

# Syllabus: Group Dynamics

CRN: 35136 /35147

Psy 457/557, Spring 2010, M & W 10-11:50 A.M., 142 Straub

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

This course has three interrelated goals:

- 1) acquaint you with theory and research on small groups
- 2) improve your skills as participant in, observer of, and consultant to small groups
- 3) develop your ability to work collaboratively in producing and critiquing scientific writing

To accomplish these goals, readings, lecture, and discussion are paired with group exercises, practice in observing and interpreting group dynamics, several writing assignments (all but one of them short or very short), and comments/feedback on the writing of others.

## Work Load Summary

**Undergrads (457)** will complete one short paper (2-3 pages) one longer literature review (the final project), multiple group exercises with their class group, and four short (250 words max) group essays. They will also comment on the essays and draft lit reviews of others.

**Grad students (557)** will complete a comparative case analysis and a literature review, write several short essays, and make comments on blog essays and draft lit reviews of other grad students. They will assist with group exercises and give feedback to the undergraduate groups based on what they observe when watching group interactions.

## Details about Requirements for Undergrads (447) and Gradds (557)

### 1. Participation (all)

Attendance and participation is required. In Week 2, students will form permanent small groups of size 3-4, with undergrads and grad students in different groups. At the end of the class, each student will (confidentially) evaluate how well fellow group members fulfilled their commitments. This will inform the participation grade.

**1b. Grad students (557):** Along with doing some exercises in your own groups, grad students will serve as process consultants for several undergraduate groups. Holly will provide guidance.

## **2. Readings (All)**

Readings will be available on Blackboard, via Web links or (for several case studies) for purchase & download on-line from the Harvard Business School site.

### **3a. Group Essays on WordPress Blog (457)**

Every week you will participate in a group discussion of the readings. Undergraduate groups will develop and post 4 short integrative essays (one per group) that analyze a case or cases by drawing on readings / lecture. These will be posted on a blog (accessible to class members only) and will be due by 9 PM on the day assigned. The strict length limit is 250 words. Each group will post a single essay.

**Credits for Essays:** Blog essays will be graded on a 1-4 scale, with 1 = weak but completed on time, 2 = mixture of strengths and weaknesses, 3 = strengths outweigh weaknesses, 4 = strengths sufficiently notable that any weaknesses seem trivial. In addition, Holly & Jason will decide each week which are the one or two strongest entries for the week. Those essays will receive 5 points. More detailed guidelines will be provided on BB and in class.

### **3b. Grad Student Blog Essays (557)**

Grad students will complete 6 blogs: 2 as a group, and 4 individually. Group blogs will be graded on a 4-point scale and individual blogs on a 3-point scale. The topic of grad student blogs will differ from those of the undergraduate groups. For example, in some weeks they will write blogs commenting on what they learned from their observations of group exercises completed by the UG groups.

**3c. Comments (All):** After the blog essays are published, every student is responsible for reading all the essays. For the first two blogs, all students are responsible for making at least one substantive comment by 9 PM the next evening. For subsequent blogs, students in groups that did NOT write an essay are responsible for making at least one substantive comment by 9 PM the next evening. After this time, the comment function will be disabled. Comments should advance the conversation about the case being discussed. Specific connections back to the readings, thoughtful questions, and critical/constructive/specific feedback are all helpful. Vague comments lacking specifics are less useful. Comments must be submitted by the deadline to count.

### **4a. Reflective Essay (457)**

For the **2-3 page reflective essay** (500-750 words), connect your observations of groups to class readings. Either (1) focus on one group and examine 2-3 different aspects, or (2) pick a particular topic (e.g., conflict or leadership) and compare and contrast 2-3 groups. Cite specific readings: (Laughlin & Shippy, 1983).

### **4b. Group Dynamics Case (557)**

Pick either a single group with that has an identifiable challenge or problem, or two groups that provide a useful contrast. These may be groups you belong to, groups you are observing directly, or other groups about which substantial documentation is available. Write a 5-7 page case analysis modeled after one of the cases assigned for class. Make connections to class readings and other relevant literature.

