

# Syllabus: Group Dynamics

Psy 457/557, Spring 2005, Tu & Th 4-5:20 P.M., 176 Education

Professor/TA	Office	E-mail	Phone	Office Hours
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## Course Description & Requirements

This course has two interrelated goals:

- 1) acquaint you with theory and research on small groups
- 2) improve your skills as participant in & observer of small groups

To accomplish these goals, readings and lectures are paired with group exercises and hands-on practice in generating and interpreting data on groups

**NOTE:** *Grad students* will have some different assignments. Details are given below.

### 1. Participation

Attendance is required. *If you can't attend class faithfully, don't take this course .*

You will be working in small groups each week, and group members will rate one another's participation at the end of the course. In week 2, students will form permanent groups. If a group member is chronically absent, does not come prepared, or behaves badly, groups may petition to drop the member in week 4. Dropped members may switch groups or complete the course individually. At the end of the class, each student will (confidentially) evaluate how well fellow members fulfilled their commitments to the group; these evaluations will strongly affect the participation grade.

*All students are also expected to take part in the data collection for the research reports*, and submit their data on time to receive full credit. Most data will be submitted on the web. Students will be given a code to use when submitting their data, and ratings of fellow group members will be *averaged* before posting so that it will be impossible to track ratings back to individual raters. Those who do not wish to take part in data collection and submission may read and report on two articles instead.

**1b. Grad students:** After moving around to different small groups during the early rotations, you will work together in a separate group. During some class sessions, you will observe and give feedback to the undergraduate groups.

### 2. Readings

The three required books are D. R. Forsyth, *Group dynamics*, A. Lansing, *Endurance: Shackleton's incredible voyage*, and J. Dervisevic-Cesic, *The river runs salt, runs sweet*:

*A memoir of Bosnia.* Strunk & White's *The elements of style* (any edition) is strongly recommended as a guide to clear writing. Occasional supplementary readings will be posted on Blackboard or made available via e-reserves at the UO library web site.

### 3. Quizzes

Quizzes will be completed individually. They will cover material from Forsyth and lectures. The best 5 of 6 quiz scores will count. No make-ups available.

### 4. Group Exercises and Worksheets

There will be 6 in-class group exercises, with worksheets or other product that will be turned in and graded. Be sure and stay on top of the readings and bring your books to class as needed for these exercises. Best 5 of 6 will count. Must be present to get credit!

#### 5a. Research Report (undergrads)

This formal paper will analyze data collected in and by the class. This assignment is to be completed **in pairs**. The division of labor must be negotiated early. Students who want to work **individually** or in **triads** must get Holly's permission.

The paper should be 7-10 pp. double-spaced and follow APA format. It should start (1) with a title page and (2) an abstract of no more than 200 words. The body of the paper should (3) introduce the study, drawing on relevant literature; (4) describe the research procedure and participants (methods section); (5) present your findings (results section); (6) connect the findings to the literature on small groups and discuss implications (discussion section); and (7) note the limitations of the study, including at least one recommendation for improvement in design or execution. The paper should (8) have at least one figure, (9) all references cited (there should be at least 4) should be presented at the end of the paper. (10) Describe the division of labor between the two authors in a note at the end of the text.

All teams must also provide Holly with an electronic copy of a graphic showing results and a *\*brief\** summary (max 50 words) by Friday of Week 9 for use in the overall presentation of class projects in Week 10. See schedule of readings and assignments for other intermediate deadlines. *\*Make all deadlines to be eligible for full credit.\**

**5b. Grad students** will complete a case study or research proposal. *Case study option:* Write a case study based on your observations of a small group (size 3-25) and/or interviews with its members (Note: may **not** be one of the class groups.) Be sure to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the group and analyze what you see as the contributing factors to these strengths and weaknesses. Consider the following: composition, structure, task, context, and group development. Make one specific recommendation for improving the functioning of the group. The paper should have 4 sections: Intro, description, analysis, and recommendation.

