

PSYCHOLOGY OF WORKING IN GROUPS & TEAMS – PSYC 467-DL SYLLABUS SPRING 2021

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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment (Zoom)
Day/Time: Distance Learning (online)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: Welcome! This upper-level undergraduate course provides you with a survey of the topics covering the psychology of working in groups and teams. We will examine the foundations of groups and teams research, as well as theories and models of various group phenomena. Through text reading, short lectures, videos, writing assignments, and exams, you will learn about empirical studies of these phenomena, understand how individual, group, and contextual factors influence group processes and outcomes, and think about applications of that research to your life.

You will develop the following skills:

1. Synthesize and describe psychological theories and research related to groups and teams.
2. Determine the best methods for team staffing and organization, planning, and execution of team deliverables.
3. Apply the concepts learned in class to become more effective team members and team leaders.

REQUIRED TEXT: Thompson, Leigh. (2014). *Making the Team* (5th edition). Boston: Pearson.

COURSE STRUCTURE: This course is structured to facilitate connections among students, while also allowing for some flexibility given its asynchronous, virtual format. During each week, there will be a series of materials including reading assignments and videos. For each week there will be one or more supplementary scholarly articles which are **not mandatory** readings (examples are included in the course schedule). These articles are meant to supplement and provide additional readings for those interested in the topic. There will also be short discussion posts, paper assignments, and presentation over the course of the semester.

BLACKBOARD LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS: Access to [MyMason](#) and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Click on the link for Psyc 467-. The class website in Blackboard will contain access to videos, assignments, the discussion board, exams, and other course resources. Nearly all course activities will take place in Blackboard and Revel, so it is important to login and begin to explore the various components in the first days of the semester. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Check the [IT Support Center](#) website. Navigate to the [Student Support page](#) for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning to facilitate discussions and materials exchange this semester.

Students are encouraged to post whatever questions, answers, tips, issues, problems, suggestions, whatever, as often as they like throughout the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week	Content & Readings	Assignments/Exams (All are due 11:59pm on last day of week)
1 (1/25 - 1/31)	Introduction to Teams/Groups Thompson Ch 1 – Types of teams <i>Video: Tannenbaum – Science of Teams</i> Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Hollenbeck et al., (2012)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 1 & response • Week 1 worksheet
2 (2/1 – 2/7)	Team Assembly & Design Thompson Ch 2 – Designing the team <i>Video: Amy Edmondson – Teaming TedTalk</i> Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Bell et al. (2018)</i> <i>Cordery & Tian (2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 2 & response • Week 2 worksheet • Team Project - teams created
3 (2/8 – 2/14)	Team Performance Thompson Ch 5 – Team performance Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Fleishman & Zaccaro (1992)</i> <i>Marks et al. (2001)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 3 & response • Week 3 worksheet
4 (2/15 – 2/21)	Emergent States in Teams Thompson Ch 4 – Team cohesion & trust Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Grossman & Feitosa (2018)</i> <i>Pescosolido & Saavedra (2012)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 4 & response • Week 4 worksheet
5 (2/22 – 2/28)	Leadership in Teams Thompson Ch 3 – Leading teams <i>Video: Adam Grant – Best teams has this secret weapon</i> Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Morgeson et al. (2010)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 5 & response • Week 5 worksheet • Team Portfolio
6 (3/1 – 3/7)	Communication & Cognition in Teams Thompson Ch 6 – Team communication & collective intelligence Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus (2010)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 6 & response • Week 6 worksheet • Team Proposal
7 (3/8 – 3/14)	None	**MID-TERM EXAM**
8 (3/15 – 3/21)	Decision Making in Teams Thompson Ch 7 – Team decision making: Pitfalls & solutions Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Reader (2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 8 & response • Week 8 worksheet

