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Communication ~~ Reedley College ~~ Spring 2015

**Communication 8: Group Communication**

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Office Hours: MW 9:30-10:45 am

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| Young-et-al | Required Materials:   * Textbook: Pedersen, D.J., Philllips, G. M., Wood, J.T., young, K. S. (2007). Group Discussion: A Practical Guide to Participation and Leadership.   4th Edition.  **ISBN10:** 1577664752  **ISBN13:** 9781577664758   * Four scantron forms (882) |

**Group Communication Class 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. (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.

***(Note: subject advisory eligibility for English 1A)***

**Student Rights**

Students 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 caught cheating or plagiarizing in my class will receive a zero on the assignment and any assignment connected to that assignment (e.g. cheating or plagiarism on a speech will result in a zero on the speech, the outline, the reference page, the reflection and on all audience evaluations). Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will also forfeit all participation points, all audience evaluation points and will not be allowed any extra credit points.

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 contact the instructor as soon as possible.

**Classroom Deportment**

Students must respect the rights of the other students in the class.  The exploration of controversial ideas is an essential component of this class. Students who are not respectful 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. Cell phones should be turned off before coming to class. If a student interrupts a speech for any reason other than a severe emergency (this includes cell phones ringing/buzzing or entering the room during a speech) they will be confronted by the instructor and their speech grade will be lowered one letter grade. Cell phone usage during class will result in a loss of participation points

**Group Responsibility**

Members have the right to remove a group member for irresponsible behavior. 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. Procedures will be discussed in class as to how a group member can be “*voted off the island*” – 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. Any group member who does not have their work completed when an assignment is due will be dismissed from the group by the instructor.

Due to the nature of this course your work is due to the instructor on the due dates not to each other. If your group has to assemble the work prior to submitting, then the group will have to set due dates PRIOR to the instructor due dates. Group members can turn in the work that is done by responsible members to save their grades and the members who did not give their work to the group will be eliminated by the instructor

**Student Learning 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 and persuasive

presentations.

9. utilize practical assignments and exercises that will reinforce the theoretical concepts taught in this course.

**Assignments**

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| **Graded Item** | **Points Possible** | **Score** |
| Individual Introduction Speeches | 25 |  |
| Individual Ceremonial Speeches | 25 |  |
| In-Class Group Activity | 50 |  |
| In-Class Group Activity | 50 |  |
| Group Commercial \*\* | 100 |  |
| Special Topics Group Presentation\*\* | 100 |  |
| Final Research Group Presentation\*\* | 100 |  |
| Individual Reflection Paper\*\* | 100 |  |
| Group Research Paper\*\* | 100 |  |
| Participation | 100 |  |
| Quiz 1 | 25 |  |
| Quiz 2 | 25 |  |
| Midterm | 100 |  |
| Final | 100 |  |
| Total Points Possible | 1000 |  |

***Mandatory assignments are indicated with \*\*, these assignments are REQUIRED in order to take the final exam.***

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

900-1000   =    A  
800-899     =    B  
700-799     =    C  
600-699     =    D  
599- 0        =    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.

Students can email the instructor during the semester to get their current grade. The instructor does NOT give grade checks the last two weeks of school. Please keep this form to track your grades during the semester.

“Per Title V Regulation 58170(e), students must be referred to academic support services by counselors or instructors. With this statement on my course syllabus, I am referring any students in my class in need of academic support to tutorial services. Tutorial services may include: the tutorial center, writing center or the communication lab. Referral reason: Mastering the content, study skills, and basic skills of this course is aided by the use of trained peer tutors.”

**Late and Missed Assignments**

***I will NOT accept any emailed or handwritten papers.***

***I have a very strict policy on late work.***

***ALL WORK IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASS.***

Attendance**:** 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 15 points for each absence**. Understanding that perfect attendance can only happen in a perfect world **each student is allowed 2 excused absences**. These points will come from your participation points first. 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.**

Speeches/Group Presentations**:** This class fulfills the ORAL component for the general education requirements –Missing a speech means A BIG FAT ZERO. I do not allow any late speeches due to the Group element – they cannot be made up. If a group is unable to present on their assigned date the entire group will be given a 0 on that assignment. Group members absent on the day of presentations will receive a 0 unless some prior arrangement has been made with me. The group however, must go on without the absent member. ***There will be 2 individual speeches; one at the beginning of the semester which will serve as an introductory speech and one at the end of the semester which will serve as a final reflection speech. As for the group speeches, there will be three (3) major group presentations this semester which include the Special Topics Group Presentation, Group Commercial Presentation, and the Group Research Presentation.* Students must dress professionally for the three main group presentations. There are absolutely no makeup's for a missed group presentation/speech.**

In Class Activities**:** Will be assigned in class at random. That is why it is important for you to show up to class. If for some reason you are unable to show up to class and I assign an activity that day, you will automatically ***forfeit your 50 points*** for that particular assignment.

Individual Reflection Essay/Group Research Essay: Instructions regarding both of these writing assignments will be described thoroughly in class. Further instructions will be available via Blackboard.

Participation Points: This class is interactive; participation is vital to the classroom environment. Each student is expected to attend class each day and be prepared to discuss ideas, and participate in class activities. Please come to class prepared to engage the material.  Absences, late arrivals and leaving early, in addition to a lack of participation in class discussions and activities will adversely affect participation points. Please note that your participation points can be completely exhausted on the basis of attendance or missed assignments.

