

Small Group Communication  
COMM 2333  
Instructor: Stuart Standly

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Office Hours  
TTh 8-10am / 2-4pm  
By Appointment Only

**Textbook (Required):**

Beebe, S.A., & Masterson, J.T. (2015). *Communicating in Small Groups: Principles and Practices, 11<sup>th</sup> edition*. Pearson Publishing: Boston.  
ISBN-13: 978-0-205-98083-3

**Student needs:**

**ADA:** It is Sul Ross University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA coordinator for Program Accessibility located in FH 112.

**Counseling & Accessibility Services:** Ferguson Hall 112      Tel: 432 837-8203

**Course Description:**

This course combines practical experience with application of theoretical perspectives to provide the student with an understanding of the role of communication in group processes. The emphasis is on effective group interaction in task-oriented situations with a focus on elements of small group structure and processes. The course will cover elements of small groups (such as roles, rules, norms, and culture) and communication styles that influence the group problem-solving process. The course includes small group participation and analysis of group communication.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course students will be able to

1. Discriminate between situations in which group members should work together or independently.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the forces at work within a small group.
3. Discern behaviors most helpful in groups and demonstrate these behaviors.
4. Evaluate group scenarios to determine which group strategies will be most effective and should be implemented for each unique collaboration.
5. Understand the role of theory and research in facilitating group processes.

### **Program Learning Outcomes:**

This course is one of the required courses for a major in communication as such it is designed to meet one or more of the program learning outcomes for the major. These learning outcomes include:

1. Demonstrates the ability to competently delivery public presentations, including the use of presentation technology such as software, video, and audio.
2. The ability to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claims, warrants, data, etc...
3. Demonstrates the ability to complete appropriate discipline specific writing assignments.
4. The ability to apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations appropriate to each degree specialization.
5. Demonstrates competent use of media technology including video, audio, and internet-based technology.

### **Course Philosophy:**

Learning is an **active** process in which we all participate. This class is a hands-on, active learning experience. Viewing learning as an active process implies several significant distinctions.

1. An active process suggests the importance of **understanding and experiencing** ideas as they relate to our own lives, rather than just remembering a list of facts.
2. Being **prepared** for class is a commitment that is necessary from each of us. Preparation includes reading and reflecting on the assigned chapters prior to the class period as well as completion of all course assignments.
3. Class lectures and discussions contribute to the learning process, thus **attendance and participation** in all class activities is essential to deriving full benefit from this course.
4. Arriving to class late or leaving the class early disrupts the entire class and distracts from the learning taking place in the class room.

The grading for the course reflects this philosophy, if you arrive for class on time and prepared to participate in the class you will like earn a high grade. If you are consistently late for class (or miss class entirely) and are not prepared for class, you will likely earn a low or failing grade.

**Course grades will be based on a 1000-point scale, as allocated below.**

In-Class Participation	100 points
Chapter Presentation #1	100 points
Presentation #1 Assessment	100 points
Tests #1	100 points
Chapter Presentation #2	100 points
Presentation #2 Assessment	100 points
Test #2	100 points
Group Project Participation	100 points
Group Project Presentation	100 points
Group Project Assessment	100 points

900-1000 points	= A
800-899 points	= B
700-799 points	= C
600-699 points	= D
599 & below	= F

**In-Class Participation:** To facilitate the interactive quality of the class, attendance is required and roll will be taken, if you are not in the classroom at the time roll is taken you will be counted as absent. Your attendance will directly influence your ability to participate in the discussions and exercises that happen in the classroom; and thus will also influence your Participation grade. Excessive unexcused absences may result in you being dropped from the class with a grade of “F.”

**Chapter Presentations:** Students will be divided into sets of 3-4 persons per group. Each group will be required to deliver two prepared presentations over an assigned textbook chapter(s). These assignments will take place at the beginning of the semester.

**Assessments: Presentation/Project:** Students will be required to provide a detailed essay assessment for each presentation and project. Requirements for each assessment will be provided when the presentation is assigned.

**Tests:** Tests may consist of true/false, matching, and multiple choice questions covering the vocabulary and concepts presented in the chapters covered in the unit of study.

**Group Project:** Group Projects will be assigned the first day of class and will run the duration of the semester. The specifics for the Group Projects will be provided and discussed throughout the semester. There are three graded elements for the group projects: Participation, Presentation, and Assessment.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY (from the Student Handbook)**

The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

“Cheating” includes:

1. Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same.
2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a non-administered test.
5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.
6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about a non-administered test.
7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist.
8. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another’s work or idea in one’s own written work offered for credit.
9. "Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.
10. "Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.
11. "Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.

<u>T/Th</u>	<u>11:00 AM</u>	<u>Tentative Schedule</u>
Tuesday	17-Jan	Syllabus Review Group Assignments
Thursday	21-Jan	Introductions How To Assignment
Tuesday	24-Jan	How To Presentations
Thursday	26-Jan	Chapter 1 Group Principals and Practices
Tuesday	31-Jan	Chapter 2 Small Group Communication Theory
Thursday	2-Feb	Group Exercises
Tuesday	7-Feb	Chapter 3 Group Development Appendix A Effective Meetings
Thursday	9-Feb	Group Exercises
Tuesday	14-Feb	Chapter 4 Collaboration - Group 1
Thursday	16-Feb	Group Exercises
Tuesday	21-Feb	Chapter 5 Relating to Others - Group 2
Thursday	23-Feb	Group Exercises
Tuesday	28-Feb	Chapter 6 Group Climate - Group 3
Thursday	2-Mar	Group Exercises <b>Test #1</b>
Tuesday	7-Mar	Chapter 7 Communication Skills - Group 4
Thursday	9-Mar	Group Exercises

Tuesday	14-Mar	Spring Break
Thursday	16-Mar	Spring Break
Tuesday	21-Mar	Chapter 8 Managing Conflict - Group 4
Thursday	23-Mar	Group Exercises
Tuesday	28-Mar	Chapter 9 Leading Groups - Group 3
Thursday	30-Mar	Group Exercises
Tuesday	4-Apr	Chapter 10 Making Decisions - Group 2
Thursday	6-Apr	Group Exercises
Tuesday	11-Apr	Chapter 11 Problem-Solving - Group 1
Thursday	13-Apr	Group Exercises
Tuesday	18-Apr	Chapter 12 Creativity Appendix B Communicating to an Audience
Thursday	20-Apr	Group Exercises <b>Test #2</b>
Tuesday	25-Apr	Group Exercises
Thursday	27-Apr	Group Exercises
Tuesday	2-May	Group Exercises
Thursday	4-May	Dead Day
<b>Monday</b>	<b>8-May</b> <b>10:15 am</b> <b>12:15 pm</b>	<b>Small Group Presentation</b>