



Class Overview

BUS 5320

General Class Information:

In an increasingly diverse, yet tightly networked world, effective small group communication is essential. We interact with each other through the Internet in many new ways (e-mail, instant messaging, social media and the like). How we engage in our group and how communication is employed matters a great deal. No matter what the group, no matter what the environment, effective small group communication and teamwork is important. To be effective we have to consider our team/group roles, norms, cohesion, processes and phases of development. We also need to examine our personal verbal and non-verbal communication and listening styles. To succeed as a member of a team, we need to consider the limits of our personal experience and perspective; recognize the creative strength of diverse perspectives in decision making and problem solving, develop our conflict management skills and strengthen our leadership skills. The challenge of small group communication and team development in the 21st century; for each team member to engage in participatory leadership in a culturally diverse and geographically dispersed team; requires the personal development of skills and abilities centric to this endeavor. To be successful necessitates an understanding of group processes, participation style, ethical group behavior and the influences of the computer age and computer mediated communication.

Instructor Name and Contact Information:

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Subject Area and Catalog Number:

- Subject Area: *Leadership*
- Catalog Number: *BUS 5320*

Year and Term:

- Spring 2014

Class Title:

- Communications & Team Development

Level:

- Graduate

Credit Type:

- 3 Graduate Credits

Class Description:

- Today's leaders must be skilled in both communicating with diverse audiences and maintaining effective teams in order to succeed in a technology organization. Communications topics include addressing technical and non-technical audiences using presentations, interpersonal skills, and writing skills. Team development instruction focuses on managing teams, identifying and understanding the leadership role, the importance of shared leadership, product teams, and team decision-making.

Required Text:

- Text: *Small Group and Team Communication*, 5/E
- Authors: Thomas E. Harris, University of Alabama; John C. Sherblom, University of Maine
- Ordering Information: ISBN-10: 0205692982 • ISBN-13: 9780205692989

Learning Outcomes:

- Through an array of individual and team exercises, the student will have the opportunity to explore, describe, examine, demonstrate, outline and explain the multifarious elements of communication and team development by way of the fastidious study of small group and team communication.
- As a course of study, BUS 5320 stimulates individual and team engagement as foundational to the success of the student with the expectation of gaining significant knowledge of the small group and team dynamic through the following:

January 27, 2014 (Session #1 Learning Outcomes):

- Understand the types of groups found in society.
- Describe the power of groups.
- Examine the reasons for joining groups.
- Explain the basis for interpersonal attraction.
- Outline the characteristics and coordination of small groups.
- Explain group synergy.
- Describe characteristics of the small group communication process.
- Demonstrate the role of small groups in organizations.

February 3, 2014 (Session #2 Learning Outcomes):

- Understand groups as systems of interaction.
- Distinguish the four types of problem-solving groups.
- Provide a systems theory for small group communication.
- Explain a systems perspective on small group communication.
- Define the importance of system properties including: wholeness, synergy, openness, transformation, interdependence, feedback, entropy, equifinality, and the environment.
- Describe complex systems, and the processes of change and learning.
- Apply the complex system concepts of: strange attractors, phase space, bifurcation points, and irreversibility.

February 10, 2014 (Session #3 Learning Outcomes):

- Describe the importance and impact of group norms.
- Clarify the different types of group norms.
- Illustrate the concept of group roles.
- Outline the different types of roles.
- Discuss the functions of norms and roles.
- Describe group cohesion and groupthink.

February 17, 2014 (Session #4 Learning Outcomes):

- Understand the four phases of group process.
- Explain the importance of the forming stage and its communication characteristics.
- Outline the factors occurring in the storming phase.
- Illustrate how the norming phase occurs.
- Discuss the performing phase.
- Show how the termination phase operates.
- Understand modifications to the phase model.
- Specify the kinds of communication occurring during each phase.
- Introduce the role of organizational teams.

February 24, 2014 (Session #5 Learning Outcomes):

- Define diversity and its role in small groups
- Describe the impact of stereotypes
- Discuss the concept of communication contexts
- Explain the role of language use on diversity
- Discuss nonverbal communication and diversity
- Describe the impact of diversity on group consensus
- Present the strength obtained through diversity
- Suggest ways to make diverse groups work effectively
- Discuss the communication of diverse computer-mediated virtual teams.

