

AEC 4434 – Section 9159
Communication & Leadership in Groups and Teams
3 Credits
Spring 2015

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Class Meeting Times and Locations: **Tuesdays 8th-9th periods (3:00 p.m.- 4:55 p.m.)**
Rolfs 205

Thursdays 9th period (4:05 p.m. – 4:55 p.m.)
Rolfs 205

Required Textbooks:

Hughes, M. & Terrell, J. B. (2007). *The emotionally intelligent team: Understanding and developing the behaviors of success*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lencioni, P. M. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Course Description:

This course is designed to examine leadership as it relates to group and team behavior. Topics will focus on: components of a group and team, relationships of group and team members, effectiveness of groups and teams, communication in groups and teams and leadership of groups and teams. This course is designed for all students who are interested in positions of leadership and who want to learn more about making the groups and teams they work with and lead more effective.

Given their participation in this course, students should have a greater ability for influence, change management, and team dynamics within the contexts of transformational organizational practice. This course will have application for contexts within the fields of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and beyond.

Objectives:

The general objectives of this course are to:

1. Describe effective leadership and membership in groups and teams.
2. Examine group communication strategies and techniques.
3. Determine group and team processes, which include how they function, influences, and the stages of development.
4. Analyze problems associated with working in a group or team.

5. Evaluate group and team performance, which includes examining effectiveness of a group/team and ways to improve performance.

Expectations, Assignments, Grades, and Dates

Attendance and participation:

Attendance and participation in class is expected and required. Both will be taken into account in your final grade. Attendance and participation in class are both vitally important to a thorough understanding of the material that will be covered. The decision to attend class is solely the decision of the student. There will be miscellaneous class assignments and quizzes given throughout the semester—if you are in class, you'll be duly rewarded. If you're not, you won't be.

Absences are excused in case of illness or medical emergency with a note from the University Health Center and/or a medical doctor. They will also be excused for UF sanctioned events with a note from the sponsoring organization and/or faculty member.

I would appreciate you letting me know if you're planning to miss class—excused or not as many classes we will be doing group activities and an accurate head count is necessary. If you habitually don't attend, you will not succeed in this course.

Reading Assignments:

There are two books required for this course. Both may be purchased at the University of Florida bookstore. Used copies may be available on-line at www.amazon.com or www.half.com. Additional readings may be assigned from the recommended texts or from additional journals, magazines, books, etc. These additional readings will be distributed in class.

Students are required to read the assigned materials prior to the class discussion of the topic and are expected to participate in the discussion.

Examinations:

There will be one midterm exam and will comprise 100 points of the overall grade. This exam may consist of the following questions: multiple-choice, true/false, matching and short answer/essay. The mid term must be taken on the day assigned; make-up exams will not be given without prior approval of the instructor or an approved doctor's note.

There will be a final exam in this class. For this exam, you will be given a set of reflection questions to answer. Your responses will be graded on how well you demonstrate your understanding of the material covered within the course and you experiences throughout the semester working in your team. This paper will be worth 100 points or 10% of your final grade.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY (by Dr. Katie Abrams, used with permission)

Listen, I love my computers, smartphone, e-mail, G-chat, Facebook, Twitter, universal remote, GPS, and my microwave. Yeah, technology is awesome. But there's a time and a place. That time and that place is NOT during or in our class.

We are an “always on” culture, which is a good and bad thing. I see it in faculty meetings and at conferences, and I’m sure you’ll see it in some workplace meetings. I am incredibly offended and distracted when students try to sneak in or blatantly use whatever communication tool may be in right now during my classes. It is also distracting to other students. Every workplace will have its norms or set rules about using electronic devices, and this is the policy for our class. Do not use your smartphone, laptop, carrier pigeon, or any other communication device while in our class unless it is approved for a class-related activity or there is an emergency in the class. And if it’s an emergency, please chose your cell phone over the carrier pigeon.

