

# CMST 2064: Small Group Communication Summer 2015

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**Office Hours:** M-TH 10:15 – 10:45 am, or happily by appointment ;-)

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**Textbook:** Engleberg, Isa N. and Dianna R. Wynn. *Working in Groups, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.* Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, 2013.

Other materials and articles via Moodle

\*\*\*This is a service learning course\*\*\*

We will be working with the LSU Food Pantry throughout the duration of the course.

Flexibility is key in working with a client in this situation as it is a shortened summer course.

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will study how to work well in groups by focusing on its communication components: creating workable goals, the stages of group development, task and social maintenance roles, membership diversity, leadership, motivation, listening, conflict resolution, problem solving, critical thinking and argumentation, planning and conducting meetings, and issues of ethical behavior.

## COURSE GOALS

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- Identify and apply basic group communication concepts
- Demonstrate effective group interaction skills
- Identify and apply group communication strategies and skills that facilitate the achievement of group goals
- Identify and demonstrate essential group discussion strategies and skills
- Explain and apply the principles and practices of ethical communication
- Apply a variety of creative problem solving and critical thinking skills

## SERVICE LEARNING

This section of CMST 2064 will be taught as a service-learning class. Bringle and Hatcher (1995) describe service-learning as “a credit-bearing, educational, experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, and a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility”.

## LSU COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

Louisiana State University is an interactive community in which students, faculty, and staff together strive to pursue truth, advance learning, and uphold the highest standards of performance in an academic and social environment. It is a community that fosters individual development and the creation of bonds that transcend the time spent within its gates. To demonstrate my pride in LSU, as a member of its community, I will:

- Accept responsibility for my actions;
- Hold myself and others to the highest standards of academic, personal, and social integrity;
- Practice justice, equality, and compassion in human relations;
- Respect the dignity of all persons and accept individual differences;
- Respect the environment and the rights and property of others and the University;
- Contribute positively to the life of the campus and surrounding community; and
- Use my LSU experience to be an active citizen in an international and interdependent world.

The continued success of LSU depends on the faithful commitment by each community member to these, our basic principles.

## TECHNOLOGY USE

Recording of any type within the classroom is strictly prohibited without the permission of the instructor. Cellular phones and electronic devices (ipads, tablets, laptops) should be silent and not be disruptive at any time during class. If you use technology inappropriately (for personal use during class unrelated to course), you will be asked to leave the class.

## ASSIGNED COURSEWORK

To increase your communication effectiveness in groups, you are asked to complete reading assignments, writing assignments, and oral presentations. The course grade distribution is on a 1000 point scale where you earn points for completed assignments.

### Overview of Course Assignments and Point Values

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Class Discussion/Participation | 50 points  |
| Client Feedback                | 20 points  |
| Group Social Activity          | 30 points  |
| Quizzes/Participation          | 200 points |
| Meeting Facilitation           | 50 points  |
| Peer Reflection                | 50 points  |
| Campus Groups Coordination     | 100 points |
| Professional Outreach Material | 100 points |
| Client Video                   | 100 points |
| Group Event                    | 50 points  |
| Group Presentation/Paper       | 150 points |
| Final Reflection Paper         | 100 points |

### Grade Distribution = 1000 pt scale

A = 895 – 1000 pts

B = 795 – 894 pts

C = 695 – 794 pts

D = 595 – 694 pts

F = 594 and below

### General Grading Standards

A = Work is polished and represents exceptional achievement well above expectations.

B = Work contains noticeable flaws, but represents solid, praiseworthy achievement.

C = Work contains a distracting number of flaws, but represents adequate achievement.

D = Work is substantially marred by flaws and represents substandard achievement.

F = Work is fatally marred by flaws or is missing.

Grades: All grades will be posted to Moodle and all assignments will be returned in class. If you do not understand why you received a specific grade, you will have one week to ask for clarification. Grades will not be discussed the day they are returned, nor will they be discussed over the telephone or through email. If you would like to go over the assignment or have questions concerning the grade, please come by during my scheduled office hours or schedule an appointment.

Extra Credit: No extra credit will be offered for the course. If you want a good grade, focus on the completing the regularly assigned credit like a boss.

Attendance: Any absences from class will negatively affect your final grade, as you will miss information and in-class activities vital to the successful completion of your coursework. From PS-22: Class attendance is the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to attend all classes. A student who finds it necessary to miss class assumes responsibility for making up examinations, obtaining lecture notes, and otherwise compensating for what may have been missed. The course instructor will determine the validity of a student's reason(s) for absences and will assist those students who have valid reasons. Valid reasons for absences include:

1. Illness
2. Serious family emergency
3. Special curricular requirements such as judging trips or field trips
4. Court-imposed legal obligations such as subpoenas or jury duty
5. Military obligations
6. Serious weather conditions
7. Religious observances.
8. Participation in varsity athletic competitions or university musical events

The student is responsible for providing reasonable advance notification and appropriate documentation of the reason for the absence.

Participation/Quizzes: You are expected to participate in all class activities. Activities are graded according to the quality of the work you produce, by the standards derived from the topics covered in the course. Your participation grade will be negatively affected if you frequently fail to attend class, if you fail to read assigned material, if you fail to bring printed material with you to class, if you are disruptively using technology (this includes texting, wearing headphones, and surfing the web).

