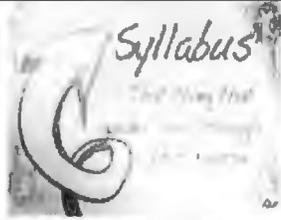


# Welcome to Small Group Communication

Communication Arts & Sciences Department  
CMST 132: SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION  
 Fall 2018

|   |                      |                      |                          |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Course Number:</b>   | CMST 132 – 20 (2347) | <b>Semester:</b>     | Fall 2018                |
| <b>Campus Phone:</b>  | 530.898. [REDACTED]  | <b>Instructor:</b>   | [REDACTED]               |
|  <b>Syllabus</b> | Tuesdays 7:00-9:50pm | <b>Section/Room:</b> | Sec. 20<br>Room THMA 113 |
| <b>Office Hours:</b>  | Tuesdays 6:00-6:50pm | <b>Email:</b>        | [REDACTED]@csuchico.edu  |
|   |                      | <b>Office:</b>       | Room [REDACTED]          |

## Required Textbooks & Materials

- Adams, K. & Galanes, G. J. (2017). *Communicating in groups. (10th ed.)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Note: This is a newer edition of the textbook, which differs greatly from older editions. Please look around for your cheapest available options (renting, Amazon, etc.). E-texts are also a good option if you feel comfortable with that format.

OR

Textbook: Ohlond. (2017). *Communicating in groups: Applications and skills (CUSTOM VERSION.)* New York: McGraw-Hill.

**\*SPECIAL DISCOUNTED PRICE: A custom copy of the book has been created for CSUC to reduce the cost of the textbook— ISBN: 9781307049008 at the CSUC bookstore  
 Student Price: \$68**

- Reliable access to a working computer to access Blackboard Learn regularly. At times you will be asked to print out materials and bring them to class.
- 9 Scantron forms 815-e (the small 15 question quiz forms)
- Business casual attire for speech days

The “ability to work in a team” is listed as the number one skill managers will be looking for when recruiting graduating college students (Forbes, 2014).

What actions and support, in your experience, make a team function successfully?

If you know the answer:



### Course Goals

1. Become a competent small group member.
2. Understand small group processes, such as norms, roles, leadership, group climate, diversity, and conflict management.
3. Use creative and critical thinking to analyze a real-world social problem and plan and implement civic action in response to that problem.
4. Use technology to improve group processes and presentations.
5. Develop the capacity to engage in productive, collective civic action.
6. Demonstrate effective listening and speaking skills by gathering and organizing necessary information and delivering it effectively to your intended audience.
7. Demonstrate effective deliberation and collaboration skills in collective efforts to reach consensus regarding divisive issues and to perform civic action in response to meaningful, complex social or political problems.

### Course Objectives and Description

Small groups exist extensively in both our personal and professional lives. Given the significant role small groups play in our lives, studying the communication in those groups is critical. However, the "group process" is not a natural event. Becoming a competent communicator in a small group setting requires significant work and effort. This course will help you gain skills in collaboration and deliberation that you can use throughout your lives. Additionally, being a competent public speaker is an important skill. Being able to speak well in an academic small group setting, at a civic meeting, or in a workplace environment all require effective public speaking skills. Learning correct principles and then practicing those principles will help you become a proficient communicator in a variety of contexts. This course is designed to be experiential. Not only will you be exposed to small group communication theory and public speaking fundamentals, but you will also be given the opportunity to explore theoretical concepts in the context of your own group activities and presentations throughout the semester. This class is a Foundation course in General Education and satisfies the oral communication requirement. You must earn at least a C- in this class to receive general education credit. Students who receive a D+ or lower will have to repeat the class.

