Professor
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Email: gwittenb@msu.edu
Office Hrs: Tues./Thurs., 2:15-3:15 p.m.
and by appointment

Assistant
Name: Delores Carter

Class Meets: 12:40 - 2:00 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, 155 COM

Text
• Additional readings available on Angel (angel.msu.edu)

Course Description
This course provides an overview of the basic theory, concepts, and research in small group processes as well as select applications to law, politics, and business.

Course Objectives
1. To foster the understanding, critique, analysis, and integration of the major theory and research of small group processes.
2. To encourage the application of small group research in order to explain and understand everyday group situations (e.g., Why doesn’t Sam do anything to help out with the group project?) and historical group events (e.g., Why did decision-makers at NASA decide to let Challenger lift-off despite reports of problems with the aircraft?).

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Paper or Fourth Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final grading is based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Final Points</th>
<th>Final %</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Final Points</th>
<th>Final %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>465 - 500</td>
<td>93 - 100%</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>350 – 374.5</td>
<td>70 - 74.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>435 – 464.5</td>
<td>87 - 92.9%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>325 – 349.5</td>
<td>65 - 69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>400 – 434.5</td>
<td>80 - 86.9%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>300 – 324.5</td>
<td>60 - 64.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>375 – 399.5</td>
<td>75 - 79.9%</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>299.5 and less</td>
<td>59.9% and less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exams**

There will be three inter-semester exams and one final exam. Exams will cover the reading assignments, handouts, lectures, class discussions, demonstrations, and audio-visual materials used in class. Exams will consist mostly of multiple-choice and short answer items and will be non-comprehensive (i.e., only covering new material since the last exam). Although there will be four exams, you may opt to take only three exams and write an application paper in lieu of taking a fourth exam. If you prefer to write a paper instead of taking a fourth exam, the most reasonable approach is to take the first three exams and opt out of the final exam. Intentionally missing one of the first three exams is risky given that illness or some other unexpected emergency may make you miss a later exam, resulting in more than one missed exam. One missed exam (for any reason, anticipated or not anticipated, by choice or chance) will necessitate that you write an application paper. However, subsequent missed exams will receive grades of 0.0, given this class has a no make-up exam policy. *No make-up exams will be given prior to or after a missed exam, regardless of the reason for the missed exam.* Thus, do not miss more than one exam.

You may dispute exam items that you missed by giving me a typewritten appeal within one week of exam returns. In your appeal, indicate the answer you chose and why you think that answer was as good or better than the one I chose as correct. My decision regarding your appeal is final and non-negotiable. See the attached “Appeal process for exams,” regarding the appeal procedure.

**Application Paper**

The application paper is designed to help you better understand, integrate, and apply the course material. It involves applying the principles of group dynamics to either 1) a real group of which you are not a member but whose operations are well-known to the public (e.g., from a film, television program, or historical/current event) or 2) a formal group of which you used to be or are currently a member (e.g., musical band, sports team). The paper will be worth a maximum of 100 points – 20% of the course grade for students who intentionally or unintentionally miss an exam. Students who take all four exams will not write an application paper. Full details of the paper will be discussed later in the semester. In order to be accepted for full credit, the paper must be (a) typed or word-processed, and (b) handed in, in class, by the due date. Papers received after class on the due date through 5 p.m. the following day will be considered for half credit per the instructor’s discretion. All papers received thereafter will receive a score of zero.
**Class Participation**

Your active involvement in the class is essential to making it a useful learning experience. In order to be involved in the class, it is necessary to attend class. Also, attendance will help you to learn the course material and perform well on exams. Missed classes may be excused with appropriate documentation as determined by the instructor. Students additionally are expected to read assigned material prior to class meetings, be prepared to ask and answer questions, actively participate in class discussions and exercises, and complete small homework assignments. Failure to engage in behaviors consistent with the “Student Code of Conduct” (see attachment) will compromise one’s class participation. Class participation will be evaluated from a maximum of 100 points – 20% of the course grade.

**Extra Credit**

Research opportunities may become available during the semester. If so, students may participate in these studies for extra class credit (for a potential maximum of 8 extra credit points). You will be informed how to sign-up and earn credit for studies if and when they become available.

**Assistance**

It is your responsibility to seek assistance when you are having difficulty understanding the course material. Please ask questions during class if the material is unclear and/or seek help during office hours (or set up an appointment) to receive assistance outside of class. You don’t have to be in dire straits to receive assistance. Office visits also are helpful for review of course material and other guidance.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, claiming someone else’s work or ideas as your own, removing an exam from the classroom) is a serious offense. All work that you submit in this class must be completed independently. Each student is responsible for being familiar with MSU’s policies on academic dishonesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide available on the MSU Web site (http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm). Any student engaging in academic dishonesty in this course will receive a “0.0” for their final course grade.
## Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T: 1/11</td>
<td>Overview of Course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| R: 1/13 & T: 1/18 | Topic: Introduction to Small Groups  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 1  
| R: 1/20 & T: 1/25 | Topic: Methods of Inquiry and Analysis  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 2  
| R: 1/27         | Topic: Group Formation  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 3 (to p. 76), chapter 4 |
| T: 2/1          | Topic: Group Cohesion and Development  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 5  
| R: 2/3          | **EXAM 1 on Thursday, February 3**                                                      |
| T: 2/8, R: 2/10 & T: 2/15 | Topic: Group Structure and Socialization  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 6  
| R: 2/17 & T: 2/22 | Topic: Influence  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 7 |
| R: 2/24 & T: 3/1 | Topic: Power and Obedience  
Reading:  
• Forsyth, chapter 8 |
<p>| R: 3/3          | <strong>EXAM 2 on Thursday, March 3</strong>                                                        |
| M-F: 3/7-3/11   | <strong>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES</strong>                                                         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T: 3/15, R: 3/17, T: 3/22</td>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Leadership  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Reading:</strong>  &lt;br&gt; - Forsyth, chapter 9  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Movie:</strong> <em>Twelve Angry Men</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: 4/5</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 3 on Tuesday, April 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>R: 4/7</td>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Decision-Making: Polarization  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Reading:</strong>  &lt;br&gt; - Forsyth, chapter 11 (pp. 313-336)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: 4/12</td>
<td><strong>APPLICATION PAPER DRAFT DUE in class on Tuesday, April 12</strong>  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Topic:</strong> Decision-Making: Carter Racing Case  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Reading:</strong>  &lt;br&gt; - Carter Racing – DRRC case (provided in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R: 4/14</td>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Decision-Making: Groupthink  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Reading:</strong>  &lt;br&gt; - Forsyth, chapter 11 (pp. 336-350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R: 4/21</td>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Conflict  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Reading:</strong>  &lt;br&gt; - Forsyth, chapter 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: 4/26</td>
<td><strong>APPLICATION PAPER DUE in class on Tuesday, April 26</strong>  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Topic:</strong> Intergroup Conflict  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Reading:</strong>  &lt;br&gt; - Forsyth, chapter 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R: 4/28</td>
<td>Clean-up and Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R: 5/5</td>
<td><strong>FINAL EXAM</strong>  &lt;br&gt; <strong>Thursday, May 5, 12:45 – 2:45 p.m., 155 COM</strong></td>
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COM 340: Leadership and Group Communication

Student Code of Conduct

General Policy

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in the classroom. As noted in the University’s Code of Teaching Responsibility, this involves “the right of faculty members to conduct classes, and of students to participate in those classes, without interference or disruption.” Additionally, section 2.3.5 in the “Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University” report states that, “the student’s behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned.” If a student’s behavior is so disruptive that it interferes with the teaching and learning process, the student may be required to leave the classroom and could be referred to the student judicial affair’s office for a disciplinary hearing.

Conduct in the Classroom

Effective teaching and learning in the classroom is compromised by the following student behaviors:

- Arriving late to class.*
- Leaving early from class.*
- Reading newspapers during class instruction or exercises.
- Studying for other classes during class instruction or exercises.
- Engaging in private conversations with classmates during class instruction.
- Passing notes with classmates during class instruction.
- Using a cell phone during class time.
- Using a laptop computer for anything other than note-taking during class time.
- Sleeping during class time.
- Interrupting or interfering with a classmate’s contributions to the class.

* If it is necessary to arrive late or leave early from a particular class, please inform the instructor in advance.

Conduct Outside of the Classroom

After a missed class, it is the student’s responsibility to obtain notes from classmates and to request missed class handouts from the instructor. The instructor will not provide a private lecture to students who missed a class.

Students are expected to attend office hours with prepared questions and evidence of having attempted to learn the material beforehand. Students should read the assigned material before getting help on it during office hours.

Appropriate methods of contacting the instructor outside of the classroom are via office phone, office visit, and email. Other methods of contact on or off campus are unacceptable.
The appeal process exists for students who feel that they deserve all or partial credit for select exam items graded as incorrect. Each student has the right to appeal one or more multiple choice exam items for all exams except the final exam. Requirements for the appeal process are outlined below.

1. Students can appeal their scoring of multiple choice exam items only.

2. The written appeal for each item should include the item number and the student’s marked answer. To receive full credit, the student must explain a) how his/her chosen answer can be considered correct and b) why her/his chosen answer is as good as or better than the designated correct answer. Successful appeals use support from the assigned reading materials and class lecture rather than students’ own personal opinions and experiences.

3. Appeals cannot be made for exam items that a student thinks had no correct option. Such items should have been brought to the instructor’s attention during the exam.

4. Appeals must be typewritten and submitted during class or via email (to gwittenb@msu.edu) no later than ONE WEEK after exams are returned.

5. Any attempt to appeal exam items in a way that does not follow this procedure will negate the student’s right to appeal for current and future exams in COM 340.

6. The instructor’s decision regarding the appeal is non-negotiable and final.