



**CMGT 536:  
Team Communication and Leadership  
(4 units)**

**Fall 2023: Wednesdays 6:30-9:20 pm PST**  
Section: 21745D  
Location: ONLINE (Zoom)

**Instructor: Prof. Andrea Hollingshead**  
Office Hour: by appointment  
Contact Info: aholling@usc.edu

**Course Description:**

Much of the world’s work is done in teams. Teams can potentially benefit from the diverse knowledge, skills and perspectives of individual members. However, few teams reach their full potential. Working in teams can be difficult, and being a team leader brings additional challenges. This course promotes student team and leadership skills through the study and practical application of team and leadership academic research. Specific topics include: Team design; Remote teams; Mindful leadership; Team diversity, inclusion and positionality; Team performance and wellbeing; Emotion in teams; Team conflict; Team creativity; Team decision making; Status and power dynamics in Teams; and Gender, race, culture, intersectionality and leadership.

This course is highly interactive and experiential. It is divided into weekly modules and designed as a “flipped classroom.” This means most content is delivered before class in weekly modules. Class sessions focus on activities and discussions that integrate and apply concepts in the readings. Because much of the learning in the course is team-based and experiential, **attendance in our weekly Zoom live session is required**. Unfortunately, it is not possible to take this course asynchronously.

By the end of this course, students should feel more confident about their knowledge and ability to lead and work in teams.

**Course Objectives:**

The specific objectives of the course are to provide students with:

- Positive team and leadership experiences
- Theory and research-based knowledge on leading and working well in teams
- Concepts and a language for describing teams and leadership
- Analytical tools and skills to observe, diagnose, and choose appropriate responses to leadership and team-related problems
- An ability to recognize and act on organizational opportunities for leadership
- A safe and supportive class environment for learning and experimentation

## **Course Notes**

This class is online and synchronous. We will meet in Zoom at 6:30 pm PST. It is not possible to take this course asynchronously.

I use Blackboard extensively for course management. All lecture slides, class readings, assignments, and other class materials will be posted on Blackboard. Check Blackboard every day for announcements.

## **Zoom Class Live Sessions**

Because this course relies on in-class teamwork, **participation in the live Zoom class sessions is required.**

**I expect everyone to keep their video on during class and especially during breakout rooms and team activities.** Seeing one another keeps the class energy level high, creates accountability and builds a sense of community. If you need to turn your video off for whatever reason, no problem. Just let me know.

Live large class discussions will be recorded, and made available to students through Blackboard. Team in-class activities will not be recorded.

Important: All students must enter our Zoom classroom through Course Blackboard. See link: <https://keepteaching.usc.edu/students/student-toolkit/classroom/zoom/> for more detailed instructions.

## **Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

We will use Zoom, Blackboard, MS Office, Adobe, and Slack. You will also need video editing software for your leader profile and final team project assignments. All software necessary for class is available for free as a USC Annenberg student. Here is information on how to activate your free Adobe creative cloud account. <https://www.annenbergdl.org/adobe/>

You can also receive free subscriptions to the New York Times, and Los Angeles Times among others. USC Technology Support Links Zoom information for students, Blackboard help for students, Software available to USC Campus. The USC Annenberg Digital Lounge provides free technology training and support to students. Be sure to advantage of these wonderful resources.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Statement**

My goal is to create a classroom-learning environment that fosters open and honest dialogue. Every student in this class, regardless of background, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, class, political affiliation, physical or mental ability or any identity category, is a valued and equal member of the class. We all bring different knowledge and experiences to the class and the sharing of our different experiences and viewpoints creates the greatest learning. Our classroom should be a

safe space to question, challenge, and critique course content. To this end, classroom discussions should always be conducted in a way that honors, respects, and dignifies each individual. This will allow for a deeper more positive learning experience for all.

It is my intention to present research on a diverse set of topics from a diverse set of researchers and from underrepresented viewpoints. Please let me know if something in course materials, said or done in class by either myself or another student causes you discomfort. While the intention may not be to cause any offense, the impact is important and deserves attention and remediation as soon as possible.

### **Class Materials:**

All course materials, which include academic research articles, popular press readings, TED talk videos and other learning materials will be available through course blackboard under “Course Materials” a week before they are due in class. Module weekly topics are provided in the course calendar. There are no required texts. Plan on about 3-4 hours per week for class preparation. (This does not include time spent on midterm and final research projects.)

### **Class Assignments:**

***In-Class Team Assignments.*** The class will divide into work teams in the second week, and will remain in those teams for the rest of the semester. Each week, your team will complete an assignment that will require discussing, evaluating and applying concepts from course readings. These team assignments will be graded. There will be a strict time deadline and a penalty for late assignments. There will be 11 team assignments during the semester.

