



## LEADERSHIP 351 – GROUP DYNAMICS – SPRING 2008

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Crystal Hoyt      **OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesday 11am-1pm and by appt.  
**EMAIL:** choyt@richmond.edu      **OFFICE LOCATION:** Jepson 132  
**PHONE:** 804-287-6825

**COURSE TIMES AND LOCATION:** Tuesday, Thursday 8:30am- 9:45pm; Jepson 102

**COURSE WEBSITE:** [HTTP://BLACKBOARD.RICHMOND.EDU/](http://blackboard.richmond.edu/)

### **TEXT AND OTHER READINGS:**

Forsyth, Donelson (2006, 4<sup>th</sup> edition). Group Dynamics. Wadsworth Publishing.

At least one additional reading will be assigned each week. The readings will be posted on Blackboard.

The assigned readings provide the background and context for classroom lecture and discussion, therefore, you should read the readings **before** the class period during which it is discussed.

### **DESCRIPTION AND GOALS OF THE COURSE:**

This course provides an introduction to the scientific study of group processes by presenting you with the vocabulary, concepts, theories, and research that are fundamental to the study of groups. To accurately introduce the discipline of group dynamics both classic research and thinking are presented as well as more modern developments. Additionally, this course will stress group effectiveness with an emphasis on group practice and individual group skills. Thus, this course will present a mixture of both theory and practice. A scholarly understanding of groups will go far to achieving the applied goal of understanding and improving groups. This course employs a number of learning and teaching techniques designed to facilitate comprehension of the assigned curriculum. You will be challenged to think critically about groups through a mix of lectures, class discussions, and hands-on group exercises. You will be actively involved with the course material through a high level of classroom participation, and reading and writing assignments.

The principle objective of this course is to introduce you to group dynamics. At the completion of the course you should be familiar with basic group processes as well as fundamental concepts and theories. More specifically, the overarching learning objectives are the following:

- You should become comfortable with the concept of groups.
- You should be familiar with the theoretical approaches to understanding groups.
- You should understand basic research methodologies in the study of groups.
- You should have an understanding of the functions and features of groups.
- You should gain an understanding of group structure (norms and roles, status and power, communication)
- You should have an enhanced understanding of group development, conflict, decision making, and productivity.
- You should recognize the unique role of member diversity in group dynamics.
- You should have enhanced critical thinking as well as oral/ written communication abilities.
- You should develop practical group competencies that logically follow the understanding of theory and research.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Your grade in the course will be determined by performance on the following course requirements:

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** This course is predicated on the active participation of all members. You are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and fully engage in discussions and activities. The emphasis is on quality of class participation rather than quantity. Each unexcused absence will penalize your final grade. Excused absences (such as illness, team trips, or family emergencies) must be documented with a doctor's or dean's letter. The class discussions and activities are highly dependent upon the assigned reading for the day. You must come to class fully

prepared to discuss the assigned readings; thorough participation will also contribute to a strong evaluation of class participation.

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:** The goal of the writing assignments, as well as the course, is to embody Kurt Lewin’s philosophy: “No theory without practice, no practice without theory.” Thus, there is both a theoretical and a practical component to the writing assignments.

**RESEARCH ARTICLE CRITIQUE:** You will read and critique an empirical research article from an academic journal that focuses on issues relevant to the course.

**CURRENT ISSUE ANALYSIS:** You will report an incident or issue currently in the news and will analyze it from a group dynamic perspective.

**SHORT ASSIGNMENTS:** A number of small assignments will be assigned through the semester.

*Late Assignments: Late assignments will be heavily penalized. Late work will receive a penalty of one grade for each day late. Also, assignments will receive a penalty of two grades if you were absent or late to class on the day the assignment is due.*

**EXAMINATIONS:** There will be two exams in this course. The exams will cover all course material (including lectures, in-class discussions, videos, reading assignments, etc.). The final exam is NOT cumulative; it will be given during the final exam testing time.

*Makeup Exams: If you miss an exam due to an illness or personal emergency, you must contact me **prior to, or within one day,** of the missed exam. Before we can schedule a makeup exam, you must provide a **written medical excuse or other verifiable documentation.** Makeup exams may take an alternative form to that taken by the rest of the class.*

**ELEMENTS OF YOUR GRADE:**

Grades in this course will be based on your performance on the two exams, the writing assignments and class participation. Good performance on each assignment and exam is important to your overall success in this course. Your *total points* will be based on the following components:

Class participation	5%
Writing assignments	35%
Exams (30% each):	60%
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<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Final grades** in the course will be based on the percentage of total points that you earn, according to the following cutoffs:

<b>Percentages for final grades:</b>	
A =	90-100%
B =	80-89%
C =	70-79%
D =	60-69%
F =	<60%
<i>Plus and minus grades are not shown but will be used</i>	

**HONOR CODE:** The Jepson School supports and adheres to the provisions of the Honor System sanctioned by the School of Arts and Sciences. Every piece or written work presented by individual students must have the honor pledge with your signature on it. The pledge is: “I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.”

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have a verified disability and would like to discuss special academic accommodations, please contact me *during the first week of class* to arrange reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

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**CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>READINGS</b>
Jan. 15	INTRODUCTIONS	
Jan 17	AN INTRODUCTION TO GROUP DYNAMICS	CHAPTER 1
Jan 22	STUDYING GROUPS	CHAPTER 2
Jan 24	STUDYING GROUPS	CHAPTER 2
Jan 29	INDIVIDUALS IN GROUPS	CHAPTER 3
Jan 31	INDIVIDUALS IN GROUPS	CHAPTER 3
Feb 5	FORMING GROUPS	CHAPTER 4
Feb 7	NO CLASS	
Feb 12	COHESION	CHAPTER 5
Feb 14	COHESION	CHAPTER 5
Feb 19	GROUP STRUCTURE	CHAPTER 6
Feb 21	GROUP STRUCTURE	CHAPTER 6
Feb 26	INFLUENCE	CHAPTER 7
Feb 28	INFLUENCE	CHAPTER 7
Mar 4	INFLUENCE	CHAPTER 7
Mar 6	MIDTERM EXAM	
Mar 11	SPRING BREAK	
Mar 13	SPRING BREAK	
Mar 18	POWER	CHAPTER 8
Mar 20	POWER	CHAPTER 8
Mar 25	PERFORMANCE	CHAPTER 9
Mar 27	PERFORMANCE	CHAPTER 9
Apr 1	GROUP DECISION MAKING	CHAPTER 10
Apr 3	GROUP DECISION MAKING	CHAPTER 10
Apr 8	CONFLICT	CHAPTER 12
Apr 10	CONFLICT	CHAPTER 12
Apr 15	INTERGROUP RELATIONS	CHAPTER 13
Apr 17	INTERGROUP RELATIONS	CHAPTER 13
Apr 22	CROWDS AND COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR	CHAPTER 15
Apr 24	CROWDS AND COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR	CHAPTER 15

FINAL EXAM DATE: FRIDAY MAY 2, 7-10PM.

Note: All dates are tentative and subject to change.