#### 4c. Observation Notes (raw material for reflective essay or case)

Take notes on your observations and insights about group interactions during the term. You can use the Journal feature on Blackboard or keep your own notes separately. Your observations will serve as raw material for either the Reflective Essay (457) or the Group Dynamics Case (557). You do not need to turn your notes in; they will not be graded.

#### 5a. Literature Review Essay (447) and Peer Feedback (if completed individually).

Undergrads (447) may either collaborate directly on a joint project in teams of 2-3 OR do individual projects. Individuals will pair up to provide written feedback on one another's drafts; 2-3 person groups will provide feedback on another group's draft. The literature review will include a review essay of 4-5 double-spaced pages (447) and an annotated list of references with a short (50-100 words) annotation for each source cited (this section can be single-spaced). **All sources must be peer-reviewed articles published in 2000 or later.**

**Completed individually:** 10 sources. Full paper 2000-2500 words.

Plus: Written feedback (150-200 words) on a partner's paper.

**Two-person team:** 15 sources. Include a paragraph on division of labor.

Full paper 2500-3000 words.

Plus: Written feedback (150-200 wds) on another team's paper.

**Three-person team:** 20 sources. Include a paragraph on division of labor.

Full paper 3000-3500 words.

Plus: Written feedback (150-200 wds) on another team's paper.

**5b. Literature Review .** Grads (557) will complete a literature review individually, covering a minimum of 20 sources, with a lit review essay of 6-10 double-spaced pages and an annotated list of references with a short (50-100 words) annotation for each source cited (this section can be single-spaced). **All sources must be peer-reviewed articles published in 2000 or later.** The full paper should be 3500-4500 words. Grads will also complete written feedback (150-200 words) on another grad student's paper.

**5c Note:** More detailed instructions about the format and requirements for the essay and the annotations, including examples, will be provided on Blackboard.

## Grading

UNDERGRADS	GRADS	Pnts	Course grades based on points earned			
Participation	Participation	15	A	93-100	C	73-76.9
Reflective essay	Case analysis	20	A-	90-92.9	C-	70-72.9
Group Blogs (4)	Blogs (6)	20	B+	87-89.9	D+	67-69.9
Comments	Comments	10	B	83-86.9	D	63-66.9
Lit review paper	Lit review paper	30	B-	80-82.9	D-	60-62.9
Feedback on LR	Feedback on LR	5	C+	77-79.9	N	< 70
<b>TOTAL points</b>		<b>100</b>			P	≥ 70

## Special Needs

If you have a **documented disability** and need adjustments to ensure an effective learning experience, or are **on a UO sports team** and will miss an occasional class because of travel, contact Holly ASAP. Arrange to have the relevant office (Office of Disability Services or Athletic Department) contact me regarding the appropriate accommodations. NOTE: if your schedule requires regular absences, *you should not take this class*, as participation and exercises are important.

**Non-native English speakers.** I want your performance in this course to reflect your understanding of group dynamics as well as the quality of your thinking. Because the measurement of understanding and thinking quality is based on your writing in English, this may pose special challenges to you. Rely on your group members for assistance with grammar and other technical aspects of writing for the written assignments. Holly and Jason can also give you feedback on early drafts regarding writing issues.

## Problem Situations

### Late Work

Points deducted unless late submission approved *\*preferably in advance\** by Holly due to some unusual circumstance. Blog comments made after the deadline will not be counted.

### Alternative Arrangements not related to Disability or UO Sports

If you have some kind of special circumstance and need an adjustment, this may be possible with advance notice. Unexpected requests at the last minute (or after the fact) are much less likely to get a positive response.

### Academic Dishonesty

All work submitted must be your own (or your group's for group assignments) and produced exclusively for this course, unless you receive explicit permission to use the work for more than one course. Getting feedback on drafts from group members and friends is encouraged and completely acceptable, and non-native English speakers may consult with ALS or an English coach to improve their writing. However, you must *\*not\** have others do the writing for you.

