Communication 8

**GROUP COMMUNICATION (#55706)**

Spring 2015

Reedley College

**Instructor:** Helen Chavez, M.A.

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**Classroom: SOC39**

**Time/Days: Thursday Nights from 6:00-8:50 pm**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Group communication is a course that introduces students to how communication can be used as a vehicle for solving problems, and making decisions. Students will study and practice theories, behaviors and the process of group interaction. As a result of taking this course students will develop skill in the use of communication in small group contexts. Specifically, students will enhance their competency in the production and management of communication behavior in task oriented groups. Additionally, students will enhance their ability to construct and deliver informative and persuasive public presentations. Students will develop a conceptual understanding of small group principles and concepts and putting this knowledge into action through a variety of experiential activities. Speech (Communication 8) fulfills the General Education Requirement in Oral Communication (G.E. Foundation A1), provided the student completes the course with a grade of “C” or better.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Identify and apply effective communication strategies within the context of group process.
2. Construct and deliver dynamic and competent presentations that are adapted to the purpose and audience
3. Utilize research materials that incorporate sufficient, credible, and relevant evidence.
4. Choose appropriate organizational patterns.
5. Analyze the effectiveness of communication through constructive critique.

**E-MAIL POLICY**

Student emails are answered Sunday afternoons/evenings and please know that I am happy to answer questions and review assignments via email. When emailing me, please let me know who you are (Helen Chavez) and the course name, date and time (COMM 8, Thursday, 6pm).

**CANCELED CLASS NOTIFICATION**

Seldom do I cancel class, but it is a good idea to check your student email right before coming to class because I will try to send a message using Bb if I need to be absent. I will also notify the college so that a notice will be posted on the classroom door.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please identify yourself to the college’s Disable Students Services and to your instructor(s) so reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation within the course can be made.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (plagiarism and cheating)**

So that students are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities, students are encouraged to become familiar with the college’s policies regarding student conduct in classes including cheating and plagiarism, disruptive classroom behavior, and other instructional issues located in the college catalogue and the schedule of courses. Any act of plagiarism or cheating may result in a zero on any and all assignments and/or may result in failing the course. Stating that you did not know what plagiarism/cheating is will NOT be an excuse.

**CLASSROOM DEPORTMENT**

Students are expected to be polite and courteous to both the instructor and fellow classmates. Students will refrain from speaking during presentations, using cell phones, or engaging in private conversations when others are lecturing or presenting. Also, on presentation days, students may not enter/leave the room while a student is speaking. Violations will result in a deduction of points taken off the total grade distribution at the instructor’s discretion. In other words, points will be deducted from the 1000 points and/or you will be asked to leave the classroom.

**DROP DATE and DROP POLICY**

Be advised that after the drop date (end of 9th week for semester-length class) you will be issued a letter grade “A” through “F” if you are still enrolled in class. It is *your responsibility to drop* the course, it is *NOT MINE*! However, I may drop you from the course if you miss more than three nonconsecutive days/nights of class.

**ATTENDANCE**

Participation is vital once presentations begin. Each student is expected to attend class on time and stay/be engaged the entire time. Understand that two (2) tardies or leaving early two (2) times (or a combination of the two) equals one (1) absence. If you come in late, be sure to check in with me after class so you will not be marked absent otherwise you will lose points (see the *PARTICIPATION* section for details).

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and put away before class. Each time I see/hear your phone or electronics, you will lose points per offense. At the instructor’s discretion, points will be taken off the total grade distribution. In other words, points will be deducted from 1000 points every time you take out your phone, earplugs, or whatever. No exceptions, No warnings.

**MAKEUPS, LATE WORK, EXTRA CREDIT, ETC.**

I accept hard copies only. I will NOT accept any emailed or handwritten papers.

I do NOT accept late work and I do NOT offer extra credit points.

The very nature of this class make makeup assignments/presentations impossible. I must enforce this or it will put everyone behind schedule.

**GROUP CONTRACT**

Once you are placed in a group, you will remain in that group the entire semester. Each group will write and sign a contract stating the rules of the group. Items such as how to deal with unproductive members, being late or absent from meetings, lack of participation and contribution, etc. You should make a copy of this contract for each member of your group and for me. This contract will be used as the guideline in the event of group mediation meeting and /or member removal.

**GROUP MEMBER REMOVAL**

Once a group contract has been signed, members have the right to remove a group member for irresponsible behavior as dictated in the group’s contract. Problems must be documented and both the group member and instructor must be informed of the problem. It is essential that each group member take his or her responsibility seriously. *Everyone needs to be aware that a student cannot pass this class without a group*. It is imperative that you follow the rules and do your share in order to avoid losing your group.

*Second Chance*: If a group member is given a second chance to stay in the group he/she has been “voted off”, the highest grade the student can receive for the entire class is a C. This is because the member was not willing to do the work the first time. It would be unfair to receive any grade above a C since the lack of effort affected not only the member but the other group members as well. Please understand it is the highest grade you can receive for the course, it is not the lowest grade. You could still receive a letter grade of D or F it just depends on the overall points earned.

