Professor:
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Course Description and Overview:
This course is designed to increase your knowledge about groups as well as increase your ability to be a member of a working unit and to manage these work teams. The primary emphasis will be placed on learning and understanding work team dynamics by actively being a member of an ongoing class group, specifically designed to explore group dynamics while being engaged in a real task.

Attendance and Participation
Due to the nature of this course and my assumptions about learning, attendance and active class participation are mandatory and required of all class members. At my discretion, an individual’s grade may be increased due to superior in-class participation that helps create enhanced learning opportunities for other class members. In addition, lack of attendance and appropriate participation will result in a lower individual grade.

Required Textbooks

This is a short book, and we will go through it fairly early in the class. Please order ahead and start reading the book before class starts. As a result, the course will be supplemented with numerous handouts and other reading materials, some of which will be placed on blackboard.

Course Activities and Evaluation:
The course will demand active involvement by all participants. Class sessions will not focus solely on textbook facts, but will comprise numerous activities and experiences that cannot be replicated without being in attendance. The beginning assumption regarding learning in this course is: to learn about teams and work groups requires that one be a member of an ongoing group in which course concepts and ideas exist and can be applied. The class exercises performed in these learning teams will enable us to: (1) see and experience what we read in our texts and course handouts about work groups, and (2) to use the learning groups as a laboratory in which we can experiment with new behaviors and interactions with others.

Individual evaluation will be based on five components:

1. Personal Journal (20 points). Each individual will be a team member, but will also be a participant observer of the interaction dynamics of their group and the entire class. Each individual is required to keep a written account of their observations, thoughts, feelings, etc. for each week of class (ie. 3 classes) and for each meeting of their learning group (both inside and outside of class). The journal
requirement is an exercise in reflection and sensemaking. The comments you make in your journal will reveal your personal reactions to the class and how you conceptually put these experiences into some perspective. You might start the first entry by writing about what happened during the first class sessions and how you felt about the class. In addition to these comments in your journal entry you should also indicate how your observations relate to the group concepts we will be learning in the course (such as communication, conflict, power, leadership, task and maintenance issues, cohesion, etc.). This is not a task that can be reconstructed too long after the fact (a week is too long), but must be kept current, immediately after each meeting of the class. Your personal journal will be done in blackboard, and I will not be taking physical copies. Please date each journal submission, attach your name, and indicate your group. I will grade your journals at various times throughout the semester so as to provide you with encouragement and corrective feedback, and will provide notice as to when I will be doing so. Your journal will also be submitted the last day of class (December 2nd). When submitting your journal turn in the complete journal, including instructor comments from previous entries.

2. Group Project (20 points). Each learning group will complete a project as a team, and it will be given to you around midterm. Your group will have approximately three to four weeks to complete this assignment. There will likely be 2 parts to the project- an activity that makes you work as a team, and a brief written project report similar to that you would give to your manager. Due date will be in the end of October, but will be finalized along with other specifics as the class progresses.

3. Group Process Analysis Paper (40 points). Each action/learning team will write (as a group) a paper documenting their experiences that applies appropriate group concepts and theories to explain these experiences. A separate handout will explain this requirement more fully. Group process analysis papers will be due November 28th. You will be giving presentations about your group this week. We will do 1-2 groups per day the week of Nov. 28th to Dec. 2nd.

4. Reflected Best-Self Report (10 points). Each individual will collect data on their best-self, analyze this information, write a reflected best-self portrait, and hand in a written report on these activities. The assignment is due October 19th. See handout for further details.

5. Personal Learning Paper (10 points). Each individual will write a concise paper documenting what they have learned about work teams and themselves from participating in this course. In this paper you will also need to access your skills as a productive team member. More specifics on this assignment will be given as the semester proceeds. This assignment will be due the last day of class (Dec. 2nd).

Please note that for all written assignments (or components of assignments), I want them to be turned in on blackboard. I WILL NOT ACCEPT PHYSICAL COPIES. The presentations you will give in class and can use powerpoint or whatever your prefer.

FOR YOU WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

PLEASE have your papers reviewed by the writing lab (appointments can be made through blackboard on the online tutoring link on your homepage) before submitting it to me. Grammar and spelling do matter, and will be especially important to monitor when there may be multiple authors.