*If you are an electronic note-taker, I’d assume you’d have a laptop or something along those lines. You may use that to take notes **with the wireless Internet capability turned off**. However, if I personally catch you or am informed by another student that you start using it to check e-mail or other websites, I will no longer allow you to bring it to class.*

And you, yes you there, with the smartphone sitting in front of you on the desk or in your lap. I wasn’t born yesterday. This is equally as offensive and not permitted during class. And you, over there with the minimized screen or hidden browser tab open to your e-mail or was that Youtube? Yeah, also not cool. Don’t do this.

Would it trouble you to disconnect from e-mail, texting, social networking, chatting, and checking your favorite websites for potentially 150 minutes on Tuesdays and Thursdays? No, it will be so relieving. And just think about how many posts will be on your Facebook newsfeed for you to enjoy when you’re done!

Computer and Internet use is only allowed during class when the instructor designates so during an activity. During this approved time, students may only use websites related to the class activity.

Assignments:

Leadership Team Project (350 points total)

Since this is a class on teams, there will be a “team” assignment. You will be assigned to a team of five members. Each team will select a group, organization, project, or cause to apply the leadership skills learned during the course in a “real world” situation. Each team is responsible for the following in regards to the team project:

1. Identify a group, organization or cause;
2. Contact the group, organization or cause;
3. Develop a plan based on the needs of the group, organization or cause;
4. Implement the plan;
5. Prepare a presentation highlighting the project.

Goals of the Leadership Team Project

1. Make a lasting contribution to the group, organization or cause;
2. Focus on a real “need” in our community;
3. Successfully work together as a team;

You are permitted the autonomy and creative freedom to convey your perspectives by any means necessary. Show your genius and produce a quality product worthy of your education.

Individual Research on an Organization (25 points)

One week after the teams are assigned for this project, each team member will write a one page summary of an organization that they would like to work with for this project. Included in this summary are the needs of the organization, what type of project the team could successfully complete and a proposed timeline for completion. Each team member will then present their summary to their teammates and the team will then choose which organization they would like work with for this assignment.

Progress Reports (50 points)

Each team will be required to turn in one progress report twice during the semester to discuss how the project is going and how the team is working together. Criteria for these progress reports will be shared prior to the first due date. Each report is worth 25 points and should be two pages in length.

Outside Social Activity (25 points)

Part of being a highly functioning team is the ability to get along with people—whether you really like them or not. An indicator of a “good” team is that teammates actually want to spend time together outside of the parameters of what they are working on. To that end, it is expected that each team will participate in a social activity—this could be meeting up for a meal, a sporting event, ice cream, whatever works for your team. A photograph of the team’s social event will be turned in as well as a brief synopsis of the activity. This activity has to occur prior to the team presentation.

Team Presentation (100 points)

A group presentation on this project will account for 10% of your total grade. This presentation offers each team the opportunity to share their accomplishments dealing with their project. The presentation should reflect professionalism and the efforts of the entire team. Areas of the presentation should include:

1. Need identification;
2. Planning components;
3. Project implementation;
4. Project evaluation;
5. Leadership concepts and theories practiced during the project.

Presentations should be 15 – 20 minutes in length and incorporate any audio-visual aids that support the presentation.

Reflection Paper on the Team Project (100 points)

In addition to the presentation, each team member will individually write a paper on their reflections on this project and its outcomes. Utilizing what you have learned in class—what went well, what did not, what could have been done differently? I want your honest assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your team and how the experience could have been improved. The paper should be three to five pages in length and will account for 10% of your total grade.

Team Member Evaluation (50 points)

Part of your final grade for the team assignments will be assigned by your teammates. Because each individual is responsible to a team—it will be up to members of the team to determine how effective (or not) each member was in fulfilling their responsibilities to their team. An additional factor for evaluation is how present each team member was—were they in class for team meetings, did they participate in all aspects of the project, etc.?