**CHANGING GROUPS**

A student will only be allowed to change groups if he/she talks with me first. If I agree to the group change (I reserve the right to deny the move, and I do not have to provide a reason or justification for the refusal), the student will have to speak to the entire class and ask a group to adopt him/her. If no group will take you in, you will have to live with the consequences. Meaning, no one can pass this class without a group! Also, if a group does take you in, you will then be under the Second Chance policy (Read the above paragraph).

**FYI**

It is your responsibility to monitor your progress in this class, and to know when class assignments are due. I am capable of making mistakes, so you need to be aware of dates, times, etc. Let me know of any errors and problems that might arise. I do not search out students to inform them of their grade or anything else. I do not post grades on Bb. It is a good idea to keep every assignment that you do in this class (actually, in every class) as proof of your status at least until you receive your final grade at the end of the semester.

I cannot and will not re-teach a lesson. My PowerPoint presentations are for students who come to class. Students who are not in class will have to rely on the textbook and/or notes from a classmate. Also, you are NOT allowed to take photos of my Power Point Presentations!

*Additional class rules, policies, conditions, assignment details, etc. will be stated in class during the course of the semester.*

**TEXTBOOK**

Young, Kathryn Sue, et al. Group Discussion: A Practical Guide to Participation and Leadership. (Fourth edition), Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 2007.

**Assignments**

*Assignments* *Points*

Informative Group Presentations & Outlines

a. Famous Speech 100

b. Events That Impacted the World 110

c. Social/Political Problem Analysis 120

Persuasive Group Presentations & Outlines

a. Social/Political Problem-Solving Analysis 130

b. “Why \_\_\_\_ can NOT work is because…” 140

Chapter Summaries

a. Ch. 1-6 100

b. Ch. 7-12 100

Class Lecture Exams (3) 90

Participation 110

*Total Course Points* 1000

**Assignment Details**

* Informative Group Presentations & Outlines

There will be three informative group projects: Famous Speech, Events That Impacted the World, and Social/Political Problem Analysis. More information will be provided at a later time.

* Persuasive Group Presentations & Outlines

There will be two persuasive group projects: Social/Political Problem-Solving Analysis and “Why \_\_\_\_ can NOT work is because…” More information will be provided at a later time.

* Chapter Summaries

All the details for this assignment is on Blackboard, and you will turn-in these assignments on Bb. If you are unable to use Bb, talk with me so we can make arrangements.

* Class Lecture Exams

There will be three exams. The exams will focus on what was said during lecture so make sure to take good class notes. These exams will consist of 15 multiple choice questions, and each question will be worth two points apiece. The exams might be timed! Make sure you are punctual because you will not be given extra time!! In addition, these exams cannot be made-up! I am not kidding!! Reschedule your doctor appointments NOW!!!

* Participation

Any student tardy (early departure included) during presentations will lose 25 participation points for each offense. Missing class (regardless of reason) especially when others are giving speeches/arguments/debates/presentations WILL hurt this section of your grade.

In addition, I might have you do a few non graded assignments like in-class activities and/or take home assignments. You are expected to complete these as well. If you are absent or if you do not participate in these activities/assignments, you will lose up to 25 participation points.

**Grade Distribution**

I give numerical scores to all work you do. I do not give letter grades on any assignment. There are 1000 points possible for the semester. Your points are added at the end of the semester to determine your grade.

**TOTAL POINTS: 1000**

***Scale***

**1000-900 A**

**899-800 B**

**799-700 C**

**699-600 D**

**599-000 F**

**Proposed Schedule**

**THURSDAY NIGHT**

**January**

15 Introduction to the class

Communicating in Groups

22 Leadership

Achieving Team Visions

***Exam 1***

29 **Resume Presentation & Outline Due**

Meet-N-Greet (Select Group Members)

**February**

05 Planning

Bring Individuals Together

Listening

Verbal/Nonverbal Communication

12 ***Exam 2***

Task Questions and Resources

Logical and Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making

19 Meeting Challenges

Managing Obstacles

**Exam 3**

26 Review (Putting It All Together)

**March**

05 *PREP NIGHT*

12 **Social/Political Problem-Solving Analysis & Outline Due**

19 *PREP NIGHT*

26 **Famous Speech Presentation & Outline Due**

**April**

02 Spring Recess-No Class Held

09 *PREP NIGHT*

16 **Events That Impacted the World & Outline Due**

23 *PREP NIGHT*

30 **Social/Political Problem-Solving Analysis & Outline Due**

**May**

07 *PREP NIGHT*

14 **“Why \_\_\_\_ can NOT work is because…” Outline**

21 **Final:** Award Night Presentations

GOODBYE AND ALL THE BEST ☺