March 3, 2014 (Session #6 Learning Outcomes):

- Discuss the functions of verbal communication
- Explain group fantasies, metaphors, and narratives
- Identify the structures of meaning in verbal communication
- Outline the types and functions of group talk
- Explain the principles of nonverbal communication
- Illustrate the types of nonverbal communication

March 10, 2014 (Session #7 Learning Outcomes):

- Explain the importance of listening
- Identify the role played by motivation in effective listening
- Outline the four components of listening
- Identify the barriers to effective listening
- Define active listening
- Identify the barriers to active listening
- Describe four response methods for active listeners
- Discuss the eight guidelines for feedback
- Describe constructive feedback techniques

March 17, 2014 (Session #8 Learning Outcomes):

- Explain employee involvement as a part of team development
- Describe the scope of employee involvement
- Define the concept of Teams
- Discuss the importance of Teams
- Distinguish the characteristics of parallel structures
- Identify the structure and role of quality circles
- Explain the three limitations to quality circles
- Outline the characteristics of self-managing work teams
- Discuss the benefits and costs of self-managing work teams

March 24, 2014 (Session #9 Learning Outcomes):

- Explain the importance of defining the “problem”
- Discuss internal and external constraints
- Identify the process of developing alternatives
- Determine issues to be considered in making a decision
- Outline the implementation stage process
- Describe the decision evaluation step
- Define the factors important to group process
- Describe the influences on the decision-making and problem-solving processes
- Apply systems thinking to group process
- Discuss the decision-making process

March 31, 2014 (Session #10 Learning Outcomes):

- Describe Creativity
- Explain Creativity as a New Way of Looking, Perceiving
- Outline Perceptual, Cultural, Emotional Barriers to Creativity
- Demonstrate use of idea needlers and manipulative Verbs
- Examine association, metaphors, analogy, and fantasy in creativity
- Discuss ways of solving problems creatively
- Provide the elements of a creative group climate
- Review Gibb's group climate factors

April 7, 2014 (Session #11 Learning Outcomes):

- Describe the Goals and Uses of Brainstorming
- Explain the Creative Decision Making Techniques of:
 - Focus Groups
 - Nominal Group Technique
 - Delphi Technique
 - Synectics
 - Buzz Sessions
 - Idea Writing, Role Playing, Listening Teams
- Illustrate the Problem-Solving Tools of:
 - Flowcharts
 - Fishbone Diagrams
 - Pareto's Principle
- Outline the Risk Procedure
- Demonstrate PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique)
- Suggest Small Group Presentational Formats:
 - Forum
 - Panel
 - Colloquium
 - Symposium

April 14, 2014 (Session #12 Learning Outcomes):

- Define conflict as a communication process
- Explain how conflict is a consequence of actions
- Distinguish between destructive and constructive conflict
- Explain the sources of conflict
- Describe the six styles of conflict management
- Discuss negotiation as a strategy
- Provide examples of types of power

April 21, 2014 (Session #13 Learning Outcomes):

- Explain the characteristics of leadership
- Identify the attributes of leaders
- Differentiate between theories of leadership
- Outline the premises behind the leadership style theories
- Explain the managerial grid and its applications
- Describe transactional and transformational leadership
- Discuss leadership by adaptation
- Explain the three characteristics of leaders
- Identify different processes for becoming a leader
- Illustrate the tasks of group leaders
- Discuss the influences of leaders on group structure
- Identify leadership snags

April 28, 2014 (Session #14 Learning Outcomes):

- Explain four ways to make small groups successful
- Discuss the design, types and uses of rating scales
- Describe post-meeting evaluation forms.
- Explain the key question regarding information usefulness
- Describe observer feedback guidelines
- Discuss evaluation of verbal interactions and content analysis

May 5, 2014 (Session #15 Learning Outcomes):

- Define Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)
- Describe audio- and video- conferencing
- Discuss the effects of CMC on group processes
- Explain the concept of social presence and influences of media richness and synchronous communication.
- Describe methods for choosing an appropriate communication medium by communication task, language demand-technology fit, and communication function.
- Discuss group process and leadership responsibilities for effective small group CMC

Assessment Components:

- Individual and team “*In Class*” participation (online discussion questions, topic assessments (i.e. quiz, short essay summaries), case analyses, communication in individual and team forums)
- Timely responses to team, individual student and instructor inquiries and course discussion questions
- Individual and team written deliverables
- End of course *Team Development “Analysis” Paper* and accompanying PowerPoint presentation (Team Project)
- End of course student survey

Delivery Mode Expectations:

- Course will be delivered as web-based (online/asynchronous) instruction. There will be no synchronous sessions (live/webcam). Class will be in session on Monday's which is when new material for the week will be rolled out. Students will however, be expected to be in the course several hours per week in order to work on course deliverables and meet required deliverable deadlines as well as to interact with other students and team members as the course dictates.

Required Technical Resources and Technical Components:

- Computer, good internet access; access to landline or cell phone. Must have a UVA e-mail address to be able to access BUS 5320 in UVACollab.