Critiques (125 points)

Class members will be responsible for writing two critiques on the leadership they observe in groups and teams. These critiques will be on the following:

Critique #1 – Think of a group/team that you currently belong to or have belonged to, what are your observations on leadership, member behavior, problems within the group/team and the outcomes of the group/team. Using what you have learned in your readings, your experience and knowledge and diagnose the problems of the group/team. This critique should be two to three pages in length and will be worth 50 points.

Critique #2 – Observe leadership in groups and teams in popular culture or in person. For this assignment, watch at least a one hour television program (or movie) which features a group/team (e.g., Grey’s Anatomy, Survivor, The Office) and make similar observations about the group/team dynamics as you did for Critique #1. Or, attend a sporting event, a business meeting, some activity that showcases a group or team and make your observations. This critique should be two to three pages in length and should have a brief synopsis (a paragraph or two) of the program at the beginning. This critique will be worth 75 points.

Team Research Project (100 points)

There is much literature on groups and teams; we will only cover a small amount over the course of this semester. To further augment your class experience, you will spend some time researching topics that relate to groups and teams. For this assignment, find a current (within the last five years) magazine or journal article (on-line sources are acceptable) on a specific topic related to groups or teams. This topic can be one that we covered in class, or one that was not covered, but can be related. Your paper should include: a complete reference for the article, a summary of the article (not to exceed one page), a critique of the ideas presented (are they valid?) and suggestions for how you would apply these ideas to your own leadership or to other concepts discussed in class. This paper is worth 10% of your total grade, should be three to four pages in length and include a copy of the article.

Creation of a Video, Skit or Team Building Activity on “The Five Dysfunctions” (75 points)

You will be able to form your own team of 3-4 individuals to create a 10 minute video or skit (to be performed during class) or lead the class in a team building activity that is centered on one of the dysfunctions outline in the “Five Dysfunctions of a Team”. Your grade will be based on creativity, ability for the audience to learn about the dysfunction and how to overcome it and how your team worked together. More information will be provided.

Attendance and Participation (150 points)

It will be worth your while to come to class! You will be expected to contribute to class discussions, have the assigned material read before class and to be a productive member of your in-class team. Throughout the semester there will be small assignments given in class most days, as well as surprise quizzes. If you consistently come to class, participate and are a contributor to your team, you should earn all the 150 points (and more as we often award some “bonus” points!)

Course Assignments and Grading Values

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Points of Overall Grade</u>
Exams		
Midterm	2/24	100
Final	TBA	100
Assignments		
Leadership Team Project		
Individual Research on Org.	1/20	25
Progress Reports	2/12, 3/12	50
Presentations	4/7, 4/9, 4/14	100
Reflection Paper	4/14	100
Team Member Evaluation	4/14	50
Outside Social Activity	With Presentation	25
Critiques		
Critique #1	1/29	50
Critique #2	2/19	75
Research Project	3/17	100
Video, Skit or Team Building Activity	3/24, 3/26	75
Attendance & Participation		150
	Possible Total	1000 Points

Any assignment turned in late will be penalized 10% off the final grade per day the assignment is late.

Assignments

The purpose of the assignments is to enhance and supplement the learning taking place within the classroom. As this is a leadership class, work turned in is expected to be neat and professional.

Guidelines for papers:

1. 12 point font in Times New Roman
2. Double spaced paragraphs with 1 inch margins

3. Page numbers at bottom center
4. Place your name at the top of each page in the upper left hand corner
5. Do not exceed the number of pages assigned

Components expected in paper assignments:

- 1. Organization**
Grammar, punctuation, spelling, margins, fonts, spacing, length
- 2. Content**
Reference to readings and class discussions
- 3. Original Thought**
Examples of situations you have encountered
- 4. Synopsis**
Did you provide a summary at the end?

