

Comm 6233: Small Group Process
Fall 2016: 3:00-5:50 Tuesdays

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Office Hours:
T 1-2:30
or by arrangement

Course Objectives:

- 1) To introduce students to many of the primary areas of research in small group communication and behaviors. The primary focus of this survey course will be on intra-group (within group) communication, although some readings relate to external group communication.
- 2) To provide students with the opportunity to pursue an area of interest in small group communication in depth. Since the course is survey course, there will be more breadth than depth in the class, but through the research proposal students will obtain more depth.
- 3) To enable students to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the complexity of group processes.
- 4) To provide students with resources and materials for teaching undergraduate courses in small group communication.

Course Readings:

Packet of readings: A series of required readings have been selected for the course. A list of these is provided in the daily/weekly schedule below. They are a mixture of classic pieces, current studies, and review articles.

In addition, for certain dates/topics, students will be assigned one of two readings or find their own additional reading to bring to class. Those readings should be recent articles—2012 or newer, and probably studies rather than review articles. They should not be articles read for some other class.

Undergraduate Textbook (optional): It is recommended that you supplement the readings with an undergraduate textbook. I have some very old ones available if you do not have access to one. This will give you a sense of topics we don't cover, of the way primary research gets translated into textbooks, and help you prepare to teach an undergraduate class in group communication.

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you have special needs covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact me for assistance. If you have additional needs, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 405-325-3852.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Graduate students are expected to follow the University of Oklahoma Integrity Guidelines. According to its code, academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism,

fabrication, fraud, destruction, bribery or intimidation, assisting others in violating the code, or attempting to engage in such activities. Of particular concern for graduate students is providing appropriate citations for ideas or information from credible sources. Failure to provide citations is a form of plagiarism. Cheating is an extreme form of plagiarism. Copying the majority or entirety of someone else's work and presenting it as your own is cheating. If discovered, this will result in the individual being turned in for academic dishonesty and may result in failure in the course.

Course Evaluation:

Participation:	10%
Abstract/Summaries:	20%
2 In-Class Essays:	30% (15% each)
Research Proposal	40%
Rationale:	5%
RQ/H	5%
Final	30%

Assignment Descriptions:

Participation: You are expected to be actively involved in participate in the discussion each class period. This includes making comments, asking questions, providing examples, etc. Your participation should demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings and are willing to share appropriate personal experiences in groups. You are expected to be talkative when we meet!

Abstract/Summaries: For one required article each week (except for first /last weeks), write a brief summary of its key concepts to demonstrate your understanding of the article. In addition, for any days when you select your own additional reading, write a second summary of that article. These summaries should be **no longer than ½ page** per article and shorter if appropriate (single space, normal fonts and margins). These are a bit longer than the abstracts for most articles. You may include evaluative comments, but this is not meant to be a thorough critique of the articles. These are due to be turned into the dropbox in Canvas at the beginning of class on the day we discuss the articles. One of the goals of these is to learn to be concise. It is a valuable writing skill.

Two Essays: Twice during the semester, there will be an essay to write to demonstrate your ability to synthesize some of the materials you have read. These may include a variety of writing activities including applying course information to case studies, personal experiences, and so forth. These will likely be in-class, but may be take home, depending on how the class develops. These essays are open note and open book but these are timed activities so that you will not have much time to examine your notes.

Research Proposal:

1. Choose a small group communication topic of interest to you. It does not have to be a topic that is on the syllabus. You will need to narrow the topic considerably. For example, "small group leadership" is too broad, but might be your starting point. Make sure that the topic includes **small groups** and **communication**. It is easy to get on a tangent.