Quizzes are frequently given at the beginning of class and cannot be made up. If you arrive late you will not be given extra time to complete the quiz. It is your responsibility to arrive in class on time, despite the devious machinations of traffic, weather, and alarm clocks.

Assignments: Assignments to be turned in must be typed. This includes papers, outlines, or any other material assigned to be completed outside of class. Handwritten work will NOT be accepted. If you do not own a printer or computer, utilize the computer labs located on campus to complete your work. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late work **WILL NOT** be accepted.

If will not be able to attend class the day a written assignment or presentation is due, you will need to email me the assignment prior to the beginning of class as proof the assignment has been completed on time and provide a documented university approved excuse in order to turn in a paper copy and/or complete the presentation upon your return to class. See Attendance section (above) for university approved excuses.

Major Graded Assignment Overview: The following is a general overview of major assignments. More detailed prompts will be provided on Moodle outlining specific details of each assignment.

- *Social Activity* –For this assignment, students should meet with their group for a social activity outside of class. Then, each person is required to write a 1-page typed (double space, 12 pt font) reflection.
- *Client Video* – Each group will be required to make a group video about the LSU Food Pantry that would be suitable for the client to use to promote the food pantry. Each video should be approximately 2-3 minutes in length and professional for potential use by the client.
- *Quizzes/Participation* – Substantial quizzes will occur at random and unannounced since there are not exams as a part of this shortened summer course. Typically, near the beginning of class. Participation within this category refers to participation in class activities. For example, if we decide to have a rap battle in class between the groups, and you attempt to prove your skills as a lyrical master, whether good or bad, you receive credit for participation. If you refuse to participate, you do not.
- *Class Discussion Participation* – Over the course of the semester, we will frequently have discussions over materials. Class discussion participation is based on your contributions

to answering questions and engaging the class in an interesting conversation about the content being discussed. You will need to constructively participate 5 times over the course of the semester. Only 10 participation points can be earned each day.

- *Client Feedback* – The client will provide feedback based on your communication, interactions at client meetings, and completion of expectations of tasks. Your grade for this will be based on the client feedback.
- *Group Presentation/Paper* – At the end of the class, you will be expected to give a 10-20 minute presentation based on the work that you completed in your groups for the LSU Food Pantry. In addition, you will submit a 5-7 page paper for the group, reflecting on the tasks that you completed and working within the group, illustrating your knowledge and understanding of small group communication concepts.
- *Final Reflection Paper* – At the end of the semester you will write a 1 to 2 page self-performance review of your contributions to the group project. This will include the specifics of your performance within the group.
- *Peer-Performance Review* – You will anonymously review and rate yourself and the other members of your group based on their performance using their Self-Performance Reflection and your working knowledge of their contributions over the semester.
- *Meeting Facilitation* – In order to keep everyone on track throughout the semester, each person from the group will be required to present a 5 minute presentation on the status of their group goals. The presentation should address the previous meeting's goals, present accomplishments, and forward movement of your group. Include information you may need from other groups (if any) along with information you may need to give them. Meeting facilitation days will conclude with discussion about the current state of the projects and in class group work.

Plagiarism: Please see the Student Code of Conduct (an excerpt of which appears below)

6. Plagiarism is defined as the lack of citation or the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else's words, structure, ideas, or data. When a Student submits work as his/her own that includes the words, structure, ideas, or data of others, the source of this information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. Failure to identify any source (including interviews, surveys, etc.), published in any medium (including on the internet) or unpublished, from which words, structure, ideas, or data have been taken, constitutes plagiarism; Plagiarism also includes:
  - 6a. Falsifying or fabricating any information or citation in any academic exercise, work, speech, thesis, dissertation, test, or examination.
  - 6b. Submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructors; (from the [Student Code of Conduct](#) section 8.1.6)

The “I Hate to Work in Teams” Kind Confrontation Policy: I think this goes without saying, but please be aware that the grades I assign to your group's project paper and your presentation may

be the same for everyone in the group. Since each team member could be graded equally, regardless of her/his contributions to the project, I expect you to engage in “kind confrontation” with any member that the team perceives as not fulfilling commitments, missing team meetings, leaving early/arriving late, and not coming prepared. What is kind confrontation? It is the ability to deal with each other directly, assertively, tactfully and effectively to insure that everyone does her/his share of the work and fulfills commitments to the team. If it is determined by members of the team that another member is not fulfilling her/his commitments, then I expect you to kindly confront that member, either one-on-one or as a team, to discuss this, prior to bringing the issue to my attention. If this kind confrontation is not effective, then I expect you to let me know immediately if someone is not responding constructively to your group’s efforts to integrate, motivate and support her/him. Please be advised that once the issue is brought to my attention, then I will kindly confront that team member. I reserve the right to privately counsel and, if necessary, remove and discipline (with a failing grade for this assignment) any member who is unwilling or unable to meet her/his obligations to the group. If you choose not to engage in kind confrontation and choose to carry that member along, you have nobody to blame but yourself.

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitations Act of 1973 states: “If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive the accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

This syllabus included information from the syllabus of Dr. Amy Fannin and Wade Walker.