## Student Learning Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of small group communication concepts, principles, and practices.
  - a. Discuss how verbal and nonverbal communication influences group dynamics.
  - b. Analyze group development in terms of norms, roles, leadership, group climate, diversity, and conflict management.
  - c. Explain the role of groups in civic life.
  - d. Use creative and critical thinking techniques to effectively solve problems.
  - e. Demonstrate the ability to recognize reasoning errors.
  - f. Use technology to improve group processes.
  - g. Employ effective deliberation and collaboration skills to bridge differences and reach consensus.
2. Students will effectively research, organize, and deliver content through oral presentations.
  - a. Locate, interpret and evaluate information used in a presentation.
  - b. Use creativity in developing and adapting content to target audiences.
  - c. Demonstrate the ability to reason from evidence to reach a sound conclusion.
  - d. Demonstrate the ability to deliver successful presentations before a variety of live audiences.
  - e. Utilize nonverbal communication to enhance delivery (i.e., eye contact, gestures, body movement, etc.).
3. Students will demonstrate effective listening skills
  - a. Demonstrate active listening skills as a small group member.
  - b. Accurately summarize speaker content (or main ideas) as an audience member.
  - c. Provide constructive feedback for the speaker as an audience member

## Overview of Assignments (More detailed assignment guidelines will be provided via Blackboard Learn)

### Semester Project (3 Parts):

Part One: Group Formation Presentation (75 points). The purpose of this assignment is to create a group identity, establish expectations for group conduct and help you get acquainted with the members of your semester-long small group.

- The assignment requires your group to meet socially outside of class for a minimum of one hour.
- Your group will need to choose a name for your group, create a logo, and plan a presentation explaining your group name, logo, and the topic for your Civic Expo project. Group members will receive a group grade for this assignment.
- The rubric will be available for you to review via Blackboard Learn
- In your presentation, you will provide your audience with a clear sense of your group as a collection of diverse individuals and as a cohesive whole. Each speaker will be required to cite at least one source orally and speak for 2 minutes.

### Sample Logo:



**Part Two: Civic Expo Presentation (150 points).** Your group's task for this presentation is to pool research drawn from credible sources in order to understand and explain diverse positions on a civic dispute related to this semester's Great Debate topic, "Engaging In Our Democracy."

You will be required to use information drawn from a variety of credible sources to accomplish this task. In your presentation, your group will help your audience understand the background of the issue, the varying positions on this dispute, and most importantly, offer insight as to how differences could be bridged between the two sides on this issue. Each speaker will be required to cite at least 3 sources orally and speak for 4 minutes. *Presentation #2 receives both a group and an individual grade.* This assignment requires your group to research and then deliver an in-class Informative Presentation in which you inform the class about an important issue on the topic chosen for the semester.

- The rubric will be available for you to review via Blackboard Learn.

#### **Sample Civic Expo Board:**



**Part Three: The Great Debate (50 points):** After the second presentation, your group will participate in the Chico Great Debate/Civic Expo, an off-campus public event where Chico State students model civic discourse about a significant, contentious topic. Your instructor will explain the participation requirements for this event. In most cases, you will be required to spend approximately two hours at the event, which lasts from about 9am - 8 pm in downtown Chico on Friday April 6<sup>th</sup>. Your (1) attendance and participation at this event, and your (2) completion of an online Reflection Survey (available through Blackboard Learn after the event), are worth 25 points.

#### **Activity Workshop (100 points):**

Each group will be responsible for researching and leading a discussion about a concept from a chapter in the required textbook. Group members will receive both an individual and a group grade for this assignment. This assignment is worth 100 points.

- The rubric will be available for you to review via Blackboard Learn.

#### **Quizzes**

Over the course of the semester, there will be 9 quizzes, worth 30 points each (240 points total). The lowest scoring quiz will be dropped at the end of the semester. Every day you will need to bring 1 Scantron 815-e form to class. Quizzes will be given after chapter discussions based on the assumption you have done your reading and have come prepared to discuss the chapter. If students are not coming to class prepared, your instructor reserves the right to end discussion and administer the quiz immediately.

#### **Final Exam**

The final exam will ask you to evaluate how your group's management of key group dynamics influenced your success throughout the semester. The exam may be individual or group, written or oral or a combination. Your instructor will provide further details about the nature of the exam. The Final Exam is worth 50 points.

### Group Analysis Assignment

After Presentation #2, you will be asked to analyze your group's processes. Individually, each group member will complete a Group Analysis Worksheet in which you analyze your own and fellow group members' contributions and how well your group has handled significant group dynamics. Collectively, your group will then discuss the completed worksheets to identify the most significant strengths and weaknesses in your group and develop strategies for improvement. This group portion of the assignment may culminate in a group meeting with your instructor, an oral presentation, or a written paper. The Group Analysis Worksheet is worth 30 points and the group component (meeting, presentation, or paper) is worth 30 points.