*Research proposal:* Write a research proposal for a study of small groups. Assume you have unlimited resources. Follow APA style (only section missing will be results). Summarize theory relevant to your topic, identify the research question(s) and/or hypotheses, describe your research design, and in the discussion section, consider how you would interpret results that are contrary to your hypotheses. Include an abstract.

*Either option:* Limit 8 pages double-spaced, including title page. You will also prepare and deliver a 15-minute summary of your project on Thursday May 26.

## Grading

Elements	Points	Course grades based on percentage of total points earned			
Participation	30	A	93-100	C	73-76.9
Data (or alt assignment)	20	A-	90-92.9	C-	70-72.9
Group Exercises	50	B+	87-89.9	D+	67-69.9
Quizzes (Best 5 out of 6)	50	B	83-86.9	D	63-66.9
Research project	50	B-	80-82.9	D-	60-62.9
		C+	77-79.9	N	< 70
<b>TOTAL points</b>	<b>200</b>			P	\$ 70

### Special Needs:

Learning disabilities & athletes. If you have a documented learning disability and need adjustments, or are on a UO sports team and will miss class because of travel, contact Holly ASAP. With advance notice, special arrangements can be made. At the last minute, this may not be plausible. NOTE: if your schedule requires frequent absences, you should not take this class. In-class participation and exercises are an important part of the course.

### Late and Missed Work:

Research Report: Up to 5 points will be deducted from the group project grade if the group does not turn in all interim assignments when due. Final research report *\*must\** be turned in on time.

### Academic Dishonesty:

All work submitted in this course must be your own (or your group's) and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources must be properly acknowledged and documented. Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade in the course and will also be referred to the Student Conduct Committee.

Collaborating with group members is NOT permitted on the quizzes. Research report teams should generate their first draft on their own; they are encouraged to make use of feedback and suggestions in their revisions. If you have any confusion about what constitutes academic dishonesty, see <http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm>

# Readings and Assignments

<b>Week One</b>	Topic / Focus	Reading	Other Events
Tues Mar 29	<b>Studying Groups</b>		Introductions, temporary groups
.Thurs Mar 31		Forsyth 1&2	Process Coding Exercise
<b>Week Two</b>	<i>Permanent Groups formed this week!</i>		
Tues April 5	<b>Individual &amp; Gp Group Formation</b>	Forsyth 3&4	<b>Data:</b> Observe Gps <b>Quiz 1</b>
Thurs April 7		Lansing, Part I&II (2-97)	<b>Grp Ex A:</b> Roles
<b>Week Three</b>			
Tues April 12	<b>Structure &amp; Leadership</b>	Forsyth 5&12	<b>Data:</b> SYMLOG <b>Quiz 2</b>
Thurs April 14		Lansing, Pts III&IV (100-175)	<b>Data:</b> LAQ <b>Grp Ex B:</b> Leadership
<b>Week Four</b>	<i>Research Report Teams formed this week!</i>		
Tues April 19	<b>Cohesion &amp; Development</b>	Forsyth 6 Lansing Pts.V-VII (178-280)	<b>Quiz 3</b>
Thurs April 21		Worchel, 1994	<b>Data:</b> GEQ <b>Grp Ex C:</b> Development
<b>Week Five</b>	<i>Plan for Research Project (1 page) Due on Thursday!</i>		
.Tues April 26	<b>Performance &amp; Dec-making</b>	Forsyth 10&11	<b>Grp Ex D:</b> Dec-making <b>Quiz 4</b>
Thurs April 28		Foushee, 1984	<b>Data:</b> Ind & Gp Decisions <i>*Peer Ass*</i>
<b>Week Six</b>	<i>Revised Plan for Research Project (1 page) Due on Thursday!</i>		
Tues May 3	<b>Intergroup relations</b>	Forsyth 13; D-Cesic Pt I	<b>Grp Ex E:</b> Intergroup
Thurs May 5		Willis/Wren/Wright	<b>Data:</b> LAQ2 <b>Grp Ex E:</b> (cont).
<b>Week Seven</b>			
Tues May 10	<b>Influence &amp; Crowds</b>	Forsyth 7&15; D-Cesic Pt II	<b>Quiz 5</b>
.Thurs May 12		Coultas, 2004	<b>Grp Ex F:</b> Group observation
<b>Week Eight</b>	<i>Full Draft Research Project due on Thursday!</i>		
Tues May 17	<b>Conflict</b>	Forsyth 9	<b>Some class time reserved for RR</b>
Thurs May 19		D-Cesic Pts III & IV	Full draft Research Report due
<b>Week Nine</b>	<i>Soft copy of 1 graphic and *brief* summary (max 50 wds) to Holly by Friday!</i>		
Tues May 24	<b>Power &amp; Environment</b>	Forsyth 8&14	<b>Quiz 6</b>
Thurs May 26			<i>Grad students present projects ☺</i>
<b>Week Ten</b>			
Tues May 31	<b>Group Projects</b>	No more reading!	Class projects: Summary
Thurs June 2			Summary cont. & peer, class evals
<b>Final Research Reports due by:</b> 1 PM Tuesday, June 7 <sup>th</sup> , Holly’s office 357. Earlier turn in is welcome!			