Your team will pre-select a different leader to guide the team for each weekly assignment in advance. The leaders’ responsibilities are up to the team, but might include leading the team case discussion, assigning tasks to group members, presenting the team’s analysis, etc.

Only team members present in class will receive the team grade for the day’s in-class assignment. To calculate your individual grade, I will drop your lowest score and add the remaining 10 team scores. An absence will count as a dropped score. One caveat: Assigned leaders cannot drop their team scores. This component is worth 30% of your course grade.

***Individual Midterm Leader Profile Video:*** The midterm assignment is to prepare a profile of a leader who you admire in a 6 min (max) video. The restrictions are that the leader chosen someone not well known for their leadership, and each student must choose a different leader. Creativity is highly encouraged. Specific requirements will be provided later in the semester. This component is worth 25% of your course grade.

***Team Final Research Project:*** On the last day of class (Nov 29), each team will present a 12 min (max) video on a research topic relating to team communication or leadership. Most work on your team project will be completed outside of class.

I am open about team project topics, so choose something that interests everyone on your team. Creativity is encouraged! The only requirements are that the topic is relevant to the course (i.e. about teams and/or leadership communication) and that your project is grounded in academic research (minimum 10 academic sources). I will provide more details about the team project video later in the semester. This component is worth 25% of your course grade.

**Leader Self-Assessment:** One course goal is to enhance your leader and teamwork skills. To gauge your progress, you will complete a Leadership Self-Assessment at the beginning and again at the end of the semester. This component is worth 10% of your course grade.

**Class Participation:** I want to cultivate a safe and positive learning environment where everyone treats one another with the highest respect and participates fully in class activities. I expect everyone in CMGT 536 to treat one another with respect and kindness, and to do their part in creating a safe, positive and comfortable space for sharing knowledge and ideas. Always think about how your actions might be perceived by others on video.

Being “present” in the Zoom session is not enough to earn a high class participation grade, you must **also** actively contribute to large group discussions and complete all in-class work products. These will vary depending on the class, and may include polls, surveys, chats, or in-class short assignments. In-class work may be assigned at any point during the class. Class Participation is worth 10% of your grade.

**Assignment Submission Policy:**

All assignments are due on the date and time specified on Blackboard. Blackboard will send you a receipt if the assignment was successfully submitted. Allow enough time to upload assignments by the deadline. Please do not email your assignments to me.

**Course Grade Breakdown:**

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Team Weekly Assignments	30	30
Individual Midterm Leader Profile Video	25	25
Final Team Project	25	25
Pre- & Post- Leader Assessment	10	10
Class Participation	10	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Course Grading Policy:**

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A/A- Outstanding, thoughtful and careful work, applies concepts and readings well

B+/B            Above average work, good insight, could benefit from more attention to detail  
 B-/C+         Needs improvement on ideas, argument and follow through  
 C and below   Bare minimum and shows little understanding of the material

Assignment rubrics will be provided on Course Blackboard.

Grades on each component will be converted to a percentage score and will be weighted as described above in determining your course grade. Your percentage score will be translated to a letter grade based on the scale below:

A	= 100-93	C	= 76-73
A-	= 92-90	C-	= 72-70
B+	= 89-87	D+	= 69-67
B	= 86-83	D	= 66-63
B-	= 82-80	D-	= 62-60
C+	= 79-77	F	= 59-0

Your percentage score must be over the threshold to receive that grade; there is no rounding up.

**Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

*Note: Weekly modules will be posted on Blackboard a week before they are due in class. Course topics and readings may change. Midterm and final video assignment due dates will not change.*

	Topics/Daily Activities	Class Readings Due	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Aug 23	Course Introduction		
Week 2 Aug 30	Team Design & Selection	Module 1: How to build a successful team	<b>Leadership Pre-assessment questionnaire due by noon on (in Module 1)</b>  In-Class Team Activity 1
Week 3 Sep 6	Remote Teamwork and AI	Module 2: Working with remote teammates and AI	In-Class Team Activity 2
Week 4 Sep 13	Mindful Communication and Leadership	Module 3: How mindfulness creates better leaders	In-Class Team Activity 3
Week 5 Sep 20	Team Diversity	Module 4: How diversity makes teams smarter	In-Class Team Activity 4

