CMS 112
SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION (3 credits)
FALL 2012

INSTRUCTOR: Kay M Carpenter, BSN, MS, MA
PHONE: 308-381-6591, 308-379-8355 (cell)
EMAIL: kay.carpenter@doane.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
A practical course in the theory and practice of small group problem solving. Small group processes and procedures are examined and practiced. Students will focus on leadership which fosters effective teamwork by a group and how effective leaders adapt to the competencies and needs of their members as well as the situations in which they work.

COURSE TOPICS:
This course will focus on four major topics:
3. Problems in groups: de-individualization, group think, and inter-group conflict.
4. Applications: business and industry, classrooms, family, social, and therapeutic settings

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
Through discussion and examination of and practice with various concepts and processes of communication within small groups, each student should:
1) Understand roles in a group and how personality development, brought into a group setting, can influence the process of the group.
2) Develop personal skills for effective group leadership/facilitation and how different leadership styles affect the group.
3) Understand the theories and models that serve as a basis for the study of groups and the concept of “group think,”
4) Identify and explain the stages of group development as they occur,
and understand the impact of nonverbal communication, critical listening and speaking skills on small groups.

5) Become aware of the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors which can cause a group to become dysfunctional.

6) Develop and have an opportunity to practice problem-solving skills and approaches to conflict resolution within groups.

7) Transfer learning from the classroom to any small group setting.

TEXT: “The Fundamentals of Small Group Communication”
[Paperback] by
Dr. Scott A. Myers and Carolyn M. Anderson; Sage Publications, Inc (2008)

GRADING:
Students will be graded on attendance, participation, weekly assignments or activities, and an individual project.

GRADING cont’d
Attendance/Class Participation 80 pts
Article Reviews (2) 60 pts
Individual/Group Activities-in and out of class 100 pts
Individual Project 60 pts
TOTAL 300 pts.

*Class participation and attendance go hand-in-hand.  No points can be earned during those times a student misses a class.  Because this is a class involving small group communication, it is imperative that you attend class each week.  If you must miss, it is necessary to notify the teacher BEFORE your absence because of some of the activities we will be doing in class.
Classes will meet on Tuesdays on the following dates:

*Students are to read and provide two written article reviews of their choice on any topic of small group communication.  (A form will be given in class to use for the article reviews).
Topics may include: (but aren’t limited to)
Group dynamics       Group structure
Personality and its influence on role development Group think
Dependence and independence in groups Group synergy
Goal-setting and the establishment of norms Conflict resolution
Teambuilding  Nonverbal behaviors
Listening skills

*Individual and group activities* will be assigned throughout the course either within class or as brief take-home activities. Students are expected to complete the assignments according to guidelines given. If a student is going to be absent the homework is to be done before the absence. In other cases, the work should be submitted no later than the day after the absence by email. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ATTACHMENTS AS A .doc-SEND INFORMATION BY EMAIL AS A .pdf OR .rtf**

*The individual project* is a **3-page double spaced** review of a small group communication that the student has experienced from direct participation in a committee meeting, social media group (face book, Twitter, myspace), leading a group, a group at work, etc. The review will include:
The dynamics of the group and its purpose
Discussion of group roles within the group
What he/she has learned from this class that has been or will be useful to future participation in small groups
His/her plan for being successful in a leadership role now or in the future in small groups.

Each student will be asked to provide a brief presentation to the class regarding the group that was reviewed.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**
The Doane College Academic Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects will represent your own work. Any use of others’ ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or the dean of undergraduate studies.