



Communication 8 Group Communication
Syllabus: Fall 2015
TTh 3:30-4:45 (Soc 36), TH 6-8:50 (Soc 39)

Instructor: Stephanie Briones

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Office hours: TH 5-5:45 pm in the Communication lab

Required Materials:

-*Group Discussion* ISBN 13: 978-1-57766-475-8- Waveland Press.

- 882-E Scantrons

-Recommended Materials: MLA/APA Style Guide

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.

Course Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

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.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. identify roles individuals play in groups and understand how those roles relate to the group goals.
2. utilize team-building strategies to strengthen group dynamics.
3. analyze and employ effective conflict management strategies.
4. identify barriers to listening and incorporate effective strategies.
5. learn and apply key aspects of verbal and nonverbal communication to small group situations.
6. learn how perceptions, values and culture can affect communication.
7. incorporate goal setting, planning, and implementation into group projects.
8. develop skill in extemporaneous speaking for informative, persuasive and ceremonial presentations.
9. utilize practical assignments and exercises that will reinforce the theoretical concepts taught in this course.

Classroom Deportment: Each student is expected to respect the rights of the other students in the class and the instructor. The exploration of controversial ideas is an essential component of this class. Students who do not behave in a respectful manner will be asked to drop the class. When presentations are in progress students arriving late are to stay outside until the presentation is complete. Interrupting a presentation for any reason other than a severe emergency is inconsiderate and will not be tolerated.

Classroom Norms

Cell phones: Cell phones should be turned off and put away before coming to class. Cell phones will only be tolerated when prompted to use or during break times. Students will receive one warning and then be asked to leave the classroom. If deported from the classroom it will count as one of your unexcused absences

Email Etiquette: When emailing me, please include a salutation, a body, and a closing. Sometimes students send me emails that say things like "When is the quiz?" I teach up to six courses a semester and have up to 120 different students. When you email me, please use proper punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar. In addition, please have a salutation (e.g, Hello Ms Briones), a body (i.e., the request or comment), and a closing. The closing should have your name, the course name or number, and the course and time (e.g., Claire Vang, Group Communication, COMM 8, 1-1:50pm). **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The average response time is between 24-48 hours, so do not wait until the last minute for assignment questions. Also, emails received after 5 pm on Friday may not be answered until Monday morning.

Student Rights: So that students are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities they are encouraged to become familiar with the "Campus Policies" section of the Schedule of Courses. This material includes information regarding cheating and plagiarism, disruptive classroom behavior, and other instructional issues. Students with disabilities should identify themselves so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Changes to Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus and to the class calendar if extenuating circumstances arise. This right extends to assignments, evaluations, and all other aspects of the course. Denying that you have heard an oral assignment change or evaluation process change is not a basis for appealing the information contained in this syllabus.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this class. Any student found to plagiarize, fabricate or otherwise submit dishonest work will automatically receive an F for the assignment. This policy will apply regardless of the magnitude of the offense (i.e., how much is plagiarized or fabricated) or the student's intent (i.e., whether the offense is deliberate or a mistake). I pursue any hint of plagiarism or fabrication that I detect in your work. If you're not sure about something you're using in your writing/speech, or whether/how to attribute information, always ask. It is very important to note that plagiarism regulations are not limited to written assignments, but also extend to oral presentations.

Group Responsibility

As a participant in this course, you are expected to work as a group to complete presentations and assignments. Your group will be selected by the instructor and you will remain in this group throughout the semester. Group participation will be monitored through individual peer evaluations and a meeting with the instructor at least once this semester.

If a group member does not participate with assignment completion, this person may be removed from the group. Protocol as to how a group member is removed will be discussed further in class. Group members must all come to a consensus with this decision, which should not be taken lightly. Consequences for group member removal are severe and often lead to failure of the course.

Group and Individual Assignments

Puzzle Speech: Each group member will bring in one artifact that represents their identity. After, the group will construct a “puzzle solution” as to how all of these pieces fit together. Points will be given for cohesion and creativity.

Class Case Study: Throughout the semester we will learn many different group communication theories and perspectives. As a group, you will be in charge of one class day to prepare a case study that incorporates group conflicts or situations and apply group theories to solve the case. Each presentation will be 20-30 minutes in length that will explain the case to the class and prompt discussions and lessons to further understand the case theories. Please be creative and fun in explaining your case study. This assignment is a group effort that will be worth 70 points.

Informative Problem Presentation: Your group will focus on one community problem. Your group must research and present the problem from a global, national, and local perspective. Points will be given based upon research, creativity in assignment, and group cohesion.