#### POSSIBLE POINTS

#### GRADING DISTRIBUTION

| Assignment   | Points Possible | My Score |
|--|-----------------|----------|
| Part #1: Logo  | 75              |          |
| Part #2: Civic Expo Presentation   | 90              |          |
|  | 60              |          |
| Part #3: Civic Expo Event  | 25              |          |
| Activity Workshop  | 50              |          |
|  | 50              |          |
| Group Analysis Assignment  |                 |          |
| Part 1: Individual Component   | 30              |          |
| Part 2: Group Component  | 30              |          |
| Quizzes (9 @ 30 points, lowest score dropped)  | 240             |          |
| In-class Assignments   | 50              |          |
| Final Exam   | 50              |          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>750</b>      | *        |
| <i>*You will lose 15 points from your final grade for each class meeting after missing one week of class (or one night class). If you are not attending you are not participating.</i> |                 |          |

|    |     |
|----|-----|
| A  | 695 |
| A- | 675 |
| B+ | 652 |
| B  | 547 |
| B- | 600 |
| C+ | 577 |
| C  | 547 |
| C- | 525 |
| D+ | 502 |
| D  | 472 |
| F  | 449 |

#### Course & Campus Policies & Expectations

**Attendance and Participation.** Class attendance is mandatory. Your learning in this class will come as you integrate classroom experiences, readings, and lecture material with your experiences from your small group interactions and presentations. Active participation in all aspects of the course is a condition of passing. Absences are absences, regardless of the reason. *You may miss without penalty a total of **one night class**. If absent more than a total of one night class, you will lose 15 points from your final course grade for every additional absence.* You need to be on time for class, be prepared, and be ready to participate during each class session. To effectively work as a group, you must make a commitment to meet with your group regularly outside of class. If you have a difficult work schedule, have a heavy course load, are involved in many organizations, or are unwilling to meet outside of class, *this course is not for you.* If you are going to miss a

group meeting, it is your responsibility to contact a member of your group before the group meets. Experiential learning requires that you become involved and actively participate, both in class and in your group.

**Late Work.** Your due dates will be addressed in class and specified in your course schedule. All work must be completed on time and submitted *at the beginning of class* in order to receive full credit. Emailed assignments will not be accepted unless previously discussed. However, in the event that an assignment is missed, your instructor will still accept it. Late work **must** be turned in at the beginning of the next class meeting (nothing later will be accepted) and will be worth less than full credit unless a legitimate reason for missing class is presented with the assignment being turned in and the instructor has been notified prior to the due date. Legitimate reasons must contain ample proof of either illness (requiring a note from the health center or other medical doctor) or of a serious social conflict that is outside of the student's control. Quizzes cannot be made up unless you have contacted your instructor via email **prior** to the start of class on that particular quiz day and you present a legitimate reason with ample proof for missing class. Quizzes may only be made up if these two requirements have been met. You have one week from the missed quiz day to visit your instructor's office hours and take your makeup quiz. In-class attendance during the final exam period is mandatory.

**Grievance Policy.** Grades for quizzes, papers, presentations, and other class activities will be returned in a timely manner. Grading is a time consuming process, and you will be receiving detailed feedback on your work, which I expect you to read, understand, seek clarification on if needed, and apply to your next assignments. Student involvement in the grading process is encouraged. To challenge a grade, please wait 24 hours after getting your graded assignment back and bring it to my attention within seven days for your grievance to be considered. Your grievance should outline why you believe you should receive additional points. The best grievances reference the assignment criteria and then outline how you believe you met those criteria. Just because you have filed a grievance, it does not necessarily mean your grade will change. It is also your responsibility to bring to my attention any grade missing from the gradebook or a grade that appears differently in the gradebook than what was returned to you within seven days of when an assignment is handed back.

**Respect for Students.** In this class we respect the right of students to have divergent opinions and views. However, we also expect students to express their differences in constructive ways rather than creating a hostile and/or discriminatory environment (i.e., no name calling, bullying tactics, etc.). We support the University's policies on Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment. If there are problems in these areas, they will be addressed through proper University channels.

