

Neumann College
Fall 2006
Psychology 215- A
Interpersonal Dynamics

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Meeting Time: M, W, 3:00-4:15

**Required text: Beebe, S. A. & Masterson, J. T. Communicating in small groups,
New York, Harper Collins.**

Watkins, M. & Braun, L. You can make a difference: Service learning from classroom to community to career

Welcome to Psychology 215-A, Interpersonal Dynamics. In this hands-on, minds-on class, we will work to attain the following objectives:

Objectives:

Students will be able to do the following upon completion of the course:

- ✓ Understand basic concepts integral to the evaluation of communication in both dyads and small groups.
 - Communication basics
 - Group and Team Principles
 - Small Group Theory
 - Group Formation
 - Relating to Others
 - Enhancing Creativity
 - Technology
 - Improving Group Climate
 - Enhancing Communication Skills
 - Conflict
 - Collaboration
 - Problem Solving/Decision Making
 - Leadership
- ✓ Observe and describe communication behaviors, analyze the effects of behavior on the communication process, evaluate communication outcomes and offer recommendations for ongoing success/improvement.
- ✓ Collaborate with others both in and outside the classroom.
- ✓ Understand and evaluate one's personal relationship/contribution(s) to group and group members through the ongoing processes of observation and self-reflection.

Objectives (Continued):

Students will be able to do the following upon completion of the course:

- ✓ Use critical thinking skills to promote understanding of the communication process.
- ✓ Understand and apply basic principles of interpersonal dynamics to real life experiences through the integration of theory, practice and ongoing self reflection.
- ✓ Students will develop a service learning project in conjunction with Campus Ministry and/or a community partner (To be discussed). Through service learning experiences, students will observe and participate in focused team projects designed to serve members of the community. (14 hrs). Alternate placements must be cleared with the instructor.
- ✓ Students will engage in ongoing self-self reflection through journal writing and class discussion.
- ✓ Students will create a final team project based on the integration of course concepts, class discussion, service-learning and self reflection experiences.

Performance Tasks

- Attendance and participation (including documented activities from class) 10%
- Completion of service learning project 10% (*Hours must be documented*)
- Observation Paper 10%
- Reflection Journals 30% (Six)
- Group Project 25%
- Final Exam: Self evaluation and semester portfolio 15% (Presentation of semester's work)

Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance and participation are mandatory. The student is expected to attend all classes and be prepared to discuss the topic assigned for the day. This is a hands-on class and the bulk of your learning will occur through your experiences in service learning, with your groups and within class discussions. This class will begin and end on time. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Each student is permitted two excused absences (an absence will be excused if the instructor is contacted directly within 24 hours of the absence). In the event of any absence, it is the student's responsibility to obtain all missed work.

If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to make sure that you have been counted present before you leave the room. **Your regular attendance and consistent effort in this course is critical to your success in this class.** If you are late it is your responsibility to make certain that you have been counted present before you leave the room.

Unexcused absences:

Failure to notify the instructor prior to an absence will count as an unexcused absence. My definition of notification means that you notify me directly via telephone, e-mail, or face-to-face communication before class, or in the case of an emergency by the end of the day. Students who attend all scheduled classes will be given five points of extra credit.

Participation:

My definition of participation includes but is not limited to the following criteria: The student makes a consistent effort to complete all in-class activities, to contribute to small and large group assignments, to seek clarification when something is unclear, to improve the quality of his/her work, to think critically about concepts, his/her thinking, and progress. Please do your best work on assignments and please do not use class time to hold personal conversations, engage in text messaging, or to catch up on sleep. These last three behaviors will have a negative effect on your participation grade.

Performance Tasks Interpersonal Dynamics

Observation Paper: Due Sept 18
Guidelines will be provided

Journals:

Journal Number	Date	Topic
#1	Sept. 25	Working in Groups
#2	Oct. 16	Service learning
#3	Oct. 30	Quiz experience
#4	Nov. 6	Service learning
#5	Nov. 13	Service learning
#6	Nov. 20	Free Choice

In your journal, you will describe, analyze and evaluate your interactions with others during the semester. **Describe** behavior in observable terms (focus on actions and words). **Analyze** the interaction: This is where you can formulate hypotheses about what was going on. **Evaluate** the effectiveness of the group interaction. What worked? What didn't work? **Make recommendations** for improvement (i.e. what should you/others keep, start and stop doing to promote/maintain effective communication).

