COM237 – Small Group Communication
Blended (Online & Synchronous)

*If there are any changes to the syllabus schedule, I will communicate the changes via an announcement in Sakai.

Instructor: Mary M. Hills, ABC, Six Sigma, IABC Fellow
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219.613.8591 (text enabled)
Student Hours: Email to set up a Zoom meeting. Please send emails to both
mhills@luc.edu and hillsmarykay@gmail.com. My luc email forwards to my gmail email,
but it's good to copy to both😊. If you do not receive a response in 24 hours, please
follow up with a text/call to 219.613.8591.

Class Time frame
The class begins the week of January 17, 2023, and finishes the week of April 28, 2023. The class week
follows the standard Sunday through Saturday week. Example: Week 2 starts on Sunday, January 22,
and finishes on Saturday, January 28, 2023, unless otherwise noted.
Synchronous class meetings are weekly on Monday and Wednesday, 9:20 – 10:10 a.m. CST. unless
otherwise noted. Friday fieldwork sessions are done from 9:20 – 10:10 a.m. CST via Zoom or in a forum
or time chosen by the group.

Course Description: COMM 237 – Small Group Communication – Small group communication is
essential in today's highly networked world. On any given day, we engage in small group communication
via email, IM, Facebook, face-to-face meetings and most recently, Zoom for work and social purposes.
Understanding group roles, culture, process, verbal and nonverbal communication and listening styles
gives people the confidence to participate and influence the outcomes of the group. This class is an
introduction to the theory, research, and practice of communication that contribute to effective task-
group discussion and decision-making.
(no prerequisite)

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)
Students will be required to comprehend, apply and demonstrate through class discussions and
assignments their grasp of the following:
   A. Explain the dynamics of small group communication.
   B. Use the small group communication process to achieve a group goal.
   C. Compare theories, frameworks & models used in small-group communication.
   D. Discuss trends in small group communication in class and group sessions.

E. Adjust small group behavior in different small group environments.
F. Develop a plan to use small groups in advancing a social justice issue/topic.

Required Course Texts and Resources
- Communicating in Small Groups Principles and Practices, Steven A. Beebe & John T. Masterson, 12th Edition. Pearson Education, Inc. ISBN: 978-0135-712-160.
- Additional Learning Materials & Activities in Sakai.

Teaching Philosophy
Class learning occurs through self-directed activities, group work, reading, lectures, guest speakers, online resources and class discussion. Weekly sessions consist of discussions of the course materials and weekly topics.

Course Expectations
Students are expected to
- Obtain the course text/book(s).
- Review Sakai for each week's learning and assessment activities.
    o Learning activities may include announcements, readings, websites and audio/video.
    o Assessment activities may include quizzes, discussion topics, individual papers, group projects, group project drafts, peer reviews, tests and individual/group presentations.
- Engage in all learning and assessment activities. Engagement tools may include:
    o Discussion Posts
    o Voice Thread
    o Zoom (team, speaker and course project presentation meetings)
- Submit assignments into Sakai assignments when due.
- Stay informed via course updates in the course announcements in Sakai.

Course Schedule
The Schedule is subject to change if necessary. Students will be notified of changes in advance. Assignments are due at the close of each week, midnight on Saturday, unless otherwise specified.
Note: No work is accepted after the due date.
 The course has three units:
- Unit 1 – Small Groups in Action, Weeks 1-4
- Unit 2 – Principles, Theory and Practice of Small Group Communication, Weeks 5-9
- Unit 3 – Effective Small Group Skills, Weeks 10-14

Please review the Syllabus Orientation video in Sakai, week 1.

