

CMN 3470 Small Group Communication Spring 2024 Syllabus			
<b>Section:</b>	660		
<b>CRN:</b>	31028		
<b>Location:</b>	D2L Online		
<b>Teacher:</b>	Dr. Andrew Robinson	<b>Semester hours: 3</b>	
<b>Office Hours:</b>	<i>In-Office: 2413 Buzzard Hall Tues. &amp; Thurs. 11:50 am-12:20 pm</i>	<i>Virtual: Tues. &amp; Thurs. 10:20-11:50 am</i> <a href="#">Zoom Conference</a>	
<b>Phone:</b>	217-721-9975 mobile	Email: <a href="mailto:warobinson@eiu.edu">warobinson@eiu.edu</a>	
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="#">School of Communication &amp; Journalism</a>		

### Course Textbooks

Rothwell, J.D. (2022). *In mixed company* (11th Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

### Course Description

This course covers the definition, structure, and functions of small groups. It examines theories and processes of communication that occur in formal and informal groups in professional, civic, and other contexts. Special attention is paid to the ways in which communication in small groups relates to critical and analytical thinking in small group decision making and problem solving, diversity in small groups, roles and leadership in small groups, and oral presentations in small groups.

### Course Objectives

Students will:

- Identify the key elements that define and differentiate group communication from other types of communication.
- Identify, explain, and adapt to group developmental stages and their effects on member needs, group norms, and group roles.
- Adapt to diverse group members by demonstrating an understanding and respect for member differences in personality, culture, gender, age, etc.
- Identify, interpret, and apply appropriate language and nonverbal communication
- Identify and apply appropriate conflict resolution strategies that enhance group cohesiveness and adapt to member differences.
- Identify and apply group leadership theories, strategies, and skills.
- Understand, analyze, and utilize effective presentation skills

### Teaching Format

This is a technology delivered (TD) course (meaning the learning environment is completely online in Desire2Learn). It applies discussion, collaboration, and critical thinking and reflection. All assignments will be submitted to the instructor in D2L. An integrative, collaborative, and experiential teaching and learning approach will be utilized throughout this course. The instructor is a facilitator; one who is there to assist and provide input into the educational process. Assignments for the class will create learning opportunities from which you are to extract lessons from the experiences as well as the content. This is a much more complex method of learning since you are learning both process and content (most courses only teach content). Therefore, you are expected to actively engage in the course discussion and collaboration.

### General Expectations

- Please keep current in the course. Learners who fall behind are less likely to get feedback from others in online discussions. If something happens that is going to cause you to fall behind, contact your instructor immediately.
- Since this is an online course, your attendance will be graded by your level of course participation.

- Use the D2L mail within the course-room to communicate with the instructor. If you need to contact your instructor immediately, you are free to call or text him.

Graded Requirements	Points	Percentage
Chapter Reading Quizzes (12 x 10 points each)	120	18%
Discussion Questions (13 x 25 points each)	175	26%
Group Contract (Part 1 of Group Film Analysis Assignment)	25	4%
Group Meeting Agenda and Minutes (Part 2 of Group Film Analysis Assignment)	50	7.5%
Group Film Analysis Paper (Part 3 of Group Film Analysis Assignment)	150	22%
Group Slideshow Presentation (Part 4 of Group Film Analysis Assignment)	75	11%
Peer Feedback to Other Groups' Presentations	25	4%
Final Reflection Exam	50	7.5%
<b>Total Points (Grading scale: A = 100-90%, B = 89-80%, C = 79-70%, D = 69-60%, and F = below 60%)</b>	670	100%

### Graded Assignments

(View results of graded assignments in the D2L grade book area anytime)

**Chapter Reading quizzes (12 x 10 = 120 points):** Quizzes will be given to evaluate student understanding and application of selected concepts and terminology introduced in the text. Each exam consists of about 10 multiple-choice and/or True/False questions, worth 1 point each and are limited to 15 minutes.

**Discussion Questions and Peer Responses (13 x 25 = 175 points):** Initial DQ answers require a minimum of 250 words to answer. Please focus on the questions posted and use material from your reading assignments and connect them to personal experience and/or knowledge to fully answer the question posed. Feel free to bring in related thoughts and material, other readings, or questions related to the ongoing discussion. Students are also expected to provide a substantive response to at least two classmates' initial posts for each discussion question topic by midnight on Friday of each week. Your postings should reflect an understanding of the course material. Your postings should advance the group's insight of ideas and meanings about the material; that is, your contributions should go beyond a "ditto" or "I agree." Although there is no word-count minimum for your responses to classmates, you are expected to provoke further discussion and critical thinking for your peers. One effective way to further the discussion is to ask the classmate an open-ended question at the end of your post. You are required to read all students' initial discussion question responses and all assigned reading materials. By the way, the instructor can track everything students read and all their activity inside D2L.

