



COM230 Small Group Communication

section 3656 , MWF 12:00-12:50pm, Acacia Village Room #V117
section 3660 , MWF 2:00-2:50pm, Acacia Village Room #V117
section 3663, TR 7:30-8:45am, Acacia Village Room #V117
section 3675 , TR 3:00-4:15am, Desert Willow Room #W226



Course Syllabus Spring Semester, 2004



The ability to effectively communicate in small groups is important and necessary in both professional and social contexts. The purpose of this course is to empower you with the theory, the techniques, and the practical skills essential to effective small group communication and participation. Successfully completing this course will help you to participate productively in your life's work and social groups. We will study (1) small group problem solving theories and methods, (2) the small group process and interaction, (3) productive and unproductive participation characteristics, and (4) leadership in small group settings. Class discussions, readings, activities, and assignments are designed to facilitate your critical thinking skills and enhance your communication competence in the small group context.

[Assignments](#) and [Schedule](#)

Prerequisites: ENG101 or ENG107 or equivalent. (Not everyone may be ready for this communication course. COM230 makes significant research and writing demands on students, and the textbook is challenging. Successful completion of the course assignments and projects requires both oral and writing competencies. English proficiency is essential.)

**Section Instructor
Bruce A. Peterson**

Office: Red Mountain Campus
Palo Verde, Room #PV248

Office Hours: MWF 10:00-11:00am
@ Acacia Village, TR 12:00-1:30pm

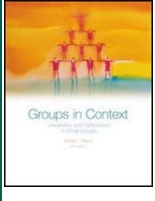
Telephone: 480-654-7722

@ Palo Verde, or by appointment. See [Daily Schedule](#)

Homepage: <http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/~vocewld/>

E-Mail: vocewld@mail.mc.maricopa.edu (This is the surest means to get my prompt attention.)

(Mr. Peterson reserves the right to drop a student from the class role, anytime during the semester, if he perceives the student is not meeting the course requirements and/or guidelines set forth in these documents.)

	<h2>Course Textbook</h2> <p><u>Wilson, Gerald L. <i>Groups in Context: Leadership and Participation in Small Groups</i> 6th edition, Boston, 2001.</u></p>
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Course Objectives

By the end of this course you should:

- 1.) Develop an awareness and appreciation of the dynamics and complexities of the small group communication process and development;
- 2.) Effectively prepare for group meetings and discussions;
- 3.) Participate in group meetings through the use and understanding of agendas, discussion techniques, technological aids, decision methods, and public discussion.
- 4.) Understand the basic principles of human communication theory;
- 5.) Recognize and reduce semantic problems in small group communication and problem solving.
- 6.) Encourage positive group development and satisfaction through the understanding and management of group roles, responsibilities, climate, cohesiveness and group-think;
- 7.) Positively manage conflict in a small group effectively;
- 8.) Analyze, evaluate, and critique small group effectiveness, decision making, interaction, and process; and,
- 9.) Demonstrate an understanding of John Dewey's "Pattern of Reflective Thinking" and employ systematic problem-solving strategies in the small group process.

Course Requirements

Your accomplishment of the course objectives will be determined by:

- 1.) Reading, understanding, and complying with the specific standards and directives listed in this course syllabus and any other addenda presented by Mr. Peterson;
- 2.) Attending class regularly, actively participating in classroom discussion and structured activities, taking copious notes, and developing good listening habits when not speaking;
- 3.) Reading the course textbook and supplemental material as directed;
- 4.) Successfully completing all oral and written exercises and assignments as directed; and,
- 5.) Taking the initiative in obtaining whatever information missed when absent.

Course Guidelines

You are responsible for comprehending and following the specific standards and policies established for this course:

Attendance Policy: Regular attendance is imperative. You need to be present to learn--by observing and practicing the various skills introduced in the classroom. This is a participation course. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting. You will be allowed 3 absences in a MWF class and 2 absences in the TR class; there is no distinction between "excused or unexcused." The only official absences are for MCC sponsored activities or religious days, but they require advanced written notice. If you are absent when you are to give an oral assignment or presentation you will be given a zero for that exercise -- THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP PRESENTATIONS. Your grade will be dropped one grade step (see Grade Computation System) for every absence after the 3MWF or 2TR "freebee" absences. You may be dropped from the class for excessive absences.

Late Work Policy: All written work must be turned in on the date it is due whether you are absent or not. Student's grade will be lowered one grade per class period late on any written assignment. Remember, there are NO late oral assignments. All written work must be typed, double-spaced with 1" margins, and adhere to the principles of college writing. No "Rewrites." See: ["Good Writing or Pet Peeves and Higher Grades"](#). The student must arrange make-up quizzes and tests within one week of the absence.