Week of	Focus	Reading & Assignments
Jan. 17-21 **Week 1** **CLO D E**	**Intro to Course** **Unit 1 – Small Groups in Action**	• Intro to Course • Sakai Week 1 – Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson - Appendices A & C
Jan. 22-28 **Week 2** **CLO B D**		• Sakai Week 2 – Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 12 – Enhancing Creativity in Groups

		• Discuss Course Project due week 14 & Proposal due in Week 4
January 29 –February 4 Week 3 CLO B D F		• Sakai Week 3– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 11 – Using Problem-Solving Techniques
Feb. 5-11 Week 4 CLO A B E		• Sakai Week 4– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 10 – Making Decisions and Solving Problems • Course Project Proposal Due in Sakai
Feb. 12-18 Week 5 CLO A C D	**Unit 2 – Principles, Theory and Practice of Small Group Communication**	• Sakai Week 5– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 1 – Introducing Group Principles and Practices • Discuss Reflection Paper Due in week 6
Feb. 19-25 Week 6 CLO A C D		• Sakai Week 6– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 2 – Understanding Small Group Communication Theory • Reflection Paper Due in Sakai
Feb. 26- Mar. 4 Week 7 CLO A C E F		• Sakai Week 7 - Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 3 – Facilitating Group Development • Discuss the Competent Group Assessment Assignment due in week 8 & Course Project Meeting in Week 9
March 5-11	**Spring Break**	Have fun!
Mar.12 -18 Week 8 CLO A C D		• Sakai Week 8– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 4 – Preparing to Collaborate • Competent Group Assessment Assignment Due
Mar. 19-25 Week 9 CLO A C D F		• Sakai Week 9– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 5 – Relating to Others in Groups • Review Unit 2 Test • Zoom Meeting with MK - Team Course Projects – 3/23-24
Mar. 26- Apr. 1 Week 10 CLO B E F	**Unit 3- Effective Small Groups**	• Sakai Week 10– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 6 – Improving Group Climate • Unit 2 Test due
Apr. 2-5 Week 11 CLO B E F		• Sakai Week 11– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 7 – Enhancing Communication Skills in Groups • Discuss Week 14 Deliverables
Apr.6-10	**Easter Holiday**	

Apr. 11-15 Week 12 CLO B E F		• Sakai Week 12– Learning Materials & Activities Beebe & Masterson Text – Chapter 8 - Managing Conflict
Apr. 16-22 Week 13 CLO A B E F		• Sakai Week 13– Learning Materials & Activities • Beebe & Masterson Text: Chapter 9 – Leading Groups
April 23-29 Week 14 CLO A - F	Course Project & Presentation	• Course Project Assignment & Presentation Deck Due in Sakai April 23, midnight. • In-class Presentations – April 24, 26 & 28.

Grading

All course requirements are graded on point values. The total point value for the course is 1,000 points. The points/weight of each requirement is:

Assignments/Due Date	Points	Weighting
Discussion and Reflection (Some individual and some group), (25 pts. week/13 weeks)	**325**	**32.5%**
Team Course Project: Proposal (Week 4)	**100**	**10%**
Unit 1 Reflection Paper Week (Week 6)	**100**	**10%**
Confidential Competent Group Assessment - Peer Evaluation (Week 8)	**100**	**10%**
Zoom Meeting with MK – Team Course Project (Week 9)	**75**	**7.5%**
Unit 2 Test (Week 10)	**100**	**10%**
Team Course Project		
Course Project – Small Groups in Chosen Not-for-Profit (Week 14)	**100**	**10%**
Course Project – Presentation to Class (Week 14)	**100**	**10%**
Total	**1000**	**100%**

A letter grade will be assigned at the end of the course based on the total points gained using the table below.

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	940 - 1000	94% - 100%
A-	900 - 939	90% - 93%
B+	870 - 899	87% - 89%
B	840 - 869	84% - 86%
B-	800 - 839	80% - 83%
C+	770 - 799	77% - 79%
C	740 - 769	74% - 76%
C-	700 - 739	70% - 73%
D	650 - 699	65% - 69%
F	640 or below	64% and below

Written Assignments

Students receive an assignment description and requirements for each assignment at least one week before its due date. Students submit written assignments via Sakai. Written assignments are due on

Saturday at midnight unless noted. The written assignment's due dates are firm and outlined above. The course project will be introduced in week 1 and more fully detailed in week 3.