2. Review as much relevant literature on the topic as possible. Your course readings should be good leads for articles to read. Many of these readings may be from areas such as sociology, psychology, management, etc. Try to find the *communication* focus in these regardless of the field in which it was published.
3. Once you have reviewed enough of the literature, you should have a sense of what has been studied on your topic and what could be studied. Develop some research questions or hypotheses to explore an area that has not adequately been explored or needs to be reconsidered. Keep the focus relatively simple; do not try to cover everything.
4. Develop a research method for answering your questions/hypotheses. Consider qualitative, quantitative, critical or rhetorical methods; consider surveys, experiments, observations, or some combination. You may or may not want to use a method similar what was used in what you read. The method you propose should be described in as much detail as you are capable of providing. This will vary from student to student. See me for help if this part troubles you.
5. Deadlines: To assist you in making progress and improve the quality of the final project, parts of the project are due throughout the semester. These will all be submitted through Canvas.

a. A topic rationale (@ 1-2 pages)	Due October 4
b. Rationale and statements of RQ or Hypotheses (@ 1-2 pages)	Due October 25
c. Final project	Due December 6
6. Final Project: This should be an article length proposal (12-20 pages of text excluding title page and references) including the following:
 - a. an introduction/rationale for the study (@ 1-2 pages)
 - b. a review of the relevant literature (@ 7-10 pages)
 - c. rationale and statement of research questions/hypotheses (1-2 pages)
 - d. proposed methodology including proposed survey instrument or interview questions, depending on methodology (2-3 pages)

Reading Schedule

Week 1, Tuesday, August 23: Introduction to Class: Definitions and Theoretical Perspectives

1. Poole, M.S. (1999). Group communication theory. In L.R. Frey, D.S. Gouran, M.S. Poole (Eds.), *The handbook of group communication theory and research* (pp. 37-70). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
2. Frey, L.R., & Sunwolf. (2005). The communication perspective on group life. In S.A. Wheelan (Ed.), *The handbook of group research and practice* (pp. 159-186). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
3. Kettner-Polley, R. (2016). A brief history of interdisciplinary cooperation in the study of small groups. *Small Group Research*, 47, 115-133.

Week 2 Tuesday, August 30: Nonverbal Communication and Communication Networks

4. Ketrow, S. M. (1999). Nonverbal aspects of group communication. In L.R. Frey, D.S. Gouran, M.S. Poole (Eds.), *The handbook of group communication theory and research* (pp. 251-287). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
5. Katz, N., Lazer, D., Arrow, H., & Contractor, N. (2005). The network perspective on small groups: Theory and research. In M.S. Poole & A.B. Hollingshead (Eds.), *Theories of small groups* (pp. 277-312). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
6. Choose 1:

Zhang, Y., & Huai, M.-Y. (2016). Diverse work groups and employee performance: The role of communication ties. *Small Group Research, 47*, 28-57.

Wright, K. B., & Rains, S. A. (2013). Weak-tie support network preference, health-related stigma, and health outcomes in computer-mediated support groups. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 41*, 309-324.
7. *Your choice article*—either involving nonverbal or networks

Week 3 Tuesday, September 6: Symbolic Interaction and Fantasy Themes

8. Bormann, E.G. (1996). Symbolic convergence theory and communication in group decision making. In R.Y. Hirokawa & M.S. Poole (Eds.) *Communication and Group Decision Making* (2nd ed., pp. 81-113). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
9. Zanin, A.C., Hoelscher, C.S., & Kramer, M.W. (2016). Extending symbolic convergence theory: A shared identity perspective of a team's culture. *Small Group Research, 47*, 438-472.
10. Conquergood, D. (1994). Homeboys and hoods: Gang communication and cultural space. In L.R. Frey (Ed.), *Group communication in context: Studies of natural groups* (pp. 23-55). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
11. *Your choice article*—using symbolic interaction, fantasy theme, or narratives

Week 4 Tuesday, September 13: Norms, Conformity, Deviance, and Teamwork

12. Graham, C.R. (2003). A model of norm development for computer-mediated teamwork. *Small Group Research, 34*, 322-352.
13. Wahrman, R. (2010). Status, deviance, and sanctions: A critical review. *Small Group Research, 41*, 91-105.
14. Choose 1:

Minei, E., & Bisel, R. Negotiating the meaning of team expertise: A firefighter team's spistemic denial. *Small Group Research, 36*, 555-599.

Garner, J. T., & Iba, D. L. (2015). Changes in eye contact and attraction scores relative to ostracism and dissent. *Small Group Research*, 46, 3-26.