Classroom Procedure: The process of learning will be *cumulative*, but your instructor will also attempt to achieve individual and group *gestalt*. In each unit of study you will be expected to show a grasp of the essential elements taught in previous units as well as the one under investigation. The instructional style will be balanced between lecture, open discussion, and learning activities. You are expected to behave in a mature, responsible, and professional manner-- Keeping an open mind to new ideas and opinions and respecting the values and privileges of all concerned. Just being in the classroom does not satisfy the participation requirement of this course! You are expected to be actively

involved, verbally and nonverbally, in the various topic discussions and learning activities, showing interest and a willingness to share.

Cell Phones, Pagers, Food & Drink: Please turn the sound off on your phone and pager before entering class. Do not talk on your phone during class: I will ask you to leave for the day. School policy does not allow food in the classrooms, and drinks must be in a spill proof container.

Disabilities: If you have a disability that may have an impact on your work and for which you may require accommodations, please notify the Recourses and Disability Office at 461-7447.



<http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/services/disability/>

I will make reasonable accommodations, so see me as soon as possible to discuss any accommodation needs.

Assignments:

Examinations and Reading/Lecture Quizzes: There will be three (3) lecture quizzes over the material covered and highlighted in class, an oral chapter quiz for each chapter from the textbook, as well as a comprehensive Final Essay Test.

For the lecture quizzes will need two **(2) scantrons - form 882-E**. You will not be able to take the lecture quizzes without the proper scantron forms.

There will be an oral Quiz on the last day of the week for each textbook chapter assigned that week. Mr. Peterson will call randomly on two or three class members to respond to one of the week's quiz questions orally in class. An on-line link to each week's possible questions is posted in the [course schedule](#) below. You will not know who will be called upon or which question they will be asked to respond to. Your quiz grades will be determined by how well you answer and respond publicly to the questions posed to you. Each student will be required to respond twice during the semester. Be prepared each week; you do not know when you will be called upon. (See [Course Schedule](#))

The **Final Essay Exam** is a take-home essay due on the day and class period of the [final exam period](#).

In-Class TEAM Activities: The purpose of each activity is to provide you with an opportunity to work together in collaborative groups on tasks designed to create greater depth and knowledge.

Community Group Observation and Critique: The purpose of of this assignment is to provide you with the opportunity to observe over time a real community meeting or group in action to determine effective structure and dynamics, as well as make noteworthy recommendations. [Assignment Details](#)

The Perfect Date: The purpose of of this assignment is to provide you with an introduction to the small group problem solving process, and the opportunity to present a persuasive group presentation. [Assignment Details](#)

Movie Critique: The purpose of of this assignment is to provide you with the opportunity to observe a small group interaction in a feature film and work together with a group of fellow students to present a critique of the group interaction in the film. [Assignment Details](#)

Semester Group Problem Solving Project: This assignment will provide you with the opportunity to participate in a small group over time, to practice leadership skills and various group tasks and roles, identify group norms and culture, understand group structure and dynamics, learn appropriate group communication, support group productivity, evaluate yourself and peer's performance, and construct and present a professional team presentation. [Assignment Details](#)

Deciding on a Discussion Question Worksheet [Download as Word.doc](#)

[Discussion Plan Outline Worksheet](#) [Download as Word.doc](#)

[Research Card](#) [Download as Word.doc](#)

Grade Computation System:

The various assignments\requirements will account for the following percentages of your final overall grade in this course.

* In-Class TEAM Activities	10%
* Community Group Observation and Critique	10%
* The Perfect Date	10%
* Movie Critique	15%
* Semester Group Problem Solving Project	20%

* <u>Reading and Lecture Quizzes</u>	20%
* <u>Final Written Examination</u>	15%

Mr. Peterson will use the following grading system. There will be no exceptions or substitutions to it. Your oral and written work will be assigned a letter grade. The respective values for each letter grade are indicated below.

Letter System:

A = 4.0	A- = 3.7	B+ = 3.4
B = 3.0	B- = 2.7	C+ = 2.4
C = 2.0	C- = 1.7	D+ = 1.4
D = 1.0	D- = 0.7	F = 0.3

If you have any questions and/or concern about your classroom performances and/or earned grades, please make an appointment to confer with Mr. Peterson as soon as possible. This course requires more than a casual effort and deals with specific terminology and the ability to apply your learning to course projects. I will use the following criteria in evaluating your work during this course.

A = Exceptionally well prepared and executed completion of assigned work indicating effort, individualized style, and demonstrating a thorough grasp of large portions of the course material.

B = Creative, well-prepared work, demonstrating unusual effort, talent, or grasp of the material that is distinctly superior to an "average" or "C" effort.

C = Satisfactory completion of assigned work at a level of effort and competency normally expected of the majority of students (basic completion, average performance, and reasonable effort).

D = Unsatisfactory completion of work indicating misperceived objectives or failure to grasp key concepts but with reasonable effort.