**Group Contract - Part 1 of Film Analysis (25 points):** You will be working on a group project in this class, with all the joys and trials that go with it. To help your group function more efficiently, you will establish a "contract" as to what constitutes a contributing member.

**Group Meeting Agenda and Minutes - Part 2 of Film Analysis (50 points):** Every time your group meets, someone will develop the meeting agenda, and someone will take "minutes" (Make sure to rotate this duty so that every member has taken minutes).

**Group Film Analysis Paper - Part 3 of Film Analysis (150 points):** To better identify and relate to the dynamics of small group communication, you and your group will analyze a film featuring small group communicative behaviors. In this course, we study the elements of group dynamics. Although it is important to apply the concepts in analyzing your own group, it is useful to apply them to a group you are not a part of and that all of your group members can observe more objectively. Typed, spell-checked, proofread, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font with 1" margins, and between 5-7 pages (excluding the cover page, reference page, and group minutes). Please use APA referencing style (when quoting from the movie, the textbook, and other sources you may consult). In your group paper, use the titles "Introduction," "Body," and "Conclusion" to organize the paper.

**Group Slideshow Presentation - Part 4 of Film Analysis (75 points):** Groups will provide a 15–20-minute group presentation to the class, discussing your film and how it provides a unique case study for examining Small Group Communication in context.

**Peer Feedback to Group Presentations (25 points):** You will post your video link to a discussion thread in order to receive feedback from your peers and then provide substantive feedback to at least two other groups' presentations in the discussion thread.

**Final Reflection Exam (50 points):** For your final exam, you will reflect on what you learned from this course and how you will apply what you have learned going forward.

### Policies

**Learning Modules:** Navigate through D2L first to become familiar with all the course components. Students can access weekly assignment instructions in the D2L learning modules section just prior to the beginning of each week. **ALWAYS BEGIN EACH WEEK IN THE LEARNING MODULES.** Each module begins with a brief overview of the information to be covered. The action assignments provide students with instructions of assignments to be completed for the week. The instructor has also provided students with video, slideshows, and other resources to help enhance their understanding of the information.

**Late Work Policy:** Late work will not be accepted without advance approval granted by the instructor.

### Grading Criteria for Papers:

*A paper*—An exceptional paper/assignment-- Content is original, and form/style is executed according to guidelines taught in class. Technical excellence includes proper format, organization, and language usage; proper sentence structure; no spelling errors or improper words; and adherence to APA style. All elements of the assignment are addressed thoroughly—content goes beyond the basics.

*B paper*—A good paper/assignment-- Content is technically well developed. There are few problems with format and grammar; however, format is not followed “to the letter.” Some editing is required to correct errors in grammar or punctuation. Two or more elements of the assignment were weak—not developed beyond basic detail.

*C paper*—An acceptable paper/assignment-- Grammar and punctuation errors draw reader’s attention away from the purpose of the paper. Organization is awkward (e.g., transitions between ideas are unclear or abrupt). There are frequent misspellings or other style errors. There are serious problems with one or more elements of the assignment. At least one element of the assignment is missing.

*D paper*—An unacceptable paper/assignment. Student does not demonstrate a full grasp of the purpose of the assignment. Organization is weak and ideas are hard to follow and understand. Assignment is filled with errors in grammar and punctuation. More than one element of the assignment is completely missing.

**Discussion Etiquette:** Eastern Illinois University (EIU) is committed to open, frank, and insightful dialogue in all of its courses. Diversity has many manifestations, including diversity of thought, opinion, and values. We encourage all learners to be respectful of that diversity and to refrain from inappropriate commentary. Should such inappropriate comments occur, the instructor will intervene as he monitors the dialogue in the courses. Faculty will request that inappropriate content be removed from the Course-room and will recommend university disciplinary action. Learners as well as faculty should be guided by common sense and basic etiquette. The following are good guidelines to follow:

- Never post, transmit, promote, or distribute content that is known to be illegal.
- Never post harassing, threatening, or embarrassing comments.  
If you disagree with someone, respond to the subject, not the person. Conflicts of ideas are encouraged, while conflicts of feelings are discouraged.
- Never post content that is harmful, abusive; racially or culturally insensitive, or religiously offensive, vulgar; sexually explicit, or otherwise potentially offensive.

**Confidentiality of Information Shared by Learners:** EIU does not guarantee the confidentiality of information shared by learners in the course environment. Students should not share any confidential information from employers unless explicitly released for public use.