Midterm: Chapters 1-5 (Taken in groups): Monday, October 23

Group Projects: Due: November/December

Final: Self evaluation and presentation of semester portfolio
Monday, December 13 @ 3pm.
Sign up for a meeting time

Group Project:

Class members will form small groups of 3-6 people

Your group will design a project and produce a twenty-thirty minute presentation for the class. I am looking for an innovative presentation that integrates course concepts, service learning and self-reflection to make the connection between theory and practice. For example, you may produce a video, PowerPoint presentation, play, game show, symposium, therapy session or debate. The format is up to the group. Your group will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- ✓ Focus and Organization: Clear topic with logical presentation
- ✓ Evidence of teamwork: Use “we” principle
- ✓ Creativity: Have fun with the presentation
- ✓ Content: Integration of course/chapter concepts with service learning experiences and self reflection
- ✓ Self-evaluation: What did you learn from this project? What did you learn from one another? What would you keep, stop and start doing if you could do it all again? Each group member will share his/her insights. **(Note: In the past many students have lost points because they have forgotten to include their self-reflections during presentations.)**

Three peer evaluators will be selected before each presentation and their job will be to observe the group effort and offer constructive feedback afterwards. Peer evaluation will count towards participation and/or provide students with opportunities to earn extra credit.

NOTES FROM PREVIOUS STUDENTS

Dear Next Class:

- ❖ *I am sure coming into this class you aren't thinking in terms of analyzing behaviors or looking at group theory. It took me most of a semester to have this be second nature. If you really open up though and are honest with yourself and each other, you will leave this class with a better knowledge of your self and group dynamics (as well as a good grade 😊). The best advice I can give is to be open minded, honest and step out of your comfort zone. In this way, you will get more from this class and you might even enjoy yourself.*
- ❖ *Really think about whom you want to work with and who is reliable. Try not to leave everything to the last minute because things can get hectic. Be sure that everyone in your group is on the same page and don't be afraid to speak up if something needs to be said.*
- ❖ *I learned how not to be so overly aggressive and to trust in my team members. The key to success in this class: COME TO CLASS*
- ❖ *I learned that group work is only as hard as you make it. If you go in and get an understanding of what you want, the rest is like filling in missing pieces to a puzzle.*
- ❖ *DO NOT start out judging how dumb and pointless this class is. I said the same thing my first few days in this class! Now I have to say that I loved it. It taught me how to work with others as a team and it also helped me to make a lot of good friends. Enjoy this class. It is easy, exciting and a pleasurable experience.*
- ❖ *Come to class with a completely open mind and a blank slate. Any pre-judgments you may bring with you will only hinder your communication and listening processes.*
- ❖ *Don't use class time for outside talk. Use it to work on the projects!*
- ❖ *Like it or not, a person has to work in a group in any place of employment, so I know for sure that everyone in this class will use what they have learned.*
- ❖ *When I first came to this class I was not happy with how much group work we were doing. By the first couple of weeks, when everyone loosened up and when we were no longer embarrassed, it became fun. We talked about real life problems that are apparent in today's society. I*
- ❖ *Communicating in small groups will teach you a lot about the real world. In your life after college, you will always deal with working in groups. Take the time to understand your group members and their opinions and you will succeed. Good luck!*
- ❖ *If you sit there like a bump on a log, you are cheating yourself of the experience of learning about your group members. Share your ideas. Be active in conversations and plans for the task at hand. Open up and share a bit about yourself, even if you are shy. Chances are there is one member of your group who will be willing to listen. Hey you might even make a new friend out of it. Overall, just communicate with your group. The group success depends on you. If there is a problem, tell the teacher. She is here to help you.*

Service Learning Contract

Placement: _____

Description of Project: _____

Your role: _____

<i>Date</i>	<i>Role/Task</i>	<i>What was learned</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Authorized Signature</i>

Group Project Evaluation Form

Date: _____

Topic: _____

Group Members: _____

Comments

Positive: _____

Work On: _____

Focus and Organization /5

Comments (Why did you assign this score? Could you identify the topic? Was the presentation logical? Did group members stay on topic?)

Evidence of Teamwork /5

Did team members use the word "we"? Did everyone know where she was supposed to be and what s/he was supposed to do? How well did the team handle the unexpected?

Creativity /5

How did the team present the material? What did they do? Was it effective? Did it hold your attention?

Content (Use of small group theory/concepts) /5

Did the group cover concepts from the text and class discussion. Was the coverage thorough or superficial?

Self Evaluation (How well did the group evaluate their teamwork, strengths and challenges?)

What would you keep, stop and start doing?

Evaluator Score: Total Score: ___/25

Signature: _____

Print your name: _____