## Supplementary Readings

### SYMLOG:

Bales, R. F. (1980). SYMLOG Case Study Kit. New York: Free Press.

### GEQ:

Carron, A.V., Widmeyer, W.N., Brawley, L.R. (1985) The development of an instrument to assess cohesion in sport teams: The Group Environment Questionnaire. *Journal of Sport Psychology*, 7(3), 244-266.

Coultas, J. C. (2004). When in Rome... An evolutionary perspective on conformity. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 7(4), 317-331.

Foushee, H. C. (1984). Dyads and triads at 35,000 feet: Factors affecting group process and aircrew performance. *American Psychologist*, 39, 885-893.

### LAQ:

Johnson, D. W. & Johnson, F. P. (1997) *Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills* (6th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, N.J. : Prentice-Hall. (LAQ is on p. 195).

### SYMLOG:

Keyton, J. (1995). Using SYMLOG as a self-analytical group facilitation technique. In L. R. Frey (Ed.), *Innovations in group facilitation: Applications in natural settings* (pp. 148-174). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Willis, B. (2003, April 3). Honor diversity: It's more than just a bumper sticker. *Eugene Weekly*, pp. 12-14.

Wren, R. (2005). Everywhere I go, I'm white: Facing the responsibility of privilege. *Community College Moment*, 37-46.

Wright, J. (2005, February 20). The eXit files. *Register Guard*, pp. A1, A15. Eugene, Oregon.

(This is for you to keep—don't need to turn in)\_\_\_\_\_

Rate Your Group Skills (+3=very strong 0=okay -3= very weak)

Wk 1    Wk 10

1.	Communicate ideas effectively (self-expression)	___	___
2.	Listen to and understand others (empathy, perspective taking)	___	___
3.	Help others understand themselves with constructive feedback (guide)	___	___
4.	Seek feedback from others to know yourself better (personal growth)	___	___
5.	Establish rapport with others (make connections)	___	___
6.	Monitor and manage your own emotions (self-management)	___	___
7.	Organize people to achieve tasks (task leader)	___	___
8.	Identify and fill needed roles in the group (social flexibility)	___	___
9.	Promote group morale and cohesion (socio-emotional leader)	___	___
10.	Resolve conflicts and negotiate agreements (mediator)	___	___
11.	Analyze structural causes of group dynamics (social analysis)	___	___

Your own goals for this class:

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|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

Week 5 *peer* assessment of progress on these goals within your class group

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Week 5 *self*-assessment of progress in developing and practicing group skills

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Week 10 *self*-assessment of progress in developing and practicing group skills

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