**Student Standards:** All faculty members in the School of Communication and Journalism are expected to uphold the standards of good scholarship and we expect our students to do the same. Students earning a degree in Communication Studies will develop superior reasoning/critical thinking, argumentation, writing and presentational skills while also building comprehensive knowledge of their content area. Students in Communication Studies classes will be expected to read all assigned materials, write extensively, complete their own work, and engage in respectful interactions in the classroom. We, as a faculty, agree to hold our students to these standards. A complete copy of our students' standards can be found at: <https://www.eiu.edu/judicial/>

**Academic integrity:** Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

**Student Email Addresses:** The School of Communication and Journalism requires each student to use his/her university email address for any class, school, college, or university email correspondence. The university email address is used for many purposes, including accessing D2L and PAWS, receiving billing statements from the library, and receiving school correspondence and announcements through the undergraduate listserv. For information on how to obtain your email address or to obtain a password, please visit the following web address: <https://www.eiu.edu/panthertech/collaboration.php>.

**Academic Support Center:** Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/success](http://www.eiu.edu/success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. Academic Support Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 2230.

**Religious Observances:** It is university policy to respect the faith and religious obligations of students, faculty, and staff. Students with classes that conflict with their religious observances should notify the instructor well in advance so that mutually agreeable alternatives can be worked out.

**Students with disabilities:** If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations (OAA). All accommodations must be approved through OAA. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1272, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

**Note from your teacher:** Please feel free to visit with me during office hours if you have questions about your grades and/or performance in class. I am thrilled you have chosen to expand your intellect in the study of small group communication! I hope you enjoy taking this academic journey through the corridors of knowledge, involving insight into evaluating communication phenomena.

All the best!

Dr. Andrew Robinson

### Tentative Schedule and Course Outline

Date	Readings/Course Content	Assignments Due
<b>Week 1:</b> Jan 8-14	Introduction to Course and Syllabus	<b>D1.1</b>
	Introduction to Small Group Communication	
		<b>Ch 1 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 2:</b> Jan 15-21	Ch 1: Communication Competence in Groups	<b>D2.1</b>
	Videos	Watch Videos (optional)
	<b>Assign Groups</b>	<b>Ch 2 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 3:</b> Jan 22-28	Ch 2: Groups as Systems	<b>D3.1</b>
		Watch Videos (optional)
	"	<b>Ch 3 Reading Quiz</b>
		<b>Group Contract</b>
<b>Week 4:</b> Jan 29-Feb 4	Ch 3: Meetings: Standard and Virtual	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D4.1</b>
		<b>Ch 4 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 5:</b> Feb 5-11	Ch 4: Group Development	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D5.1</b>
		<b>Ch 5 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 6:</b> Feb 12-18	Ch 5: Developing the Group Climate	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D6.1</b>
		<b>Ch 6 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 7:</b> Feb 19-25	Ch 6: Roles in Groups	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D7.1</b>
		<b>Ch 7 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 8:</b> Feb 26-Mar 3	Ch 7: Group Leadership	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D8.1</b>
		<b>Ch 8 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 9:</b> Mar 4-10	Ch 8: Developing Effective Teams	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D9.1</b>
		<b>Ch 9 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 10:</b> Mar 11-17	Ch 9: Defective Decision Making and Problem Solving	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D10.1</b>
		<b>Ch 10 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		
<b>Week 11:</b> Mar 25-31	Ch 10: Effective Decision Making and Problem Solving	Watch Videos (optional)
	Videos	<b>D11.1</b>
		<b>Ch 11 Reading Quiz</b>

<b>Week 12:</b> Apr 1-7	Ch 11: Power in Groups	<b>Group Meeting Agendas &amp; Minutes</b>
	Videos	<b>D12.1</b> Watch Videos (optional)
		<b>Ch 12 Reading Quiz</b>
<b>Week 13:</b> Apr 8-14	Ch 12: Conflict Management and Negotiation	<b>Group Film Analysis Paper</b>
	Videos	<b>D13.1</b> Watch Videos (optional)
<b>Week 14:</b> Apr 15-21	Appendix A: Group Oral Presentations	
	Finalize Presentations	
		<b>Group Video Slideshow Presentation</b>
<b>Week 15:</b> Apr 22-28	Appendix B: Critical Thinking Revisited: Arguments and Fallacies	
	Peer Feedback	<b>Peer Feedback DQ</b>
	Wrap-up	<b>Help Bring Closure</b>
<b>Final Reflection Exam Due no later than 11:59pm April 30, 2024</b>		