F = Failure to complete assignments through a lack of reasonable effort, or failure to attain passing average on either exams or assignments.

Course Schedule of Events

You are responsible for knowing the overall plan of this course, meeting all activity/assignment deadlines, and reading all applicable material before it is

discussed in the classroom. This schedule is interactive and may change as the course progresses. Links will be added and subject dates and due dates may change. I will announce changes in class, but visiting the syllabus on the web weekly is strongly recommended.

<p>Week #1 Jan. 20-23 Monday Jan. 19 is Martin Luther King Jr. Day; the campus will be closed. Read the Syllabus & Chapter #1 in Wilson ● Course and Instructor Introductions ● The Syllabus and the Computer. The Art of Rhetoric</p> <p>~~~~~ Chapter #1 Quiz</p>	<p>Week #2 Jan. 26-30 Read Chapter #2 in Wilson ● Peer Introductions ● Community Group Observation Discussion</p> <p>~~~~~ Chapter #2 Quiz</p>	<p>Week #3 Feb. 2-6 Read Chapter #3 in Wilson ● Semester Projects Discussion ● Intro to Human Communication</p> <p>~~~~~ Chapter #3 Quiz</p>
<p>Week #4 Feb. 9-13 Read Chapters #4 in Wilson ● Exchanging NOTHING Kenneth Burke's Definition of "Human"</p> <p>Trading Symbols.ppt</p> <p>Nothing.ppt</p> <p>~~~~~ Chapter #4 Quiz</p>	<p>Week #5 Feb. 16-20 Presidents Day No Class Read Chapters #5&6 in Wilson ● The Island Problem & Small Groups ● Introduction to the Group Process</p> <p>Slide Review</p> <p>~~~~~ Chapter #5 Quiz Chapter #6 Quiz</p>	<p>Week #6 Feb. 23-27 Read Chapters #7 in Wilson ● John Dewey's Pattern of Reflective Thinking.ppt ● Preparing for group Meetings Group Meetings</p> <p>Lecture Quiz #1</p> <p>~~~~~ Chapter #7 Quiz</p>
<p>Week #7 Mar. 1-5 Read Chapters #8 in Wilson ● Group Roles, Responsibilities, and Leadership Perfect Date</p>	<p>Week #8 Mar. 8-12 Read Chapters #9 in Wilson ● Group Roles, Responsibilities, and Leadership Group</p>	<p>Week #9 Mar. 15-19</p>

<p>Presentation Due</p> <p>Dr. Fay's Speaker's Mentor</p> <p>~~~~~</p> <p>Chapter #8 Quiz</p>	<p>Dynamics.ppt</p> <p>A Toolkit for Volunteer Leaders</p> <p>Perfect Date Essay Due</p> <p>~~~~~</p> <p>Chapter #9 Quiz</p>	<p>SPRING BREAK</p> 
<p>Week #10 Mar. 22-26</p> <p>Read Chapters #10 in Wilson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improving Group Climate, Cohesiveness, and Satisfaction ● Research tools and skills <p>Organize and Research.ppt</p> <p>Group Meetings</p> <p>~~~~~</p> <p>Chapter #10 Quiz</p>	<p>Week #11 Mar. 29-Apr. 2</p> <p>Read Chapter #11 in Wilson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conflict Negotiation <p>Conflict Negotiation.ppt</p> <p>Assertion & Win-Win</p> <p>Group Meetings</p> <p>Lecture Quiz #2</p> <p>MOVIE CRITIQUE DUE</p> <p>~~~~~</p> <p>Chapter #11 Quiz</p>	<p>Week #12 Apr. 5-9</p> <p>MOVIE PRESENTATIONS</p>
<p>Week #13 Apr. 12-16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction of Problem Solving Project <p>Deciding Question Sheet Due</p> <p>Group Meetings</p>	<p>Week #14 Apr. 19-23</p> <p>Pattern of Reflective Thinking Worksheet/Agenda</p> <p>Due with 3 Research Cards</p> <p>Lecture Quiz #3</p>	<p>Week #15 Apr. 26-30</p> <p>Group Meetings</p> <p>Community Group Critique (Semester Paper) is Due Friday</p>
<p>Week #16 May. 3-7</p> <p>GROUP PROBLEM SOLUTION PRESENTATION DUE</p> <p>Final Exam Instructions</p> <p>Final Essay</p>	<p>Finals Week May. 10-14</p> <p>Final Exam Date & Time</p> <p>section 3656 , Wed., May 12, 12:00-1:50pm.</p> <p>section 3660 , Wed. May 12, 2:00-3:50pm.</p> <p>section 3663, Thur. May 13, 7:30-9:20am.</p> <p>section 3675 , Tue. May 11, 3:00-4:50pm.</p>	