The student must notify me at least 24 hours in advance if they expect their work to be late. Late work is accepted at my discretion and may be graded down one or more grades based on submission.

Voice Threads
1. Select the VoiceThread tool from the tool menu.
2. Select **Add your own** in the upper right-hand corner of the window.
3. Follow the directions at [Creating a new VoiceThread](#) to create your VoiceThread and share it with the class.

Discussion and Reflections Posts
Weekly activities may include discussion or reflection posts, or both. Each week's assignment section describes the requirements for that week. Posts will be reviewed and graded weekly. Posts may include
- Providing additional information on the topic under discussion
- Sharing a personal experience on the topic under discussion
- Enhancing comments made by other students on the topic under discussion
- Clarifying/paraphrasing the subject under discussion to support understanding, or
- Presenting a brief critical assessment of the issue under discussion.

Students/groups must use [hyperlinks](#), [tags](#) and [hashtags](#) to support a post.

Review the *How to "Forum" in Sakai* video to learn more. Note that Sakai now calls Forums, Discussions. Otherwise, the steps are the same😊
[How do I post to a Forum topic?](#)
[How do I reply to a Forum post?](#)

[Netiquette](#) (Note: Yes, you're in the right spot if you landed on Marquette's site😊)
Netiquette refers to the guidelines for socially acceptable exchanges in a virtual environment. As many online courses require students to interact with one another, often over controversial issues, awareness of "how we sound" in a text-based discussion is essential. As the course progresses and you would like to suggest an addition to our community netiquette, please let me know, and we can discuss it in a Forum.

Technology Help Desk
The ITS Help Desk is your single point of contact for technology support. Please contact the ITS Help Desk to help with your password self-service setup or schedule technical support, including hardware and software questions, consulting installations, and network connection requests.

- Find the Help Desk Hours at: [https://www.luc.edu/its/service/support_hours.shtml.](https://www.luc.edu/its/service/support_hours.shtml)
- **Call the Help Desk via telephone at 773/508-4ITS (773/508-4487)**
- Email the Help Desk at ITSservicedesk@luc.edu or HelpDesk@luc.edu.
- For general orientation to technology at Loyola, check out the Technology Roadmaps at: http://www.luc.edu/its/resources/technologyroadmap/.

Student and Digital Media Resources
Digital Media Services provides access to an array of equipment and software support in Loyola's digital and multimedia lab spaces. Visit its website at http://www.luc.edu/digitalmedia.

University Information Security Office – The University Information Security Office (UISO) manages and advises on technology risks, policies, compliance, technology-related laws, and regulations. UISO provides incident handling services if a system or information breach occurs. The office works to keep the campus technology environment safe and productive. An information security incident is an attempted, suspected, or successful unauthorized access or misuse of University information. **A good source on phishing scams.**

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support
Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa.
Contact: 773-508-8840 or deanofstudents@luc.edu.

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity (Please follow the link to review the complete statement.)
A university's fundamental mission is to search for and communicate the truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a basic tenet of the community's intellectual life. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, respect, and practice this standard of personal honesty.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning a grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. The instructor must report all instances of academic dishonesty to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and documentation when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of their findings and sanction.

Student Accessibility Center
Any student who needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from the Student Accessibility Center confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

Privacy Statement
Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do

so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording.

School of Communication Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
As Loyola's mission statement holds, "We are Chicago's Jesuit, Catholic University-a diverse community seeking God in all things." Together, as a community rich in diversity, we are called to "expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith."
Recognizing and appreciating the diverse collection of identities, experiences, perspectives, and abilities of the students, faculty, staff, and community partners with whom we collaborate, the School of Communication commits itself to enriching academic experiences through the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive practices.