Problem Solving Presentation: Your group will utilize SA methods as well as persuasive problem solving to discuss a potential budget proposition for a local non-profit organization in Fresno, CA. Points will be given for: problem layout, budget research and layout, and persuasive presentation. This presentation will also focus on creativity so please make your last effort one to remember.

Peer Evaluation: Each group member will be given an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the participation and contributions of their fellow group members. Peer evaluations will be completed for group members following both group presentations. These are worth 100 points (50 points each). I cannot stress enough the importance of completing these peer evaluations by the deadlines.

Exams: Students will be given 3 exams that will cover lecture material and material from the textbook. The tests may include true-false, multiple-choice, matching, and short essay questions. Emphasis will be placed on assigned readings and material discussed in class. The purpose of the exams is to provide an opportunity for the students to demonstrate that they understand the theoretical concepts covered in the course.

Reflection Paper: Students will be required to write two 2-page papers in which they discuss group aspects and applications that have been observed in their group work experience. Each paper should be Times New Roman, size 12 font, and should have 1” margins. Each paper is worth 50 points. A detailed assignment guideline will be provided for each assignment

Assignment breakdown of points

Graded Items	Points Possible	Your Score
Introduction Speeches	Credit/No Credit	
Group Puzzle Speech	50	
Puzzle Outline (Individual/Group)	15	
Informative Speech	50	
Informative Outlines (Individual/Group)	25	
Persuasive Speech	100	
Persuasive Outline (Individual/Group)	50	
Case Study Presentation	70	
Peer Evaluation (2 @ 50)	100	
Reflection Papers (2 @ 50)	100	
Participation/ Peer Critiques	100	
Exam 1	100	
Exam 2	100	
Exam 3	100	
Total Points Possible	960	

The following numerical guidelines will be used in the assignment of final grades.

960-864 = A
863-768 = B
767-672 = C
671-576 = D
575 or less = F

The instructor reserves the right to increase points for students who are on the margin; this will be done on the basis of attitude and participation throughout the semester and is solely at the discretion of the instructor.

Attendance Policy and Participation Points: Due to the nature of this course, attendance is important. Roll will be taken at each class session. I will drop anyone who misses the first day of class. I will also drop anyone who misses the second day of class. Per college policy I can drop any student who misses 4 class periods. If a student misses 4 classes prior to the drop date I will drop that student. Roll will be taken at each class session. Class points will be drastically reduced by absences. I will subtract 25 points for each absence. Each student is allowed 2 absences. I will no longer investigate or decide if an absence is excused or not. Every student has two freebies – after that I will deduct 25 points for EVERY absence regardless of reason. These points will come from your participation points first. If your absences exceed the participation points I will deduct points from your reflection paper or peer points. Arriving late to class and leaving early are unacceptable and will result in a reduction of participation points. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their absences. If you know in advance that you will be absent please inform the instructor so that accommodations can be made for speeches or quizzes prior to your absence. Also understand that notifying the instructor does not excuse the absence and any assignment due during that absence MUST be made up prior to not after the fact. Please be aware that I WILL enforce this policy and will not make exceptions! It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences and tardies. I will not give warnings.

It is your responsibility to keep track of your grade including assignments in class. At any time during the semester you may check blackboard to see where you stand. If you are absent it is your responsibility to find out all announcements made during your absence. PLEASE do not approach the professor and ask, "What did I miss?" Instead, make an effort to go to her office hours or ask another student for missed assignments/announcements. In class group activities CANNOT be made up. Missing class during any graded in class activity will result in lower points. Please note that work schedules, lost keys, car trouble, parking trouble, or vacations are not excused absences. If however you know in advance that you will be absent please inform the instructor so that accommodations can be made for speeches or quizzes prior to your absence. Also understand that notifying the instructor does not excuse the absence.

Late and Missed Assignments

I will NOT accept any emailed, unstapled, or handwritten papers. I have a very strict policy on late work. ALL WORK IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASS – DO NOT COME IN LATE AND ASSUME I WILL ACCEPT YOUR WORK.

Speeches: This class fulfills the oral component for general education requirements. Therefore four speeches are REQUIRED! I take this very seriously. Students who miss a speech will deplete all participation points and will earn a 0 on the missed speech, which will cause the student to only be able to earn a D in the course overall. **I do not allow any late speeches due the Group element – they cannot be made up.** If the group is unable to present on the assigned date they will take a 0. Groups must go on without the absent member. Mathematically students who miss a speech would have a difficult time passing this course. If you are more than 15 minutes late on the day you are scheduled to speak you will not be allowed to give your speech. The door will be locked when speeches begin to avoid interruption. After you complete your speech you are required to stay until class is dismissed. If you give your speech and leave you will be receive a 0 on the speech. Keep this in mind and do all four of the graded speeches.