2015 Class Schedule:

Date	Topics and Readings
<i>Week 1</i> January 6	Overview of class, assignments, grading, and expectations. Introduction of instructor and classmates
January 8	Introduction to leadership in groups and teams
<i>Week 2</i> January 13	Reading: Chapter 1 & 2 (Hughes & Terrell) Personality Assessment Activity
January 15	Reading: Chapter 3 (Hughes & Terrell) Teams Assigned for Group Project
<i>Week 3</i> January 20	Reading: Chapter 4, 5, 6 (Hughes & Terrell) “Welcome to the Jungle” Activity Individual Research on an Organization Due
January 22	Reading: Chapter 7 (Hughes & Terrell)
<i>Week 4</i> January 27	Communication in Groups and Teams
January 29	Chapter 8 (Hughes & Terrell) Conflict Activity Critique #1 Due

<i>Week 5</i> February 3	Reading: Chapter 9 & 10 (Hughes & Terrell)
February 5	Reading: Chapter 11 (Hughes & Terrell)
<i>Week 6</i> February 10	Reading: Chapter 12 (Hughes & Terrell)
February 12	Reading: Chapter 13 & 14 (Hughes & Terrell) Progress Report #1 Due
<i>Week 7</i> February 17	Miscellaneous Leadership Topics
February 19	Wrap-up and review for exam Critique #2 Due
<i>Week 8</i> February 24	Mid Term Exam
February 26	Work Day – No Class
<i>Week 9</i> March 3	Spring Break – No Class
March 5	Spring Break – No Class
<i>Week 10</i> March 10	Reading: Part 1, 2, & 3 (<i>Five Dysfunctions</i>)
March 12	Incorporating the Five Dysfunctions Progress Report #2 Due
<i>Week 11</i> March 17	Reading: Part 4 (<i>Five Dysfunctions</i>) Review of the Dysfunctions Individual Research Project Due
March 19	Reading: The Model (<i>Five Dysfunctions</i>) Discussion on the <i>Five Dysfunctions</i>
<i>Week 12</i> March 24	Final Thoughts on the <i>Five Dysfunctions</i> Video, Skit or Team Building Activities
March 26	Video, Skit or Team Building Activities

<i>Week 13</i> March 31	Team Scavenger Hunt
April 2	Miscellaneous Leadership Topics
<i>Week 14</i> April 7	Group Presentations (3)
April 9	Group Presentations (2)
<i>Week 15</i> April 14	Group Presentations (3) Reflection Paper & Team Member Evaluations Due
April 16	Debrief of Group Projects
<i>Week 16</i> April 21	Course evaluation, wrap-up
Exam Week	FINAL TBA

Course Grading Scale:

Grades will be based on the number of points earned.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	960 – 1,000
A-	930 - 959
B+	900 - 929
B	870 - 899
B-	840 - 869
C+	810 - 839
C	780 - 809
C-	750 - 779
D+	720 - 749
D	690 - 719
D-	660 - 689
E	659 or less

Academic Honesty

Academic Honesty

Students are required to be honest in all of their university class work. I, as a faculty member, have a duty to promote ethical behavior and avoid practices and environments that foster cheating. I encourage you, as a student in my classroom, to bring incidents of dishonesty to my attention.

In the fall of 1995, the UF student body enacted a new honor code and voluntarily committed itself to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

The Honor Pledge: *We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.*

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

It is to be assumed all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as group project, in writing by the professor.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources:

Students experiencing crisis or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center and Student Mental Health provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, www.counsel.ufl.edu

Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, www.hsc.ufl.edu/shcc/smhs.htm

Career Resource Center, CR-100 JWRU, 392-1602, www.crc.ufl.edu/

Students with Disabilities Act

The Dean of Students Office coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes the registration of disabilities, academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services, and mediating faculty-student disability related issues.

Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-7066, www.dso.ufl.edu.

Disability Resource Center, 0001 Reid Hall (Building 0020), 392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc

Syllabus and Course Amendments

As your instructor I reserve the right to amend this syllabus as appropriate before the semester or if changes are necessary during the semester I will provide adequate notice to all course participants.