			<b>Midterm Leader Profile Topic due by Tues, Sep 19 at 11:59 pm</b>
Week 6 Sep 27	Team Wellbeing	Module 5: Balancing team performance and team wellbeing	In-Class Team Activity 5
Week 7 Oct 4	Emotions in Teams	Module 6: Experiencing and expressing emotions in teams	In-Class Team Activity 6
Week 8 Oct 11	Team Conflict	Module 7: Preempting and resolving team conflict	In-Class Team Activity 7
Week 9 Oct 18	Leader Profiles Video Presentations	No reading for this week (We will view and discuss leader profiles.)	<b>Midterm Leader Profile Video Due by 11:59 pm on Tues, Oct 17.</b>
Week 10 Oct 25	Team Creativity	Module 8: Improving team creativity	In-Class Team Activity 8  <b>Team Project Topic due by 11:59 pm on Tues, Oct 24</b>
Week 11 Nov 1	Group Decision Making	Module 9: Making informed team decisions	In-Class Team Activity 9
Week 12 Nov 8	Status and Power Dynamics	Module 10: Understanding social influence	In-Class Team Activity 10
Week 13 Nov 15	Gender, Race, Culture and Intersectionality in Leadership	Module 11: Overcoming social stereotypes and other barriers to leadership	In-Class Team Activity 11
Week 14 Nov 22	No Class Thanksgiving Break		
Week 15 Nov 29	Team Video Viewing Last Day of Class	No Readings This Week	<b>Final Team Videos Due by 11:59 pm on Tues, Nov 28</b>  <b>Post-Assessment Due on Wed, Dec 6, 12-noon</b>

## **Policies and Procedures**

### ***Communication***

Use USC email for contacting me, and check your USC email for time-sensitive information every day.

### ***Academic Conduct and Support Systems***

**Academic Integrity.** The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the USC Student Handbook. All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university. . Any assignment that includes an instance of plagiarism will receive a 0. Two or more instances of plagiarism in a semester will receive an automatic failing grade (F) in the course.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor

**Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies.** USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is also prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

**The Use of AI Generators.** Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be completed entirely by you working individually or with your team. Developing strong competencies in these areas will best prepare you for a competitive workplace.

That said, we will discuss AI-powered text generation tools in teams as a class topic and I will permit using artificial intelligence (AI)-powered text generation tools on a few specific assignments during the semester. You should be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses. They are not sophisticated enough to produce text that meet the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced on these assignments and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

### ***Students and Disability Accommodations***

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).



## *Support Systems*

**Annenberg Student Success Fund.** The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

**Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund.** Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

**Counseling and Mental Health** - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

**Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)** - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

**Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)** - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

**Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment** - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

**The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)** - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

**USC Campus Support and Intervention** - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion** - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

**USC Emergency** - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

**USC Department of Public Safety** - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

**Office of the Ombuds** - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

**Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice** - (323) 442-2850 or [otfp@med.usc.edu](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

**TrojansAlert** TrojansAlert is an alert system that allows university officials to contact you during an emergency. It is your connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information. Visit the website to sign up.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis.** In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on [Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness](#).

**ITS Customer Support Center** (CSC): (213) 740-5555

The ITS Customer Support Center (CSC) provides support to the USC community for connecting to the USC Network and using supported applications. For help with network connectivity and software, contact CSC. Walk-in support is available in Leavey Library's Information Commons.

**Violence-Free Campus.** Visit the website to read more about prohibited behaviors, reporting responsibilities and where to report.

## ***Student-Athlete Travel Excuse Letters***

Prior to a university-sponsored away competition, Student-Athletes are responsible for providing their Instructor with a Competition Excuse Letter (provided by their academic counselor) for the classes missed while on the road (i.e., excused absence). It is the responsibility of the Student-Athlete to provide the letter prior to leaving on their trip and to make arrangements for a make-up of any missed assignments or exams. Please refer to the [SAAS site](#) where they detail travel and travel excuse letters.

## ***Add/Drop Dates for Session 001***

(15 weeks: 8/21/2023 – 12/1/2023; Final Exam Period: 12/6-13/2023)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20233/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, September 8, 2023

Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund: Friday, September 8, 2023

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, September 8, 2023 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Audit: Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, October 6, 2023 [Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply.]

\*Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

Last day to drop with a mark of "W": Friday, November 10, 2023

## **About Your Instructor**

Andrea Hollingshead is a Professor of Communication (USC Annenberg), Psychology (USC Dornsife), and Management and Organizations (USC Marshall), and an expert on team communication and leadership. Much of her research examines how people communicate their expertise and share knowledge in teams. She studies a wide array of groups and teams: from very small to very large; from offline to online to hybrid; across a wide range of work, social and educational settings. Her current research projects investigate team wellbeing, online incivility, and human-machine teaming. She also studies connections between mindfulness, communication, and individual wellbeing in daily life. She has published three books and her research articles appear in top-tier social science journals such as *Communication Research*, *Communication Monographs*, *Human Communication Research*, *Communication Yearbook*, *Organization Science*, *Academy of Management Proceedings*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* and *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* among many others. Professor Hollingshead teaches courses on group communication at the undergraduate, masters and PhD levels; on mindful communication at the undergraduate and master's levels, and undergraduate research methods. Professor Hollingshead earned her B.A. in Psychology from Yale University and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She is an avid scuba diver and enjoys plants, LA farmers markets, cooking, and running. She is married and has a pup named Pancho. <https://annenberg.usc.edu/faculty/andrea-b-hollingshead>