Small Group Communication HONORS
Spring 2018 @ 11-12:15 – McKibben 351
Languages, Cultures and Communication
Communication Studies
www.sfasu.edu/commstudies

Professor: R. Tyler Spradley, Ph.D.
2013-2015 Jim Towns Endowed Professor of Mentoring
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Office Hours: 8:30-11:00 TR Also by appointment

Class Times: 11 TR, 12:30 TR, Online

Course Materials:

Additional Text via Steen Library Online:

Course Description: Theories, principles and skills involved in group communication. Experiential focus upon problem analysis, problem solving, and decision-making.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:
Understand what constitutes and characterizes a small group.
Understand different types of small groups and the dynamics and functions of each.
Understand and demonstrate small group communication competencies related to discussion, problem solving, decision making, and presenting.
Recognize and address challenges to small group communication.
Understand the role of diversity in small group communication.
Understand and demonstrate roles within small groups.

University Core Curriculum Program Learning Outcomes (See Last Section of Syllabus):
Critical Thinking Skills - to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
Communication Skills - to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
Teamwork - to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
Personal Responsibility - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making
Communication Studies Program Learning Outcomes:

**Objective 1—Theory Knowledge:** Students majoring in Communication Studies should display comprehension of major communication theories.

**Objective 2—Theory Application:** Students majoring in Communication Studies will apply the major theories in the field to communicate effectively in a variety of settings.

**Objective 3—Research Methods:** Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to use and demonstrate understanding of appropriate methodology in critical, humanistic, or social scientific paradigms in examining research questions in communication.

**Objective 4—Diversity and Freedom of Expression:** Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to recognize the central role of diversity and freedom of expression in a global community.

**Objective 5—Constitutive Nature of Communication:** Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the constitutive nature of communication, which includes forces that enable and constrain communication such as technology, ethics, and organizational life.

**Objective 6—Higher Order Thinking:** Students majoring in Communication Studies will be able to demonstrate oral and written competence in logical and critical thinking.

**Governing Policies:** The following policies will apply toward classroom decorum.

1. **ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

2. **COURSE ADAPTATIONS:** To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

3. **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at
least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

4. D2L AND ONLINE COURSEWORK: ALL students are expected to use D2L in this course to perform and keep up with graded activities and scheduled readings. Students should sign in at http://d2l.sfasu.edu using the same username and password as MySFA.

5. GRADE WITHHELD POLICY (Semester Grades A-54): II. Withheld Grades: Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp

6. ATTENDANCE AND MAKE-UP WORK: Students are expected to attend every class meeting. Generally, the following policy will apply to absences and make-up work:
   1. For evaluated activities such as celebrations and writing, absences will NOT be allowed. You will be allowed to make up the activity only when conditions are clearly beyond your control and are convincingly documented. If you do not have valid documentation for the absence, you will receive a ZERO for the assignment. Even if you are allowed to make up the activity you will still be counted absent for the class day.
   2. There is no provision for excused absences for class meetings that do not involve graded activities. Your professor will not hear excuses for these days, nor will he accept documentation. You will simply be miss and risk knowledge and points loss.
   3. Attendance can add to your final course grade, including, but not limited to Daily and Service Learning Involvement points. Student who miss class are likely to not pass.

Evaluation: In addition to attendance, students will be evaluated using exams and written work. Each evaluated activity must be completed and turned in by the scheduled class meeting time. Your professor throughout the semester will provide additional instructions. You may earn up to 1000 points total. The following indicates which letter grades correspond to earned points:

| 1000 – 900 points | A |
| 899 – 800 points | B |
| 799 – 700 points | C |
| 699 – 600 points | D |
| 599 and less | F |

Tests: There will be two exams throughout the semester. Exams will be completed via D2L on the assigned dates. Each exam will have multiple-choice and essay questions and student will have 60 minutes to complete the exam. Questions must be responded to before moving to the next question and cannot be returned to after moving forward. Tests will be worth a total of 400 points.

Test 1 200 points
Test 2 200 points
**Graded Activities:** Graded Activities will include quizzes, single page application essays, group projects, and in-class exercises. Instructions will be provided during the semester. **Activities will be worth a total of 600 points.**

Students should always contact me using @jacks.sfasu.edu email or personal email at rspradley@sfasu.edu. Using D2L will result in delayed replies.