The use of sources must be properly acknowledged and documented (when in doubt, cite!). Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade in the course and will also be referred to the Student Conduct Committee. If you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty, see <http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm> for more information.

## Readings, Activities, Due Dates

<i>Week One</i>	<i>Topic / Focus</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Other Events &amp; Assignments</i>
M March 29	<b>Studying Groups</b>	Syllabus	Introductions, temporary groups
W March 31		Jordon & Zanna, 1999; Wheelan 2009	Process Coding Exercise
<b>Week Two</b>	<i>Permanent Groups formed this week</i>		
M April 5	<b>Composition</b>	Tziner & Eden 1985; Taylor et al 2007	Speed dating & Group Formation
W April 7		Army Crew Team case (Snook & Polzer)	Blog Essay #1 (all): Post by 9 PM
<b>Week Three</b>			
M April 12	<b>Status, Identity &amp; Structure</b>	Seeley et al. 2003; Anderson et al. 2001	Group exercise
W April 14		Nurses & Nighthawks (Denison; Wood)	Blog Essay #2 (all): Post by 9 PM
<b>Week Four</b>			
M April 19	<b>Conflict</b>	Abu-Nimer 1996; de Dreu & Weingart 2003	Group exercise
W April 21		Learning Team & Chinese Brewery cases	Blog #3 <b>*Even*</b> groups By 9 PM
<b>Week Five</b>	<i>Midterm Skills Progress and Class Assessments</i>		
M April 26	<b>Decision Making</b>	Turner et al.1992; Stasser & Titus, 2003	<i>Skills &amp; class assess</i>
W April 28		Columbia Case (Bohmer et al.)	Blog #4 <b>*Odd*</b> groups By 9 PM
<b>Week Six</b>	<i>**First 150 words of Reflective Essay or Group Case Analysis Draft to Holly Monday ***</i>		
M May 3	<b>Differences</b>	Differences Exercise	<i>First 150 wordsRE by 9 PM</i>
W May 5		Gruenfeld, 1995;Gibson & Vermeulen, 2003	
<b>Week Seven</b>	<i>Reflective Essay or Group Case Analysis Due 9 AM Monday</i>		
M May 10	<b>Productivity</b>	Paulus & Brown, 2007; Wooley et al 2008	Group exercise
W May 12*		Surgical Teams Case (Edmondson 2003)	Blog #5 <b>*Even*</b> groups By 9 PM
<b>Week Eight</b>	<i>**First 250 words of Lit Review Essay, List of Refs &amp; a sample annotation to Holly**</i>		
M May 17	<b>Leadership</b>	Couzin et al 2005; Javidan et al. 2006	Group exercise
W May 19		Coach K & Coach Knight Cases	Blog #6 <b>*Odd*</b> groups By 9 PM
<b>Week Nine</b>	<i>**Deliver Full Draft of Lit Review to Partner by Friday NOON **</i>		
M May 24	<b>Adaptation</b>	Gersick 1989; LePine 2005	Group exercise
W May 26		Mann Gulch Case (Weick, 1993)	<b>*Optional</b> Blog for the Ambitious*
<b>Week Ten</b>	<i>**Feedback on lit review due in class Wed at the latest – earlier is even better **</i>		
M May 31	<b>Integration Wrap-Up</b>	<b>MEMORIAL DAY NO CLASS</b>	<i>*Bring Written Feedback to class on Wed – both for author(s) and a copy for Holly*</i>
W June 1		Wrap Up & Peer Feedback, Evals	
M June 7	<i>*Lit Review due to Holly by NOON Monday 7 June*</i>		