15. Barker, J.R. (1993). Tightening the iron cage: Concertive control in self-managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 408-437.

Week 5 Tuesday, September 20: Bona Fide Group Perspective and External Communication

16. Lammers, J.C., & Krikorian, D.H. (1997). Theoretical extension and operationalization of the bona fide group construct with an application to surgical teams. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 25, 17-38.

17. Streeter, A. R., Harrington, N. G., & Lane, D. R. (2015). Communication behaviors associated with the competent nursing handoff. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 43, 294-314.

18. Choose 1:

Keyton, J. & Stallworth, V. (2003). On the verge of collaboration: Interaction processes versus group outcomes. In L.R. Frey (Ed.), *Group communication in context: Studies of bona fide groups* (pp. 235-260). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Streeter, A. R., Harrington, N. G., & Lane, D. R. (2015). Communication behaviors associated with the competent nursing handoff. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 43, 294-314.

19. Ancona, D.G., & Caldwell, D.F. (1992). Bridging the boundary: External activity and performance in organizational teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37, 634-665.
20. Harvey, S., Peterson, R. S., & Anand, N. (2014). The process of team boundary spanning in multi-organizational contexts. *Small Group Research*, 45, 506-538.

Week 6 Tuesday, September 27: Socialization and In Class Writing

21. Levine, J.M., Moreland, R.L., & Choi, H-S. (2001). Group socialization and newcomer innovation. In M.A. Hogg & R.S. Tindale (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Group processes* (pp. 86-106). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
22. Anderson, C.M., Riddle, B.L., & Martin, M.M. (1999). Socialization processes in groups. In L.R. Frey, D.S. Gouran & M.S. Poole (Eds.), *The handbook of group communication theory and research* (pp. 139-163). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
23. Kramer, M.W. (2011). A study of voluntary organizational membership: The assimilation process in a community choir. *Western Journal of Communication*, 75, 52-74.

WRITING #1: Read this Case Study for in class or take home:

24. Cohen, S.G., & Denison, D.R. (1990). Flight attendant teams. In J.R. Hackman (Ed.), *Groups that work (and those that don't)* (pp. 382-397). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Week 7 Tuesday, October 4: Leadership and/or Facilitation: **Topic Rationale Due**

25. Chemers, M.M. (2001). Leadership effectiveness: An integrative review. In M.A. Hogg & R.S. Tindale (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Group processes* (pp. 376- 399).
26. McNamee, L. G., & Peterson, B. L. (2014). Reconciling “Third Space/Place”: Toward a complementary dialectical understanding of volunteer management. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 28, 214-243.
27. Baran, B.E., Shanock, L.R., Rogelberg, S.G., & Scott, C.W. (2012). Leading group meetings: Supervisors’ actions, employee behaviors, and upward perceptions. *Small Group Research*, 43, 330-355.
28. Ryfe, D.M. (2006). Narrative and deliberation in small group forums. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 34, 72-93.
29. *Your choice article*: leadership

Week 8 Tuesday, October 11: Individual Differences in Groups

30. Larkey, L.K. (1996). Toward a theory of communicative interactions in culturally diverse workgroups. *Academy of Management Review*, 21, 463-491.
31. Li, J., Krakowsky, L., & Siegel, J.P. (1999). The effects of proportional representation on intragroup behavior in mixed-race decision-making groups. *Small Group Research*, 30, 259-279.
32. Meyers, R.A., Brashers, D.E., Winston, L., & Grob, L. (1997). Sex differences and group argument: A theoretical framework and empirical investigation. *Communication Studies*, 48, 19-41.
33. Palomares, N.A. (2008). Explaining gender-based language use: Effects of gender identity salience on references to emotion and tentative language in intra-and intergroup contexts. *Human Communication Research*, 34, 263-286.
34. *Your choice article*: diversity or gender issues in groups

Week 9 Tuesday, October 18: Conflict in Groups

35. Behfar, K.J., Mannix, E.A., Peterson, R.S., & Trochim, W.M. (2011). Conflict in small groups: The meaning and consequences of process conflict. *Small Group Research*, 42, 127-176.
36. Nicotera, A.M. (1993). Beyond two dimensions: A grounded theory model of conflict-handling behavior. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 6, 282-306.