9 (3/22 – 3/28)	Conflict in Teams Thompson Ch 8 – Managing team conflict <i>Video: Lindred Greer – Managing conflict in teams</i> Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Greer & Dannals (2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 9 & response • Week 9 worksheet
10 (3/29 – 4/4)	Creativity & Innovation Thompson Ch 9 – Creativity & innovation in teams Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Van Knippenberg (2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 10 & response • Week 10 worksheet • Team Update
11 (4/5 – 4/11)	Subgroups & Multiteam Systems Thompson Ch 10 – Subgroups & multi-teams Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Ashforth & Mael (1989)</i> <i>Zaccaro et al. (2012)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 11 & response • Week 11 worksheet
12 (4/12 – 4/18)	Networking & Social Capital Thompson Ch 11 – Team networking & social capital Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Murase et al. (2012)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 12 & response • Week 12 worksheet
13 (4/19 – 4/25)	Virtual Teams Thompson Ch 12 – Virtual teamwork <i>Video: Steven Rogelberg – Virtual Meetings TedTalk</i> Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Ford et al. (2017)</i> <i>Gibbs et al. (2017)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 13 & response • Week 13 worksheet
14 (4/26 – 4/30)	Cross-cultural Teams Thompson Ch 13 – Multicultural teams <i>Video: Ricardo Fernandez – Managing cross cultural remote teams</i> Supplementary scholarly reading: <i>Feitosa et al. (2018)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion board post 14 & response • Week 14 worksheet • Team Presentations & Peer Evaluations
5/3 - 5/7	None	**FINAL EXAM DUE 5/7**

I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus and will give students ample notice to any changes. We may take more or less time to cover certain material than is allocated on the schedule. Additionally, I may add additional videos to support the content.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION & GRADING BREAKDOWN:

WEEKLY WORKSHEETS (15%): Every week, students will complete a worksheet. This is intended to cover content delivery, as you will read the textbook and view the other course materials while filling it out. Worksheets are worth 20 points, and should be completed individually, ideally prior to completing the discussion board posts. Worksheets contain a chapter overview, an outline, and application questions. Students are expected to use the outline as a starting point for taking notes on that week's content. If you prefer to take hand-written notes, you may do so, but you then need to insert a readable photo of your notes into your worksheet. Notes should take several pages and be thorough. Application questions are intended to (1) advance your understanding of the course material by asking students to demonstrate understanding, analyze, apply, evaluate, and synthesize concepts; and (2) prepare you for written exams. Responses to each question may vary, but will likely be around 1 paragraph. Worksheets are graded for completion. The more effort you put into these worksheets the more prep you will have for the exams.

DISCUSSION POSTS (25%): For each week, students must complete one post and one response, either of which can pertain to the any of the content (e.g., article, book chapter, and/or video) covered in that week.

Original Post. This post must be related to the chapter content for that week. For these posts, students must submit a unique, interesting and relevant video, link, popular press article, or a scholarly article related to a topic presented within that chapter that the student found interesting (cannot duplicate the article or video that I assign— nor one previously posted by another student). Along with their post, students must 1) provide a summary of the chosen material, 2) an explanation of why the post is interesting/relevant to the given chapter/content, and 3) any other comments or ideas that the student had regarding their posting.

Another option is for students to describe one of their own experiences and relate it to the content that week.

**Note that a post with just the synopsis of the article/video or chapter content will NOT get students full credit as it is considered the less important component.

These responses should **be at least five full sentences**, filler *sentences will not be accepted*. That is to say, each sentence must contribute to your overall point. **Your original post should demonstrate that you spent sufficient time and effort thinking about the week's course content. Please remember to be respectful and polite regarding other students' opinions and ideas when posting these responses. I encourage healthy discussions and debates through these discussion threads.**

The goal of these posts is to spur discussion among classmates, so they should be as thought-provoking and engaging as possible in order to encourage other students to read and respond.

Response. Students must also read and respond to a discussion post of **at least one other classmate**. These responses should include overall thoughts/ideas spurred by the post,

other reasons why the post was interesting, other ways that the post was relevant to topics outlined within the course, aspects of the post that the student may agree/disagree with, and/or any other observations that the student would like to make about the post. These responses should be **at least three full sentences**. Please note, I will not count “filler” sentences such as, “I really liked this article” or “Great job!” Your response should demonstrate that you fully read the content posted by the commenter and spent sufficient time and effort thinking of a constructive response.

