

COMM 524: Small Group Process
Annenberg School of Communication
Spring 2023
(Draft – (Will Change based on students’ research interests))

Instructor: Professor Andrea Hollingshead

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Class time: W 9:30-12:20 pm

Office hours: by appointment

Course Description:

The main objective of this interdisciplinary Ph.D. seminar is to provide an overview of contemporary theory and research about group communication with special emphasis on groups supported by technology. We will examine a wide array of groups — from small to very large, from offline to online to hybrid — across a wide range of work, social and educational settings. Possible topics include: group creativity, group composition and diversity, leadership, group decision making, group learning, socialization, intergroup conflict, group wellbeing, psychological safety, crowdsourcing, human-machine teaming, online (in)civility, remote teamwork and videoconferencing among many others. We will discuss possible course topics on the first day of class and I will use student interest to finalize the topics and readings.

This is an interactive and experiential course. Class time is spent discussing the assigned readings, engaging in group activities, and developing research ideas. We will also discuss practical applications of group research, for example, how to lead effective group discussions, how to create a psychological safe space, and how to encourage high performing teams while supporting members’ wellbeing. Previous coursework on groups is not essential.

Course Readings :

Readings will be available on Blackboard site at least one week in advance.

Seminar Structure:

Each class is divided into two parts. The first part is on class readings for the week. I present an overview and introduction to the topic then we discuss the readings. One student is assigned as discussion leader on each reading. The second part of class is devoted to a group activity or generating research ideas.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Discussion Leadership	50%
Research Proposal & Presentation	40

Discussion Leadership

Students will assume the role of discussion leader for one of the assigned weekly academic articles for most weeks of the semester. Discussion leaders will be randomly chosen on the day we are discussing the readings in class. Serving as a discussion leader involves preparing discussion questions and a few insights on the articles. Discussion leaders should assume that everyone has read the article and is prepared for discussion. The discussion should lead to a deeper understanding of the main points of the article. (We'll spend about 15min on each article.) Creativity is encouraged.

Presentations and Papers

The main assignment is a research proposal. A brief written description and presentation of your topic for class feedback is due the week before spring break. A presentation practice and feedback session will occur on Apr. 21. Final presentations will be on the last day of class: Apr. 28. Final papers are due on May 8 by 11:5pm.

Specific guidelines on the proposals and presentations will be given later in the semester.

Class Participation:

Of course, I expect everyone to be well prepared for class: to read all assigned weekly readings, and to actively contribute to class discussions.

Academic Integrity Policy:

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. The "2009-2010 SCampus" (<http://www.usc.edu/scampus>) contains the university's student conduct code and other student-related policies

Instructors expect students to be aware and to comply with USC University policies regarding academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than you.

If you have any questions about the definition of academic dishonesty, consult the resources found on the Student Judicial Affairs Web site (<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS>) or ask a faculty member. "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations, and citation in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's writing program; "Understanding and avoiding academic dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration.

It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the academic integrity to the University Student Judicial Affairs office (SJACS) and to the USC Annenberg School for Communication Dean's Office on Student Affairs. These offices may decide to take additional action. Any serious violation or pattern of violations will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication degree program.

Disabilities Policy. Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

Course Topics and Outline (Subject to Change)

Date	Activity
Jan 14	Course Overview
Jan 21	Group Wellbeing
Jan 28	Communication and Collective Behavior in Animals
Feb 3	Group Creativity
Feb 10	Crowdsourcing Creativity
Feb 17	Group Composition and Diversity
Feb 24	Group Decision Making
Mar 3	Transactive Memory
Mar 10	Studying Group Process
Mar 17	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
Mar 24	Midterm Topic Presentations
Mar 31	Group Affect and Emotion
Apr 7	Time, Change and Development in Work Teams
Apr 14	Group Phenomena and COVID-19
Apr 21	Presentation Rehearsal/Feedback Session
Apr 28	Final Presentations
May 8	Final Papers are due by 11:59pm

Sample Reading List

(from a previous semester – will change for Spring 2023 based on students' research interests)

Jan 21 Communication and Collective Behavior in Animals

Leadbeater, E. & Chittka L. (2007). Social learning in insects - From miniature brains to consensus building. *Current Biology*, 17: R703-713.

Conradt, L. & Roper T.J. (2005). Consensus decision making in animals. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*. 20: 449–45.

Frans de Waal TED Presentation: “Do animals have morals?”

http://www.ted.com/talks/frans_de_waal_do_animals_have_morals.html

Brosnan, S. F., & de Waal, F. B. M. (2003). Monkeys reject unequal pay. *Nature*, 425(6955), 297–299. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nature01963>

L. Barrett, S.P. Henzi & D. Rendall. (2007) Social brains, simple minds: Does social complexity really require cognitive complexity? *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*. **362**: 561-575.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2346517/>

Jan 28 Psychological Safety and Group Well-Being

Peterson, C., Park, N., & Sweeney, P. J. (2008). Group well-being: morale from a positive psychology perspective. *Applied Psychology*, 57, 19-36.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350-383.

Yu, L., & Zellmer-Bruhn, M. E. (2018). Introducing team mindfulness and considering its safeguard role against conflict transformation and social undermining. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(1), 324-347.