Participation Points: Since this class is interactive your participation is vital to the classroom environment. Since it is a group communication class your group members will be relying on you to be present in class. Each student is expected to attend class each day and be prepared to discuss ideas, share opinions relevant to interpersonal communication and participate in class activities. Please come to class prepared to engage the material. (In other words READ the assigned chapters prior to their lecture date on the syllabus). Absences, late arrivals and leaving early, in addition to a lack of participation in class discussions and activities will adversely affect a student's participation score. Participation points are strictly given on days with no speeches or quizzes. Please note that your participation points can be completely exhausted on the basis of attendance or if you miss any assignments. Any student who misses a presentation will forfeit ALL participation points.

Outlines: Outlines must be submitted to me one class day prior to the first assigned speech date. No one will be allowed to give their speech without giving the instructor their outline ON TIME. So without an outline that student will receive a 0 on their outline, speech and reflection grade. Keep in mind this affects the individual AND it will also affect the group. Outline format will be taught in class. All outlines must be typed and in the proper format. Group outlines must contain outlines from each individual – students whose work is not included in the group outline will not be allowed to speak.

Reference Pages: are required on two speeches, the informative and the persuasive speech. They must be typed and in APA style format. If you do not submit a reference page you will NOT give a speech. These speeches are to be properly researched with the use of appropriate sources. Group reference pages must contain sources to support each individual speaker. Students who do not submit their sources on the group reference page will not be allowed to speak.

Additional Point Assignments: On rare occasions extra credit assignments may arise. They will be briefly announced in class and written on the board. It is the students responsibility to find out more information from the instructor and to have them turned in by the deadline. Extra credit is not to take the place of other work. It will only be accepted from those students who have submitted and attempted all assignments. Students with excessive absences will not be allowed to submit any extra credit. Students who miss a speech cannot submit any extra credit.

I am willing to look at your work and give you feedback as long as you get it to me at least 3 full days before it is due.

COMM. 8 – Fall 2015 Tentative Schedule

The schedule may change at the discretion of the instructor.

*Note: Students should read the scheduled chapter for the class **before** they come to class.*

Date	Topic	Required Reading	
8/11	Tuesday	Course Introduction & Syllabus	
8/13	Thursday	Communication Apprehension/ 5 Canons of Rhetoric Introduce Introduction Speech	Chapter 12 Bring Introduction Speech guidelines to class
8/18	Tuesday	Introduction Speeches	
8/20	Thursday	Communication Apprehension Group Availability form needed	
8/25	Tuesday	Introduction to group discussion Groups assigned	Chapter 1
8/27	Thursday	Understanding the Group as a system	Chapter 2
9/1	Tuesday	Team building- Part 1 Puzzle Speech Assigned	
9/3	Thursday	<i>Group Movie Case Study</i> Class Case Study	Bring Case Study guidelines to class
9/8	Tuesday	<i>Group Movie Case Study</i>	Bring movie case study handout
9/10	Thursday	Exam 1 Review/ Group Work time	
9/15	Tuesday	Exam 1 Ch. 1, 12, 2	
9/17	Thursday	Puzzle Speeches	Outlines Due
9/22	Tuesday	Puzzle Speeches	
9/24	Thursday	Puzzle Speeches	
9/29	Tuesday	Chapter 3 Informative Speech Assigned	Chapter 3
10/1	Thursday	Case Study 1/ Chapter 4	Chapter 4
10/6	Tuesday	Case Study 2/ Team Building Day 2	
10/8	Thursday	Chapter 7 and 8	Chapter 7 and 8
10/13	Tuesday	Library Day/ Group Research Day	
10/15	Thursday	Informative Presentations	Outlines Due
10/20	Tuesday	Informative Presentations	
10/22	Thursday	Informative Presentations Exam 2 Review	Peer Evaluations Due
10/27	Tuesday	Group Meeting Day	Check Meeting times on Blackboard
10/29	Thursday	Exam 2- Ch 3,4 7	

11/3	Tuesday	Chapter 5	Chapter 5
11/5	Thursday	Case Study 3/ Chapter 10	
11/10	Tuesday	Case Study 4/ Chapter 11	
11/12	Thursday	Case Study 5/ Chapter 6	
11/17	Tuesday	Case Study 6/ Final Group Meeting	
11/19	Thursday	NO CLASS- Outside research day	
11/24	Tuesday	Persuasive Presentations	Outlines due
12/1	Thursday	Persuasive Presentations	
12/3	Tuesday	Persuasive Presentations Peer Evaluations 2 due	
12/8- 12/10	Finals Week	See Below: Exam #3 Ch. 5,6,10,11	

Final Exam

TTh 8	Thursday, December 10 th	3:00-4:50 pm
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