Quizzes: Students are responsible to bring their OWN Scantron – students without a scantron will not be allowed to take quizzes. Be on time or get a zero.

Midterm/Final: The Midterm and Final are held in the same classroom but not necessarily at the same time. Please note schedule on calendar so that you are aware of the time and date of your final. DO NOT BE LATE on the day of the midterm/final. I will NOT allow anyone to take the midterm/final prior to finals week without a documented medical excuse. Accommodations will not be made for vacation or travel reasons. Again students are required to bring their own scantron to the final. Finals will not be given to anyone who has been caught plagiarizing or has exceeded the absences for this course as detailed in the attendance portion.

**My Teaching Philosophy**

**I understand there will be a time in which you will have to miss class: this does not mean you can approach me after class or during my office hours and have me reiterate what lesson that was just taught. It is your responsibility as a COLLEGE STUDENT to get class notes from a peer and study the chapter/content that was assigned for that specific day.**

**CELL PHONE POLICY**

**As stated earlier, cell phone usage during class will result in a loss of participation points**. **IF YOUR PHONE GOES OFF DURING CLASS, YOU WILL HAVE TO GIVE A 2-MINUTE IMPROMPTU SPEECH AT THE TOPIC OF MY CHOICE.**

**COMM 8 SPRING 2015 SCHEDULE**

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|  |  | **January** | **Required Reading** |
| 1/12 | Monday | Course introduction |  |
| 1/14 | Wednesday | Intro to Group Discussion & the Standard Agenda/ Individual Speeches Assigned | Chapter 1 |
| 1/19 | Monday | Martin Luther King, Jr Day observed (no class) |  |
| 1/21 | Wednesday | **Individual Speeches** |  |
| 1/26 | Monday | **Individual Speeches** & Goldberg Exercise |  |
| 1/28 | Wednesday | Understanding the Group as a System | Chapter 2 |
|  |  | **February** |  |
| 2/2 | Monday | Understanding the Group as a System (Continued) | Chapter 2 |
| 2/4 | Wednesday | Establishment of Groups, Group Commercial Assignment |  |
| 2/9 | Monday | Exploring the Group System | Chapter 3 |
| 2/11 | Wednesday | Exploring the Group System (Continued) | Chapter 3 |
| 2/16 | Monday | Washington Day observed (no class) |  |
| 2/18 | Wednesday | **Group Commercial Presentations**  Individual Reflection Paper Assigned |  |
| 2/23 | Monday | Individual Choices that Affect the System | Chapter 4 |
| 2/25 | Wednesday | Individual Choices that Affect the System (Continued) | Chapter 4 |
|  |  | **March** |  |
| 3/2 | Monday | Making Effective Choices When Leading  **Individual Reflection Papers Due** | Chapter 5 |
| 3/4 | Wednesday | Making Effective Choices When Leading  New Groups Assigned & Special Topics Group Presentation Explained | Chapter 5 |
| 3/9 | Monday | Creating a Constructive Climate and Managing Conflict | Chapter 6 |
| 3/11 | Wednesday | **Special Topics Group Presentation** |  |
| 3/16 | Monday | **Special Topics Group Presentation** |  |
| 3/18 | Wednesday | \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***Midterm**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* | Chapters 1-6 |
| 3/23 | Monday | Standard Agenda Step 1: Understanding the Charge | Chapter 7 |
| 3/25 | Wednesday | Standard Agenda Step 2: Understanding and Phrasing the question | Chapter 8 |
| 3/30-4/2 | Monday | **Spring Break**  **Final Research Groups Assigned via Blackboard** |  |

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|  |  | **April** | **Required Reading** |
| 4/6 | Monday | Standard Agenda Step 3: Fact-Finding | Chapter 9 |
| 4/8 | Wednesday | Recap of Steps 1-3 & Final Research Group Presentation Assigned |  |
| 4/13 | Monday | Standard Agenda Step 4: Settling Criteria and Limitations | Chapter 10 |
| 4/15 | Wednesday | Standard Agenda Step 5: Discovering and Selecting Solutions | Chapter 11 |
| 4/20 | Monday | Standard Agenda Step 6: Preparing and Presenting the Final Report | Chapter 12 |
| 4/22 | Wednesday | Recap of Steps 4-6 & Final Research Group Meeting |  |
| 4/27 | Monday | Freebie Day for EVERYONE. USE THIS TIME TO GET READY FOR FINAL GROUP RESEARCH PAPER/PRESENTATION |  |
| 4/29 | Wednesday | **Final Group Presentation**  **Group Research Paper Due at the Beginning of Class** |  |
|  |  | **May** |  |
| 5/4 | Monday | **Final Group Presentation**  **Group Research Paper Due at the Beginning of Class** |  |
| 5/6 | Wednesday | Fun with Individual Ceremonial Speeches |  |
| 5/11 | Monday | Fun with Individual Ceremonial Speeches |  |
| 5/13 | Wednesday | Review for Final | Bring Notes/Books |
| MAY | 18th – 22th | Finals Week (Check Schedule Below) |  |

Final will include Chapters 6-12

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| Your Class | Date Assigned For Final | Time Assigned For Final |
| Comm 8 MW 11 am | Monday May 18th | 11 am to 12:50 pm |

\*\*Note: Some changes to schedule throughout the semester may occur.