## Reading List

- Abu-Nimer, M. (1996). Conflict resolution approaches: Western and Middle Eastern lessons and possibilities. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 55(1), 35-52.
- Anderson, C., John, O. P., Keltner, D., & Kring, A. M. (2001). Who attains social status? Effects of personality and physical attractiveness in social groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(1), 116-132.
- Bohmer, R., Feldman, L. R., Ferlins, E. M., Edmondson, A. C., & Roberto, M. A. (2004). *Columbia's Final Mission (Case 304090-PDF-ENG)*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Couzin, I. D., Krause, J., Franks, N. R., & Levin, S. A. (2005). Effective leadership and decision-making in animal groups on the move. *Nature*, 433(7025), 513-516.
- De Dreu, C. K. W., & Weingart, L. R. (2003). Task versus relationship conflict, team performance, and team member satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(4), 741-749.
- Denison, D., R., & Sutton, Robert I. (1990). Operating room nurses. In J. R. Hackman (Ed.), *Groups that work (and those that don't)* (pp. 293-308). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Edmondson, A. C. (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: How team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6), 1419-1452.
- Gersick, C. J. (1989). Marking time: Predictable transitions in task groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, 32(2), 274-309.
- Gibson, C., & Vermeulen, F. (2003). A healthy divide: Subgroups as a stimulus for team learning behavior. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 48(2), 202-239.
- Gruenfeld, D. H. (1995). Status, ideology, and integrative complexity on the U.S. Supreme Court: Rethinking the politics of political decision making. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 68(1), 5-20.
- Isabella, L. (2007). *A Learning Team Drama in One Act* (No. UV0756): University of Virginia Darden School Foundation.
- Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., Luque, M. S., & House, R. J. (2006). In the eye of the beholder: Cross cultural lessons in leadership from project GLOBE. *The Academy of Management Perspectives (formerly The Academy of Management Executive)(AMP)*, 20(1), 67-90.
- Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (1999). Appendix: How to read a journal article in social psychology. *The self in social psychology*, 461-470.
- LePine, J. A. (2005). Adaptation of teams in response to unforeseen change: effects of goal difficulty and team composition in terms of cognitive ability and goal orientation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6), 1153-1167.
- March, R. M., & Wu, S.-H. (2007). *The Chinese Negotiator: How to Succeed in the World's Largest Market*. Tokyo: Kodansha International. (excerpt)
- Paulus, P. B., & Brown, V. R. (2007). Toward more creative and innovative group idea generation: A cognitive-social-motivational perspective of brainstorming. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 1(1), 248-265.
- Seeley, E. A., Gardner, W. L., Pennington, G., & Gabriel, S. (2003). Circle of friends or members of a group? Sex differences in relational and collective attachment to groups. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 6(3), 251.
- Snook, S. A., Perlow, L. A., & Delacey, B. J. (2005). *Coach K: A Matter of the Heart (Case 406044-PDF-ENG)*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Snook, S. A., Perlow, L. A., & Delacey, B. J. (2005). *Coach Knight: The Will to Win (Case 406043-PDF-ENG)*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Snook, S. A., & Polzer, J. T. (2003). *Army Crew Team (Case 9-403-131)*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Stasser, G., & Titus, W. (2003). Hidden profiles: A brief history. *Psychological Inquiry*, 14(3), 304-313.
- Taylor, C., Cindy, L., Kulik, J., Badr, H., Smith, M., Basen-Engquist, K., et al. (2007). A social comparison theory analysis of group composition and efficacy of cancer support group programs. *Social Science & Medicine*, 65(2), 262-273.
- Turner, M. E., Pratkanis, A. R., Probasco, P., & Leve, C. (1992). Threat, cohesion, and group effectiveness: Testing a social identity maintenance perspective on groupthink. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(5), 781-796.
- Tziner, A., & Eden, D. (1985). Effects of crew composition on crew performance: Does the whole equal the sum of its parts? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 70(1), 85-93.
- Weick, K. E. (1993). The collapse of sensemaking in organizations: The Mann Gulch disaster. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38(4), 628-652.
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- Wood, J. D. (1990). New Haven Nighthawks. In J. R. Hackman (Ed.), *Groups that work (and those that don't)* (pp. 265-279). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Woolley, A. W., Gerbasi, M. E., Chabris, C. F., Kosslyn, S. M., & Hackman, J. R. (2008). Bringing in the experts: How team composition and collaborative planning jointly shape analytic effectiveness. *Small Group Research*, 39(3), 352.