37. Hinds, P. J., & Mortensen, M. (2005). Understanding conflict in geographically distributed teams: The moderating effects of shared identity, shared context, and spontaneous communication, *Organization Science*, 16, 290-307.

38. *Your choice article*—group conflict (not from your conflict class)

Week 10 Tuesday, October 25: Decision Making **RQ/Hypotheses section due**

39. Fisher, B.A. (1970). Decision emergence: Phases in group decision making. *Speech Monographs*, 37, 53-66.

40. Hirokawa, R.Y., & Rost, K.M. (1992). Effective group decision making in organizations: Field test of the vigilant interaction theory. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 5, 267-288.

41. McLeod, P. L. (2013). Distributed people and distributed information: Vigilant decision-making in virtual teams. *Small Group Research*, 44, 627-657.

42. *Your choice article*—decision making

Week 11 Tuesday, November 1: Alternative Perspectives and Faulty Decision Making

43. Poole, M.S., Seibold, D.R., & McPhee, R.D. (1985). Group decision-making as a structuration process. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 71, 74-102.

44. Mintzberg, H., & Westley, F. (2010). Decision making: It's not what you think. In P.C. Nutt and D.C. Wilson (Eds.), *Handbook of Decision Making* (pp. 73-81). West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley.

45. Street, M.D. (1997). Groupthink: An examination of theoretical issues, implications, and future research suggestions. *Small Group Research*, 28, 72-93.

46. Hirokawa, R.Y. (1988). Understanding the sources of faulty group decision making: A lesson from the Challenger disaster. *Small Group Research*, 19, 411-433.

Week 12 Tuesday, November 15: Group Dialectics and Synergy:

47. Kramer, M.W. (2004). Toward a communication theory of group dialectics: An ethnographic study of a community theater group. *Communication Monographs*, 71, 311-332.

48. Thatcher, M.S. (2011). Negotiating the tension between the discourses of Christianity and spiritual pluralism in Alcoholics Anonymous. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 39, 389-405.

49. Salazar, A.J. (1995). Understanding the synergistic effects of communication in small groups: Making the most out of group member abilities. *Small Group Research*, 26, 169-199.

50. Rogelberg, S.G., Shanock, L.R., & Scott, C.W. (2012). Wasted time and money in meetings: Increasing return on investment. *Small Group Research*, 43, 236-245.

Week 13 Tuesday, November 22: Technology and Idea Generation

51. Poole, M.S., DeSanctis, G. Kirsh, L., & Jackson, M. (1995). Group decision support systems as facilitators of quality team efforts. In L.R. Frey (Ed.), *Innovations in group facilitation techniques: Applications in natural settings* (pp. 299-321). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
52. Baruah, J., & Paulus, P. B. (2016). The role of time and category relatedness in electronic brainstorming. *Small Group Research, 47*, 333-342.
53. Aakhus, M. & Rumsey, E. (2010). Crafting supportive communication online: A communication design analysis of conflict in an online support group. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 38*, 65-84.
54. *Your choice article: GDSS, CMC, or technology*

Week 14 Tuesday, November 29: Critique of the Field and **WRITING #2: In Class Video**

55. Berdahl, J.L., & Henry, K.B. (2005). Contemporary issues in group research. In S.A. Wheelan (Ed.), *The handbook of group research and practice* (pp. 19-37). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
56. Keyton, J. (2016). The future of small group research. *Small Group Research, 47*, 134-154.
57. Special Issue: Research presented at the 2012 Conference on Interdisciplinary Network for group research. *Small Group Research, 44* (2). Choose one of the *interdisciplinary* articles from this issue.

Week 15 Tuesday, December 6: Teaching Undergraduate Group Com and Final Paper Presentations

58. Special Issue: Teaching People about Groups. *Small Group Research, 44* (4). Choose one of the articles from this August issue of SGR—your choice.

Final Papers Due: Monday, December 12 at Noon!!!