

Syllabus: Group Dynamics

CRNs: 35240 /35253

Psy 457/557, Spring 2015, Tu & Th 12-13:50, 101 Knight Library

Professor/TA	Office	E-mail	Phone	Office Hours
Dr. Holly Arrow	Straub 421	harrow@uoregon.edu	346-1996	M 11-12; Fri 8:30-9:30
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Course Description Overview

This course has three interrelated goals:

- 1) acquaint you with theory and research on small groups, with an emphasis on recent work
- 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, and comments on essays written by others.

Work Load Overview and Time Estimates

Undergrads (457) will complete one short paper (2-3 pages), collaborate on five short (250 words max) group essays, read and comment on the essays of other groups, and complete a take-home final. Attendance and participation (40 hrs class time) is required. Estimate of time required to do all reading and assignments with care: About 40 hours for reading, 20 hours for the group essays, 5 hours to read and comment on essays of other students, and 15 hours for the short paper (draft and final revision) and take home final (short answer and essays).

Grad students (557) Along with the assigned readings and class time (80 hours) grads will complete a case analysis (15 hours including extra reading) a literature review (30 hours including reading), 5 short essays (25 hours), and read and make comments on the undergrad group essays and provide feedback on the draft lit reviews of other grad students (10 hours).

Requirements for Undergrads (447) and Grads (557)

1. Participation

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 the quality of group members' participation, and there will be a chance to change group membership in Week 4 if some groups aren't working well together. Peer ratings will help determine participation grades.

2. Readings

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 discuss the readings with your group. As a group, you will also develop and post 5 short integrative group essays 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 **5 PM Friday. *The strict length limit is 250 words.*** Each group will post a single essay. **Do not wait until the last minute to post! Allow a time buffer for technical difficulties**

3b. Grad Student Blog Essays (557)

Grad students will complete 5 blogs, some as a group, some individually or in pairs (depending on grad enrollment). For essays 2a-4b, grad students can choose which essay to write (a or b).

Essay Grades: Blog essays 1-4 will be graded on a 1-5 scale on two dimensions:

Content: Ideas/Insight/Integration of Literature/Innovative/Thought-Provoking

Execution: Writing clarity/Organization/Accuracy /Formatting of Cites

Assignments will be posted on Blackboard; see BB for grading rubric and writing tips.

Blog 0 will receive feedback but no grade: the first group project is always a bit stressful, so the focus for this first blog is on developing a sensible group process.

3c. Comments (All): After the blog essays are published, *every student* is responsible for reading all the essays. For the first two essays (0 and 1), *all students* are responsible for making at least one substantive comment on one of the other essays by **Noon Monday**.

For subsequent essays (which alternate between ODD and EVEN groups, 2a-4b), students in groups that did NOT write an essay that week are responsible for making at least one substantive comment by **Noon Monday**.

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 with no specifics are less useful and will get half credit. *Comments must be posted by the deadline to count.*

4. Make observation notes (raw material for reflective essay or case)

Pick a group or two you are in or interact with and take notes on your observations and insights about during the term. Your observations will serve as raw material for either the Reflective Essay (457) or the Group Dynamics Case (557). Your notes are private – no need to turn in.

4a. Reflective Essay (457)

For the **2-3 page reflective essay** (500-750 words), connect your observations of one or more 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: (Wheelan, 2009). See schedule for when to submit partial draft on Blackboard (different deadlines for Odd and Even group members). ***Both the partial draft and the final essay must be submitted when due*** to receive full credit. You will have some time in class to trade and peer review close-to-final drafts.

4b. Group Dynamics Case (GRADS only, 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. Partial draft due on Blackboard Week 5; Final version due Week 6 (see schedule for dates/times). **Both the draft and final case must be submitted when due** to receive full credit. *NOTE: Two extra HBS readings provide tips for case writing.*

5a. Take Home Final (457). The final will consist of several short answers and essay questions. It will be open book, open notes, but you must complete it yourself. Completed finals must be submitted on Blackboard by the time/day of our final exam time. Early submission is welcome. ESL students may consult a tutor for writing assistance. ****No other assistance* is permitted.***

5b. Literature Review Paper (GRADS only, 557). Choose a substantive question about group dynamics and complete a literature review of relevant research. The paper should include a minimum of 20 sources, of which at least 10 are peer-reviewed articles published in 2000 or later. A 7-10 page double-spaced review essay should provide a critical summary of what these sources tell us about the question, what issues remain unresolved, and what you think is the most important direction for future research to take. The full paper (counting title page, reference list, etc.) should be 2500-3500 words. Partial draft due Week 9; Final version due Mon Finals week.

Grading

UNDERGRADS	GRADS	%	Course grades based on % of 100 earned			
Participation	Participation	20	A	93-100	C	73-76.9
Reflective essay	Case analysis	20	A-	90-92.9	C-	70-72.9
Group blogs (1-4)	Blog essays (1-4)	20	B+	87-89.9	D+	67-69.9
Comments	Comments	10	B	83-86.9	D	63-66.9
Take home final	Lit review paper	30	B-	80-82.9	D-	60-62.9
			C+	77-79.9	N	< 70
TOTAL		100			P	70 or higher

For Psychology department grading standards, see
<http://psychology.uoregon.edu/courses/departments-grading-standards/>

Special Needs

If you have a **documented disability** or are **on a UO sports team** and will miss class because of travel, have the relevant office (Acessible Education Center or Athletic Department) contact me regarding the appropriate accommodations. NOTE: if your schedule requires regular absences, ***you should not take this class.*** **Non-native English speakers** are encouraged to consult with writing coaches for assistance. Holly and Erik can also give you extra feedback on early drafts.

