

PA5081
Working in Teams:
Crossing Disciplines and Learning from Difference
Fall, 2017

We will not solve our biggest societal challenges by working in silos. The future will require leaders who understand the need to work across disciplines, across cultures, and across ideological differences to craft solutions together.

*Center for Integrative Leadership,
University of Minnesota*

SYLLABUS

Instructors:

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Course Description:

In today's professional environments—both global and domestic, working alone is rare and working with diverse groups of people is common. Public affairs professionals collaborate across teams, organizations and sectors to achieve outcomes and advance the common good in a diverse world. Knowing how to work and thrive in a team is critical. High performing teams that achieve results pay attention to how and why teams are assembled, how the work is shared, and how the work flow is managed. The most effective teams capitalize on the diverse backgrounds and perspectives represented in the group. This seven hour, .5 credit course is offered to all incoming Humphrey School students at the beginning of their first academic year. The course prepares students for not only their future coursework in groups at the Humphrey School, but for careers in public life.

Course Learning Objectives:

At the completion of this course I expect students will:

- Be able to develop team operating norms and expectations
- Be able to develop effective group and task work plans.
- Demonstrate increased capacity to reflect on personal learning and communication styles, and how they impact group dynamics.
- Demonstrate a deepened understanding of interpersonal group dynamics including communication, decision-making, and problem-solving.
- Know how to develop cultures of inclusion in teams and manage effectively across different styles and approaches to teamwork.
- Improve intercultural competence within group settings.
- Demonstrate how to give and receive constructive feedback.

Course Readings:

What Google Learned from Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team (New York Times; February, 2016)

How Diversity Makes Us Smarter (Scientific American; October, 2014)

Singleton, G.E. (2015). *Courageous Conversations about Race*; chapter 4: *Agreeing To Talk About Race*.
Additional reading materials and web resources will be posted on the course moodle site.

Course Methods:

This course is not for spectators! Students will achieve course learning objectives through active engagement with their peers and the course instructor, completing course readings and sharing reflections through the course website. Each student will also complete a personal traits inventory and a general discussion of the results will be used to advance interpersonal skills and understanding.

Student Evaluation and Grading:

Students will be evaluated on an S/N basis. Because we meet for such a short time and because the course is highly participatory, **full attendance in the entire day-long course is required to receive a passing grade**. In addition to attendance and active course participation, students will submit a 2-3 page summary of their reflections on the course readings and activities.

Important University Policies You Should Know About.....

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf.

Disability Accommodations

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact Disability Resource Center at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations. If you are registered with Disability Resource Center and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course. For more information, please see the Disability Resource Center website, <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>.

Mental Health and Stress Management

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

Student Conduct Code

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community. As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/instructorresp>.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: <http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

<http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf>