

**Group Policy.**

This course requires students work in groups both during and outside of class. In taking this course, students are responsible for actively participating in their groups. This means attending meetings, sharing ideas, contributing to papers and projects, and working to manage differences. Working in a group can be challenging. Group members are expected to try and manage conflicts on their own; however the instructor will always be available as a communication consultant if needed.

If a member of a group is not actively participating in a group, the group may choose to ‘fire’ that student. To do this, the group must document how they tried to resolve problems before firing the student and make a case for why the student was fired. DOCUMENT EVERYTHING! The fired student must then find another group willing to ’hire’ him or her to receive credit for the assignment.

**Attendance.**

Attendance is required for participation in this course. Work missed during excused absences (those due to extreme illness, a family emergency, a religious holiday, or an excused university activity) can be made up. It is up to students to provide documentation of excused absences to me prior to planned absences and within a week of unplanned absences to make arrangements for missed work. Work missed due to unexcused absences may not be able to be made up. Additionally, students are responsible for obtaining the information covered in class.

*Each student is allowed two absences throughout the semester, regardless of the reason. Continued unexcused absences will result in a deduction of 5% overall grade reduction per absence. For excused absences, it is the student’s responsibility to inform me of the reason for missing class within a week of the absence.*

**Arriving after class has started and attendance has been taken means that you will be marked absent. It is important to arrive on time.**

**Late Work.**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class time on the assigned day. If I do not have the assignment by the beginning of class that day, the assignment is late. Each calendar day that the assignment is late will generally result in a one-letter-grade reduction. Work missed during excused absences (see above) can be made up. In-class work may not be able to be made up.

**Communication.**

This course will rely on Blackboard to communicate electronically with students outside of class. Students will need to ensure access and check regularly throughout the semester.

**Final Exam.**

Students must be present at the scheduled final exam time for the course. This means that travel plans should be made with the final exam time in mind.

**Media.**

When class is in session, laptops may be used only to take notes. Students may not use the internet, instant messaging programs, email, or any similar programs during class unless
otherwise instructed to do so. Similarly, mobile phones should be turned off. Students who are using laptops or mobile phones inappropriately will no longer be allowed to bring them to class.

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism.**
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a 5% overall reduction of your final grade in addition to reporting the plagiarism to the University.

**Academic Advising.**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Dropping a Class.**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 11 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Statement of Civility.**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Grade Appeals.**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_a
ppeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Disabilities Accommodations.**
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 call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Statement of Academic Continuity.**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Grade Appeal Process.**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to destrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Questions and Problems.**
If you have concerns about the class, please arrange to discuss them with me during my office hours or by appointment.

**Course Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Requirements.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unless otherwise indicated, each assignment must be typed. Assignments should be double spaced with one-inch margins and typed in Times New Roman 12 point font. More thorough descriptions of each assignment will be handed out in class. Students are responsible for keeping track of assignments and grades.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blackboard Group Process Analysis. (3 Entries per week per group)
Utilizing Blackboard, each group member will reflect on, analyze, and evaluate the communication processes associated with their community benefit project. This will occur with group blogs and 3 papers written throughout the course.

Project Proposal.
Upon formulation of the group, students will work together to identify a non-profit organization and intended action to benefit the community. The group will submit one paper together consisting of 3-5 pages.

Mid-point and Final Analysis.
Students will reflect on, analyze, and evaluate the communication processes associated with their community benefit project. Students will individually submit their papers consisting of 3-5 pages.

Exams.
Two exams will be given this semester. Exams will cover readings, discussions, presentations, assignments, and in-class activities. Exams may be composed of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, or matching questions; short answer questions; and essay questions. The exams are designed to test both students’ understanding of the material and their ability to apply course information.

Community Benefit Project.
Students will complete a major project while working in a small group throughout the semester. The group will be required to solve a problem or accomplish a task that benefits the community in some way. (WARNING: the goal of the group project cannot to be simply to raise money!) The group must actually do something for a non-profit organization. The process will involve meeting as a group both inside and outside of class. Each group will put together a written proposal, as well as a formal presentation of the group’s project and outcomes.

Class Participation and Attendance.
The success of this class depends on the active participation of its members during a wide variety of discussions and group activities inside and outside of class. Participation in these discussions and activities is an integral part of the learning process and is graded accordingly. Participation includes coming to class prepared, contributing ideas to class discussions, encouraging others to share their ideas, completing informal assignments, and acknowledging, supporting and respecting views that are different from one’s own. Monopolizing conversations, disrespecting or criticizing others, and creating a discordant atmosphere are unacceptable participation techniques. In addition, students will be expected to complete various informal course assignments. Participation, like other assignments, require effort.

Grade Distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>My Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Process Analysis Blogs</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Proposal</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Point Analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Group Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Evaluation

Evaluation.
Grades are based on demonstration of mastery of course material. Work that meets the minimum requirements of an assignment, is done on time, and displays average involvement with the course content is deserving of a 'C.' Higher grades are awarded to work that goes above and beyond the minimum standards to produce products that reflect superior intellectual effort, excellence in critical analysis, and overall creativity in the approach to any given assignment.

Grading Scale.
You can use the following percentages as a guide for determining your grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>224-250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>199-223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>174-198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>149-173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
<td>below 148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Tentative Course Schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Initial Group Blog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Group Formation; Introduction</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 7</td>
<td>Group Development</td>
<td>Ch. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>Group Membership</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 21</td>
<td>Diversity in Groups</td>
<td>Ch. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 28</td>
<td>Group Leadership</td>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 4</td>
<td>Critical Thinking and Argumentation in Groups</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 11</td>
<td>Problem Solving in Groups</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>Structured and Creative Groups</td>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Case-Based Learning in Groups</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Final Group Blog Entry</td>
<td>Final Group Blog Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>Exam II (Units 6-10)</td>
<td>Final Group Blog Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Tentative Course Schedule</td>
<td>Final Group Blog Presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>