**Group Grades.** Should a problem arise with anyone's participation in their group, we will address the problem discretely, but directly. As a group, you will work on improving the status of all group members. Should a group find a member incapable or unwilling to improve, group members should speak with the instructor and provide specific feedback concerning all group members. If a case is made that one member deserves a lesser grade than other members on a specific assignment, this can be done. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points from individual members if their poor attendance or limited interaction has limited their participation with in-class or out-of-class group preparation time and assignments. In extreme cases, where repeated efforts to include a noncompliant group member have failed, a group will work with the instructor to determine best options for moving forward. If a student is taken out of a group they may not be able to complete existing assignments, and may lose all points associated with those assignments. If needed, consult with your instructor about the parameters of this process.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Since the curriculum in this class is designed to prepare you for effective group work and public speaking in and outside of college, professionalism is a requirement. That includes a requirement to be courteous and respectful to your fellow classmates as well as your instructor and to dress professionally on your speech days. Students are welcome to bring internet and communication devices to assist with the learning process. However, students are expected to follow common principles of respect and professionalism when using these devices. All devices that may make noise during class must be switched to silent mode before entering class and removed from desktops. *No devices may be used during class for purposes that are not related to instruction.* Public speaking can be a high-stress activity, so be mindful of that. Put yourself in the position of the speaker and be the listener you would want for your speech. Do not pack up until the class is excused. Your grade will take your actions in regard to respect and professionalism into consideration.

**Class Materials Warning.** This class is “R” rated. The material that we will be viewing, reading, listening to, and discussing in class may contain adult language, sexual situations, violence, or material that may be deemed offensive by some audiences. Your continued enrollment in this course, following the reading of this syllabus, indicates that you are aware of this material and have chosen to stay in this class. Please ask your instructor if you have any questions or concerns.

**Academic Integrity.** Any work submitted that is not the product of the student who has their name on the work (which would include work taken from any other sources and not properly noted or work done by another student) is plagiarized work and will be prosecuted according to University Code. Any sign of cheating in any way on course quizzes, exams or assignments will be addressed directly. If you do not understand what constitutes academic honesty, review the University Catalog. There is also a standard for academic honesty in group work. Some assignments (i.e., quizzes) are individual efforts. Other assignments require group efforts (i.e., presentations, group analysis meeting). You must do your own work on individual assignments and you must put in your fair share of work on the group assignments to remain academically honest in this class.

**Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting.** As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as an instructor. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct with the University. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the Counseling and Wellness Center (898-6345) or Safe Place (898-3030). Information on campus reporting and other Title IX related resources are available here: [www.csuchico.edu/title-ix](http://www.csuchico.edu/title-ix)

**Students with Disabilities.** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please visit me during office hours. Please also contact Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) as they are the designated department responsible for approving and coordinating reasonable accommodations and services for students with disabilities. ARC will help you understand your rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide you further assistance with requesting and arranging accommodations.

**Accessibility Resource Center:** 530-898-5959, Student Services Center 170.

**Adds and Drops.** Students may add or drop courses without restriction or penalty and without instructor approval during the first two weeks of the semester using the registration system, or where necessary, by submitting a Change of Program (COP) form. During the third and fourth weeks of classes COP forms are needed to add and drop and students must obtain the approval signature of the instructor. After the end of

the fourth week of the semester, all COP forms to add or drop will require a serious and compelling reason (see University Catalog) and require approval signatures of the instructor, department chair, and dean of the college. Do not assume that you will be automatically dropped for not attending class. It is your responsibility to make a commitment to dropping or staying in class by the end of the second week. It is your responsibility to follow the appropriate drop procedure or you risk getting a failing grade. *Students who miss any of the first two weeks of class can be dropped at the instructor's discretion. Email if you are going to miss a class during the first two weeks and wish to remain in the course.*

**Final Exam Time**

| CMST 132 Section (regular meeting time) | Day of Final | Time        | Location |
|---|--------------|-------------|----------|
| December 18                             | Tuesday      | 8:00-9:50pm | THMA 113 |

**NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change as needed once the semester is underway.**