Bryant, A. How to build a successful team. *New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/business/manage-a-successful-team?>

Feb 3 Group Composition and Diversity

Lau, D. C., & Murnighan, J. K. (1998). Demographic diversity and faultlines: The compositional dynamics of organizational groups. *Academy of management review*, 23(2), 325-340.

Mannix, E., & Neale, M. A. (2005). What differences make a difference? The promise and reality of diverse teams in organizations. *Psychological science in the public interest*, 6(2), 31-55.

Harrison, D. A. & Klein, K. J. (2007.) What's the difference? Diversity constructs as separation, variety, or disparity in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 32, 1199-1228.

Phillips, K. W. (2014). How diversity makes us smarter. *Scientific American*, 311(4), 43-47.

Feb 10 Intersectionality: Gender, Race, Culture and Leadership

Brescoll, V. (2016), Leading with their hearts: How gender stereotypes about emotions lead to biased evaluations of female leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, 415-428.

Sanchez-Hucles, J. V., & Davis, D. D. (2010). Women and women of color in leadership: Complexity, identity, and intersectionality. *American Psychologist*, 65(3), 171.

Hoyt, C. L. & Murphy, S. E, (2016). Managing to clear the air, stereotype threat, women and leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, 387-399.

Wang, J., & Shirmohammadi, M. (2016). Women leaders in China: Looking back and moving forward. *Advances in developing human resources*, 18(2), 137-15

Feb 17 Group Creativity

Thompson, L. (2003). Improving the creativity of organizational work groups. (and executive commentary by Leo Brajkovich), *Academy of Management Executive*, 17, 96-111.^

Diehl, M. & Stroebe, W. (1987). Productivity loss in brainstorming groups: toward the solution of a riddle. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53, 497-509.

Harvey, S. (2013). A different perspective: The multiple effects of deep level diversity on group creativity. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49(5), 822-832.

Lehrer, J. (2012). Groupthink: The brainstorming myth. *The New Yorker*, Jan 31 issue.

Creativity Techniques: Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creativity_techniques

Feb 24 Group Decision Making

Stasser, G. & Titus, W. (2003). Hidden profiles: A brief history. *Psychological Inquiry*, 14, 304-313.

Hollingshead, A. B. (1996). The rank order effect in group decision making. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 68, 181-193.

Wittenbaum, G. M., Hollingshead, A. B. & Botero, I. (2004). From cooperative to motivated information sharing in groups: Going beyond the hidden profile paradigm. *Communication Monographs*, 71, 286-310.

Stasser, G. & Abele, S (2020). Collective choice, collaboration and communication. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 71:13, 1-13.

Mar 3 Transactive Memory

Wegner, D. M. (1995). A computer network model of human transactive memory. *Social Cognition*, 13:3, 319-339.

Hollingshead, A. B. (1998). Retrieval processes in transactive memory systems. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 659-671.

Lewis, K. (2003). Measuring transactive memory systems in the field: scale development and validation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 88(4), 587-604.

Majchrzak, A., Jarvenpaa, S. L. & Hollingshead, A. B. (2007). Coordinating expertise among emergent groups responding to disasters. *Organization Science*. 18, 147-161.

Mar 10 Studying Group Process

Weingart, L. (1997). How did they do that? The ways and means of studying group process. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 19, 189-239.

Tausczik, Y. R., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2010). The Psychological Meaning of Words: LIWC and Computerized Text Analysis Methods. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 29(1), 24–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X09351676>

Bruckman, A. (2012). Interviewing members of online communities: A practical guide to recruiting participants. In A. B. Hollingshead & M. S. Poole (Eds.) *Research methods for studying groups and teams*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge.

Sheehan, K. B. (2018). Crowdsourcing research: Data collection with Amazon's Mechanical Turk. *Communication Monographs*, 85, 140–156.

Mar 17 No Class – Spring Break

Mar 24 Midterm Research Topic Presentations and Feedback

Mar 31 Group Affect and Emotion

Barsade, S. & Knight, A. P. (2015). Group Affect. *Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 2, 21-46.

Kelly, J. R. & Jones, E. E. (2012). Investigating emotions and affect in groups. In A. B. Hollingshead & M. S. Poole, *Research methods for studying groups and teams*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge

Druskat, V. U. & Wolff, S. B. (2001). Building the emotional intelligence of groups. *Harvard Business Review*, 81-90 (Mar).

(Optional) Emotional Intelligence scale, *Psychology Today*. (Take the free version and save your report, bring to class.) <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/tests/personality/emotional-intelligence-test>

Brescoll, V. (2016), Leading with their hearts: How gender stereotypes about emotions lead to biased evaluations of female leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, 415-428.

Apr 7 Time, Change and Development in Work Teams

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_development

McGrath, J. E. (1991). Time, interaction, and performance (TIP) A Theory of Groups. *Small group research*, 22(2), 147-174.

Moreland, R. L., & Levine, J. M. (2001). Socialization in organizations and work groups. In M. E. Turner (Ed.), *Groups at work: Theory and research* (pp. 69-112). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Gersick, C. J. (1988). Time and transition in work teams: Toward a new model of group development. *Academy of Management Journal*, 31(1), 9-41. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256496>

Gersick, C. G., & Hackman, J. R. (1990). Habitual routines in task-performing groups. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 47, 65-97.

April 14 Human-Machine Teaming

Apr 21 Final Presentation Dress Rehearsals & Feedback Session

Apr 28 Final Presentations