

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. **COURSE ID:** COMM 140 **TITLE:** Small Group Communication **C-ID:** COMM 140
Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; 16.0-18.0 TBA hours; and 80.0-90.0 Homework hours
Method of Grading: Letter Grade Only
Recommended Preparation:
 Eligibility for ENGL 100 or 105

2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**
Degree Credit
Transfer credit: CSU; UC
AA/AS Degree Requirements:
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2b. English, literature, Speech Communication
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2c. Communication and Analytical Thinking
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5d. Career Exploration and Self-Development
CSU GE:
 CSU GE Area A: ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION AND CRITICAL THINKING: A1 - Oral Communication
IGETC:
 IGETC Area 1: ENGLISH COMMUNICATION: C: Oral Communication (CSU requirement only)

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**
Catalog Description:
 Understanding of the principles of group interaction and decision making, including study of leadership, types of authority, teamwork, and conflict resolution. Participation in discussion groups to share information, solve problems, and reach consensus.

4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
 1. Exhibit effective problem-solving communication skills.
 2. Demonstrate the ability to discover, critically evaluate, and accurately report information.
 3. Engage in sound reasoning to reach a well-reasoned decision.
 4. Organize presentations effectively.
 5. Demonstrate ability to effectively prepare for and deliver presentations within small group settings.
 6. Explain the psychological, social, and cultural basis and significance of oral communication as it occurs in dyads, small and large groups, and public settings.
 7. Demonstrate effective listening skills in various settings.
 8. Adapt communication strategies to fit the audience and situation; and present their views with persuasive force.

5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
 1. Exhibit effective problem-solving communication skills.
 2. Demonstrate the ability to discover, critically evaluate, and accurately report information.
 3. Engage in sound reasoning to reach a well-reasoned decision.
 4. Organize presentations effectively.
 5. Demonstrate ability to effectively prepare for and deliver presentations within small group settings.
 6. Explain the psychological, social, and cultural basis and significance of oral communication as it occurs in dyads, small and large groups, and public settings.
 7. Demonstrate effective listening skills in various settings.
 8. Adapt communication strategies to fit the audience and situation; and present their views with persuasive force.

6. **COURSE CONTENT:**
Lecture Content:
 1. Introduction to Group Communication
 - A. Defining Group Communication

- B. Nature of Group Communication
- C. Advantages and Disadvantages of working in Groups
- D. Ethics and Group Communication
- 2. Group Development
 - A. Stages of Groups
 - B. Theory in Groups
 - C. Group Norms
 - D. Effective Groups
- 3. Group Membership
 - A. Member Needs
 - B. Member Confidence
 - C. Member Assertiveness
- 4. Group Diversity
 - A. Barriers to Understanding Others
 - B. Personality Dimensions
 - C. Cultural Dimensions
 - D. Gender Dimensions
 - E. Generational Dimensions
- 5. Group Leadership
 - A. Leadership and Power
 - B. Leadership Theories
 - C. 5M model of Leadership Effectiveness
 - D. Diversity and Leadership
- 6. Group Motivation
 - A. Member Motivation
 - B. Assessment and Feedback
 - C. Rewards
- 7. Verbal and Nonverbal Communication in Groups
 - A. Language and Meaning
 - B. Language Challenges
 - C. Nonverbal Environment
 - D. Supportive Communication Climate
- 8. Listening in Groups
 - A. Challenge of Listening in Groups
 - B. Group Roles and Listening
 - C. Improving Listening
- 9. Conflict and Cohesion in Groups
 - A. Conflict in Groups
 - B. Conflict Styles
 - C. Management Strategies
 - D. Conflict and member Diversity
- 10. Communicating Information
 - A. Modes of delivery: panel discussion, symposium, oral reports, etc.
 - B. Communicating information using the Internet: Skype, Web conferences etc.
 - C. Organizing, evaluating and delivering group reports/positions persuasively

TBA Hours Content:

COMM 140 has a TBA (To Be Arranged hours) requirement that students must fulfill as part of their enrollment in this course. These TBA hours are not homework but are instructional activities designed to augment the lecture portion of the course. Under faculty supervision, students are required to complete activities shown below in the Communication Studies Center, such as videorecorded rehearsal of speeches and presentations; peer and self-critiques, including those based on at least two (2) videorecorded in-class speeches or presentations; group activities; research; and consultation with instructor on lab modules.

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Lab
- C. Activity
- D. Critique
- E. Discussion

- F. Other (Specify): Typical methods of instruction may include: A. Instructor guided research for developing group reports and presentations B. Peer evaluation of other group presentations with qualitative instructor feedback of those assessments C. Assigned reading and written response questions for each chapter D. Ongoing small group projects to develop reports and presentations with continuous instructor guidance E. Ongoing written and oral quizzes to assess student comprehension and skill

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

- A. Students self-assess at least two presentations recorded in the classroom.
- B. Students self-assess their own approach to problem solving within their teams by writing reaction papers and self-critiques (examples: conflict resolution approach, listening effectiveness).
- C. Students plan agendas and keep minutes of group meetings.
- D. Students prepare detailed recommendations to solve an organizational problem as an ad hoc group (example: finding a solution to the parking problem at CSM).
- E. Students create their own group mission statement. This includes values that guide their process and self-generated rules and consequences to deter social loafing.

Reading Assignments:

- A. Students read 30-40 pages (a chapter) weekly.
- B. Students research topics of the day with respect to a group project (example: Is the "Stop and Frisk" policy in New York City justifiable?).

Other Outside Assignments:

- A. Students attend a public group event such as a symposium or panel discussion. They report on the strengths, weaknesses, and persuasiveness of each speaker's message (example: Accreditation Site Team Presentation at CSM).

To be Arranged Assignments:

Possible assignments would include the following:

- A. Reinforcing small-group communication theory through educational videos
- B. Videorecording group interactions such as rehearsals for symposiums
- C. Videorecording effective small group interactions for skill development
- D. Consulting with faculty, fellow classmates, and possibly tutors to refine presentations
- E. Consulting with faculty, fellow classmates, and possibly tutors to reinforce comprehension of small-group communication principles
- F. Peer or self-evaluation of at least two (2) speeches made and recorded in the classroom

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Performance
- C. Exams/Tests
- D. Group Projects
- E. Homework
- F. Lab Activities
- G. Oral Presentation
- H. A. Participation (this could include behaviors such as contributing to the cohesion of the class by supporting classmates, asking and answering questions during class, doing small homework assignments that the instructor makes spontaneously) B. Group and individual examinations. In COMM 140, conventional exams are often combined so that a portion is graded for one's individual competence which holds the exam taker accountable for the material, and another portion is taken by a group to demonstrate competence in effective planning for the exam as well as content competence C. Pop quizzes to ensure students are completing the course reading and understanding the material D. Group presentations such as panel discussions and symposiums. Typically, there is a substantial group presentation at the end of the semester that is a comprehensive response to instructor prompts throughout the semester. Often, the

audience/class peers will play a partial role in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each presentation
E. Video-recording—this method of evaluation helps students see and hear how they communicate verbally and nonverbally, such as when they take part in a panel discussion

10. **REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):**

Possible textbooks include:

A. Isa N. Engleberg and Diana R. Wynn. *Working in Groups*, 6th ed. Allyn & Bacon, 2013

B. Rothwell, J. Dan. *In Mixed Company: Communicating in Small Groups*, 8th ed. Cengage Learning, 2013

Origination Date: December 2015

Curriculum Committee Approval Date: September 2016

Effective Term: Fall 2017

Course Originator: Catherine Motoyama