Problem Situations

Late Work

Points will be deducted if your **Reflective Essay draft or final essay (or Case or Lit Review drafts or finals for grads)** are late unless late submission is approved **in advance** by Holly due to some unusual circumstance. Blog comments made after the deadline **will not count**, and group blog essays ***MUST*** be submitted on time; otherwise you will mess up the schedule for the rest of the class.

Alternative Arrangements not related to Disability, ESL, or UO Sports

If you have some kind of special circumstance and need an adjustment, this may well 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, friends, Holly, or Erik is encouraged and completely acceptable. Non-native English speakers are encouraged to 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!). If I suspect academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism) I will contact you directly and if this does not clear up any suspicion I will also report this to the Student Conduct Committee. My preferred sanction is failing the course; the Student Conduct Committee may decide on additional actions.

If you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty, see

<http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm> for more information.

Readings

- Aggarwal, P., & O'Brien, C. L. (2008). Social loafing on group projects: Structural antecedents and effect on student satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 1-10. doi:10.1177/0273475308322283
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- Denison, D. R., & Sutton, R. 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.
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- prisoner's dilemma game: How common fate, proximity, and similarity affect intergroup competition. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 120: 168–180.
- Isabella, L. (2007). *A Learning Team Drama in One Act* (No. UV0756): University of Virginia Darden School Foundation.
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- Perlman, L. M, et al. (2010). A multidimensional wellness group therapy program for Veterans with comorbid psychiatric and medical conditions. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 41 (2), 120–127.
- Poulin, F., Dishion, T. J., Burraston, B. (2001). 3-year iatrogenic effects associated with aggregating high-risk adolescents in cognitive-behavioral preventive interventions. *Applied Developmental Science*, 5 (4), 214-224.
- Roberto, M. A., & Carioggia, G. M. (2003). *Mount Everest—1996 (Case 9-303-061)*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Scheepers, D. (2009). Turning social identity threat into challenge: Status stability and cardiovascular reactivity during inter-group competition. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 228-233.
- 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), 251-263.
- Snook, S. A., & Polzer, J. T. (2003). *Army Crew Team (Case 9-403-131)*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- 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.
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- 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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Readings, Activities, Due Dates

Week One	Topic / Focus	Readings	Other Events & Assignments
Tu March 31	Studying Groups	Syllabus	Introductions, temporary groups
Th April 2		Wooley et al. 2010; Wheelan 2009	Process Coding Exercise
Week Two	Permanent Groups formed this week		
Tu April 7	Composition, Cohesion, & Performance	Tziner & Eden 1985; Arrow 2010	Speed dating
*Th April 9		Army Crew Team case (Snook/Polzer)	Group formation & first task: Blog Essay #0 (all): Due Fri 5 PM
Week Three	Comments on blogs due by Monday Noon		
Tu April 14	Members & Motivation	Seeley et al. 2003; Aggarwal & O'Brien, 2008	Group exercise
Th April 16		Nurses & Nighthawks (Denison; Wood)	Blog Essay #1by Fri 5 PM
Week Four	Comments on blogs due by Monday Noon		
Tu April 21	Conflict & Difference	Watson et al.; Jehn & Mannix 2001	Group health check & Member change
Th April 23		Learning Team case (Isabella)	Essay #2a *Odd* groups Fri 5 PM
Week Five	Even group members comment Mon Noon **Grads: First 150 Words Case due Tues 6 PM		
Tu April 28	Decision Making	Packer 2009; Wittenbaum et al. 2004	Skills & class assess
Th April 30		Columbia case (Bohmer et al.)	Essay #2b *Even* grps Fri 5 PM
Week Six	Odd group members: comment Mon Noon ; First 150 words Reflective Essay Mon 6 PM **Grads: Final Case due Thurs 6 PM; Share drafts with other grads Tues to get feedback		
Tu May 5	Task Performance	Woolley et al. 2008	Group exercise
Th May 7		Surgical Teams case (Edmondson 2003)	Essay #3a *Odd* grps Fri 5 PM
Week Seven	Even group members: comment Monday Noon . First 150 words Reflective Essay Mon 6 PM Odd group members: Final Reflective Essay Thurs 6 PM ; Bring draft for peer review Tues class		
Tu May 12	Leadership	Javidan et al. 2006; Couzin et al. 2005	Peer review of Essay/Case
Th May 14		Mount Everest case (Roberto & Carioggia)	Essay #3b *Even* grps Fri 5 PM
Week Eight	Odd group members comment Monday Noon Even group members: Final Reflective Essay Thur 6 PM ; Bring draft for peer review Tues class		
Tu May 19	Intergroup Dynamics	Kurzban et al. 2001; Scheepers 2009	Peer review of Essay/Case
Th May 21		Intergroup conflict in Ferguson, Missouri	Essay #4a *Odd* grps Fri 5 PM
Week Nine	Even group members comment Monday Noon ; **Grads: First 2 pages lit review + list of references submitted by Mon 6 PM**		
Tu May 26	Adaptation	LePine 2005	Group exercise
Th May 28		Mann Gulch (Weick, 1993)	Essay #4b *Even* grps Fri 5 PM
Week Ten	Odd group members comment Monday Noon		
Tu June 2	Therapy & Support	Poulin et al. 2001; Perlman et al. 2010	<i>*Take home final essay Qs posted on BB by Mon 6 PM*</i>
Th June 4		Peer Evals, Review for Final	
Mon June 8	<i>*Take-home FINAL: Submit by midnight, Mon, June 8. *Grads: Final Lit Review due Mon</i>		