Students must submit their discussion posts and responses for each chapter by the due dates listed. **Students will be allowed to drop their lowest discussion post grade.** This is done to account for any unforeseen circumstances that may prevent a student from submitting the discussion post/response in time. **Thus, there will be NO exceptions for late work.**

There will be a total of 13 content posts, **but only 12 will be required and count towards your grade.** Each post will be worth **10 points** (5 points for the discussion post and 5 points for commenting on another post). **There is no partial credit given for late discussion posts. Late posts will be counted as missing.** *If a student misses a discussion post (i.e., if you miss the 11:59 PM deadline) it **cannot** be made up at a later date. However, you will have the flexibility to miss **one** class posts without penalty.* The post questions and set up can be found in the “Discussion Posts” tab. I strongly recommend saving your discussion posts in a word doc before posting on blackboard. Blackboard will log you off if you have been inactive for a while.

GROUP ANALYSIS PROJECT (25%): One of the learning outcomes for this course is to apply the group/team theories and effective strategies of teamwork. Accordingly, one component of your course grade will be based on the completion of a group project. Several deliverables will be due throughout the course of the semester including:

- a. Team Portfolio (including a team profile, team inventory, and team charter)
- b. Team Proposal (including the team goal and plans for achieving the shared goal)
- c. Team Update (approximately halfway through the semester provide an update to the progress made on the tasks, as well as challenges)
- d. Final Team Presentation (a 15-minute presentation detailing the team project)
- e. Peer evaluation (a short survey regarding individual and team performance)

This is just an outline to give you an idea of what’s to come. Details on the entire project and for each deliverable will be provided separately on Blackboard.

EXAMS (40%): There will be two exams. The first will be a mid-term that will be completed during Week 7. The second will be a final that must be turned in by May 9th via Blackboard. Exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Exam material will be taken from the mandatory course content assigned.

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

Weekly worksheets:	15%
Discussion posts:	20%
Group project:	25%
Exams:	40% (20% for mid-term & final)

LETTER GRADE: Based on the percentages that you receive on your exams and course deliverables; your final letter grade will be calculated using the following:

$$A (4.00) = 100 - 93$$

$$B (3.00) = 86 - 83$$

$$C (2.00) = 76 - 73$$

$$F (0.00) = \text{below } 59$$

$$A- (3.67) = 92 - 90$$

$$B- (2.67) = 82 - 80$$

$$C- (1.67) = 72 - 70$$

$$B+(3.33) = 89 - 87$$

$$C+(2.33) = 79 - 77$$

$$D (1.00) = 69 - 60$$

EXTRA CREDIT: For extra credit, you may sign up to participate in two hours of research participation credit via the psychology department [SONA system](#). Or, you may find something in the news that is relevant to the materials in one of the chapters, and write a one-page description about how this news item relates to a concept discussed in the textbook. Either option is worth **four points** applied to your final exam score. Extra credit, if you choose to do it, needs to be turned in to me by the end of week 15 (5/9).

If you read this far!!!! * Post a picture of a cute or funny animal in your class introduction thread*** for an additional extra credit point.**

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

- a. **Academic Honesty:** George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. The University's Honor Code can be found [here](#). Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the Honor Code. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. Please contact me if you have questions about what is or is not plagiarism before you turn in an assignment.
- b. **Mason Official Policy:** Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors; notices from the library; notices about academic standing; financial aid information; class materials; assignments; questions; and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.
- c. Students must follow the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](#)
- d. **Enrollment:** Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes (available from the Registrar's Website: registrar.gmu.edu). After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.
- e. **Student services:** The University provides range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
- f. **Communication policy:** Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- g. **Counseling Center:** [The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance. Student Union I, Room 364, 703-993-2380. Web-site [here](#).
- h. **Accommodations:** If you have any specific needs (e.g., related to vision, hearing, learning, or medical conditions) or any religious or cultural practices, please let me know by the second week of class so that I can make the appropriate arrangements. Disabilities must be documented by the Disability Resources Center (703-993-2474) for reasonable accommodations to be provided. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [George Mason University Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester.
- i. **Writing help:** [The George Mason University Writing Center](#) staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.