**Tentative Course Calendar:** The course calendar should be used by students to see when daily readings, activities, and exams are scheduled. The **calendar is subject to change** based on student learning progress and unforeseen occurrences. In the event the calendar changes, announcements will be emailed to the student’s SFA email and posted on D2L announcements. **See COURSE TIMELINE.**

**COM 215 COURSE TIMELINE**

Quizzes can be given on any day we meet in the classroom or elsewhere.

1/16: Introduction and Syllabus
1/18: What is Communication? What is a group? – Wheelan CH 1
   Components of Small Group Communication
   Groups Assigned
   **Group Project 1:** Breaking the Ice (50 points)

1/23: What is a team? – Wheelan CH 2 & 3 and Yemm CH 2
   **Class Exercise:** Characteristics of an Effective Team (30 points)
1/25: The Small Group/Team Socialization Process
   Small Group Member Communication and Personality Traits
   Inclusion in Teams
   **Class Exercise:** The Socialization Model (30 points)

1/30: Small Group Decision Making and Problem Solving
   Effective Organizational Support Checklist
   **Group Project 2:** Solving a Problem Together as a Group (50 points)
2/1: How do high performance teams function? - Wheelan CH 4
   High Reliability Teams
   **Class Exercise:** Performing at High Levels (30 points)

2/6: Facing the challenges of leading your team – Yemm CH 1
   Understanding team roles and balance – Yemm CH 3
   **Class Exercise:** Checking Team Balance (30 points)
2/8: Effective team members and leaders – Wheelan CH 5 & 6 and Yemm CH 4

2/13: The Ideal Team Player: The Fable
   Lencioni pp. 1-152
2/15: The Ideal Team Player: The Fable – Part 2
   Lencioni pp. 1-152
   **Group Project 3:** Balancing Roles (50 points)

2/20: The Ideal Team Player: The Model
   Lencioni pp. 153-173
2/22: The Ideal Team Player: The Model
   Lencioni pp. 174-216
2/27: Models of Small Group Development - Wheelan CH 7, 8, & 9
   Group Stages and Phases
3/1: **Group Project 4**: Case Study Analysis (50 points)

3/6: **Group Project 4**: Case Study Analysis (50 points)
3/8: **Online Class**
   *Exam 1 – Complete the exam on D2L before 11pm. (200 points)*

3/10-3/18: **SPRING BREAK**

3/20: Context, Composition, Competencies, and Chang: Developing High Performing Teams
   Sustaining high performance – Wheelan CH 10
   **Class Exercise**: Team Performance Checklist (30 points)
3/22: Managing Conflict in Groups and Teams

3/27: Developing Procedures and Measures for Your Team
   Setting the direction for your team – Yemm CH 5
   Monitoring and controlling performance – Yemm CH 6
   **Class Exercise**: Setting the Direction (30 points)

3/29: **EASTER HOLIDAY BREAK**

4/3: Communicating with your team – Yemm CH 7
   **Class Exercise**: How Good of a Listener are You (30 points)
4/5: Sharpening the Mind of the Team (Making the Team, 5)

4/10: **Online Class** (30 points)
   **Class Exercise**: Log on to D2L for Class Assignment: Due before 11pm.
4/12: Getting the most from your team – Yemm CH 8
   Handling challenges within the team – Yemm CH 9

4/17: Mastering Innovation and Creativity in Teams (Making the Team, 5)
4/19: Virtual Teams – Wheelan CH 11

4/24: Social Capital and Networking Across Teams
   **Assessing Your Group/Conclusions Instructions**
4/26: Recent Research – Wheelan CH 12
   Pulling it all together – Yemm CH 10
   **Class Exercise**: Where do go from here? (30 points)

5/1: Last Class Day for COM 215
   Team Reflection Paper Due (50 points)
5/3: **STUDY DAY**

5/5-5/8: **Exam 2 - Complete the exam on D2L before 11pm on 5/8. (200 points)**

**Quizzes can be given on any day we meet in the classroom or elsewhere.**

**Important University Dates**
1/19 – Last Add/Drop Day
1/31 – 12th Class Day
3/7 – Mid-Semester
3/21 – Last Day to Drop or Withdraw without WP or WF
4/23 – Last Day to Withdraw