

# Instructor's Course Policies

## Sample Syllabus for Small Group Processes: Communication 224

COMMUNICATION 224  
SMALL GROUP PROCESSES  
FALL 2002

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*STUDENTS, I VALUE YOUR VOICE, DIVERSE THOUGHTS, CREATIVITY,  
INTEGRATION, AND YOUR ORIGINALITY THROUGHOUT THE COURSE!*

Instructor: Tara Perry Phone: 650-2308  
Class: T/TH 10-11:50am Office Hours: T & R 2:10-4:10  
Email: tara.perry@wwu.edu  
Instructor's Web site: <http://www.ac.wwu.edu/~perryt/>  
Blackboard: <http://mywestern.wwu.edu> (see ATUS for questions)

"The real purpose of books is to trap the mind into doing it's own thinking," Chris Morley

**Note:** The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course syllabus throughout the quarter. Therefore, it is important to attend class regularly. All students are required by WWU to be present throughout the quarter and finals week. I will not permit ANYONE to leave early nor will I give students assignments or exams in place of the final or assigned work.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the dynamics of human interaction and diversity in small group settings. Group tasks will include the development of problem-solving, decision-making, diversity skills, and critical thinking skills. The following will be learned in-class and through direct service-learning in the community. Students will learn how to be more effective members of small groups in various situations. The class is designed to give students a diverse perspective to small group processes. Topics covered in this course include leadership, effect of culture on small group communication, diversity, managing conflict, group discussion and observation, and small group as a system.

### COURSE GOAL

The overall goal of the course is to provide students with the needed concepts, theories, and skills to be effective communicators in a variety of small groups. Students should be able to apply the class readings, direct service-learning experience, and various assignments to many real life settings. Following this goal, students will have the communicative ability to work in diverse small groups and apply the professionalism learned.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire skills that contribute to successful small group participation and satisfaction.
2. To improve critical thinking, problem-solving, diversity skills, and decision-making skills in small groups in class and out of class.
3. To develop an understanding of current research, theories, service-learning, and principles of small group processes to provide the basis of effective application.
4. To be able to adapt to diverse group settings.
5. To gain direct hands on experience by working in small groups with citizens of the community.

### REQUIRED TEXT & MATERIALS

- Brillhart, J. K., Galanes, G. & J., Adams, K. (2001). Effective Group Discussion: Theory and practice, 10th Ed., New York: McGraw-Hill. (Bring to class daily)
- Assigned hand-outs by the instructor
- One 3-ring binder notebook and dividers for each major section
- Professional attire is required for presentations such as dress pants, polished shoes, ties, skirt, dress shirts & blouses all ironed. No sports socks, jeans, khakis, no hats, or dirty shoes. Hair must also be well groomed etc (this will be needed for in class graded presentations (No EXCEPTIONS). Purchase or borrow an outfit ASAP. This attire is required for the final presentations and progress reports.  
Semi-professional attire is required for discussion leaders.
- Knowledge of APA style (American Psychological Association)
- Positive attitude :)
- Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the instructor and Office of Student Life during the first week of class of any accommodation(s) needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable. All accommodations must be approved through the Director of Disability Resources for Students, David Brunner, Office of Student Life, 650-3844.

## **GRADE DISTRIBUTION (TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS)**

A = 350-322

A- = 321-315

B+ = 314-305

B = 304-294

B- = 293-280

C+ = 279-266

C = 265-259

C- = 258-245

D+ = 244-235

D = 234-223

D- = 222-210

F = 209-0

## **GRADING**

Every effort will be made to grade and return course materials within a week of their completion. Research papers will take extended time to grade. All assignments given to the instructor need to be stapled. The instructor will not be responsible for unstapled papers. It is the student's responsibility to keep extra copies of all turned in and graded assignments.

Chapter Discussion Leaders 25

Service-Learning Progress Reports (oral/written) 25

1 @ 10

1 @ 15

Movie Analysis 20

Paper (Impact of Diversity in Small Groups) 45

Participation (all in class exercises, article readings, see notes) 40

Service-Learning Group Presentation 125

Project completion & professionalism (50pts)

Individual Team Evaluation (20 pts)

1 Cohesive Group Outline (30 pts)

Professional attire (10 pts)

Oral Team Presentation (40 pts)

Exam (1) 70

Total Points: 350

### ***Goals of the Direct Service-Learning Project:***

Note: You are to implement small group communication concepts from class in every aspect of your service-learning experience and other situations. You are representing WWU therefore your performance at the S.L. agency must be professional. You are to work at the service-learning organization in your small group by providing service to citizens the agency serves. You are required to take theories learned and apply them daily. You are providing a service to the organization (final project/presentation) and the organization is giving you the opportunity to gain experience and apply the small group theories to construct a final project.

- To productively work with a service-learning organization as a small group.
- To develop a growing partnership with your contact person and those the agency serves.
- To gain hands on experience with the community and gain knowledge of diversity.  
To gather information on the agency, mission, vision, structural chart, articles at or prior to the first meeting.
- To identify communication styles, leadership, conflict management, and group formation.
- To provide clear communication between yourself, your contact employer, the instructor, needs, deadlines, goals, and daily concern.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

Complete readings by the first class meeting of each day. Discussion leaders will be responsible for presenting on their assigned day. Students are responsible for all chapters, articles, and chapters that may not be discussed. Each leader should discuss how the chapter or article best relates to your service-learning organization experience and/or personal experience. Forms to accompany assignments can be retrieved on blackboard. Students are responsible for all forms discussed. Keep in mind that chapters are not read in order, therefore pay close attention to the schedule.

All cell phones MUST be turned off before entering my classroom

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