

SPCM: 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies  
The University of Texas at Tyler  
MWF (10:10-11:05)

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**Text**

Adler, R.B., Rodman, G., de Pre, A. (2014). Understanding human communication (12<sup>th</sup> ed). Oxford Press

**Course Description**

Theory and practice related to the dynamics of human communication. An examination of the process of attributing and sharing meaning, and the factors influencing intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, organizational, rhetoric and public speaking, and mass communication.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- A. Understand, analyze, and practice effective and ethical oral communication in forms and styles appropriate for various situations, purposes and audiences they serve.
- B. Create and deliver presentations across multiple contexts.
- C. Apply effective approaches to human relational interaction through interpersonal or group and teamwork interactions in various settings and with diverse others.

**Major Requirements & Grade % Approximations (Total Points: 670)**

A. Listening	(25 pts)	4%
B. Communication Research Paper	(100 pts)	15%
1. Presentation	(50 pts)	7%
C. Intercultural Communication Paper/Letter	(50 pts)	7%
D. Service Learning Leadership	(25 pts)	4%
E. Small Group Comm Video Assignment	(50 pts)	7%
F. Organizational Comm Ethics/Leadership	(20 pts)	3%
1. Group Work Peer Evaluation	(40 pts)	6%
G. Impromptu Speeches (3)	(30 pts)	4%
G. Informative Speech	(100 pts)	15%
a. Outline	(50 pts)	7%
b. Visual Aide	(30 pts)	4%
H. Exam		
1. Final Exam	(100 pts)	15%

**Grades: Standard Grading Scale**

90% - 100%	=	A
80% - 89%	=	B
70% - 79%	=	C
60% - 69%	=	D
59% - ↓	=	F

### **Attendance Policy**

Perfect attendance in this course is recommended. A student's grade will not be automatically reduced due to absences. However, a student is more likely to do better in this course with higher attendance. In-class activities may be missed due to absences and are only available for make-up if the absence is excused. If a student must miss class, he or she is advised to contact another student to learn what was missed and if any work is due on a following class period because that work is still due next class period whether or not the absence was excused. If you are to be absent from a class, whether or not you miss any assignments, you must notify the teacher before-hand if possible, but no later than the next class period, of your desire to make up any missed work in order to be able to do so. If medical reasons are cited for absences, a doctor's note must accompany any request to provide make-up work.

### **Participation**

Students are expected to not only attend class, but to play active roles in the classroom. Assigned text readings are to be completed before each class session and students are encouraged to ask questions or offer insight during class periods. When group or individual assignments or activities are assigned, everyone is expected to participate as assigned.

### **Assignments and Exams**

All assignments are due when stated by the instructor. As the college experience is, in part, designed to prepare students for the work place, ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK will be accepted. If you have completed at least part of an assignment by the due date, it is better to turn in part of the assignment on time than to turn in the completed assignment late for no credit. All homework turned in, unless otherwise stated, is to be typed. Any exam must be taken on the designated day and time set forth by the instructor. Any exceptions to due dates must be verified with the instructor prior to the scheduled deadline. Lack of performance as a part of a group assignment can constitute in a lowered grade than other group members.

### **Original Work**

All student work must be original to the student and original for the course where assigned. Any failure to abide by high standards or ethics in regard to student work will be handled by the instructor and the university and may constitute in the student failing the course and receiving further reprimand from the university. Plagiarism is a big deal and the consequences can go much further than the university's reach, so please be careful.

### **Students Rights and Responsibilities**

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

### **Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies**

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise

grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- ☑ Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- ☑ Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- ☑ Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- ☑ Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- ☑ Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

### **Academic Dishonesty and Original Work**

Faculty members have a special obligation to expect high standards of academic honesty in all student work. Students also have a special obligation to adhere to such standards. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the material in [A Student Guide to Conduct and Discipline.pdf](#) at UT Tyler concerning university regulations regarding academic dishonesty, and the definitions of cheating and plagiarism that it contains. In general, plagiarism is the unauthorized use of published or unpublished material as well as not giving proper credit to the source.

**The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:**

- a) use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without fully or properly crediting the author with footnotes, citations or bibliographical reference
- b) unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials
- c) unacknowledged use of work/materials that have been produced through collaboration with others without release in writing from collaborators.

### **State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

### **Disability Services**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to [cstaples@uttyler.edu](mailto:cstaples@uttyler.edu)

### **Student Absence due to Religious Observance**

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

### **Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities**

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

### **Social Security and FERPA Statement:**

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

### **Emergency Exits and Evacuation:**

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

## **Course Calendar**

### Week 1

*Introduction to Course (ch 1, 2)*

Communication Model: 8 Components of Communication

Why We Communicate

Assign: Listening

Assessments (Pre – semester PRCA-24)

### Week 2

*Listening Process (ch 5)*

Guest Lecture: Hearing Loss Resource Specialist, DARS Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) (ex. Michael Wilcox)

Due: Listening Assignment, Discuss

### Week 3

*Interpersonal Communication (ch 7, 8)*

Assign: Research Paper and Presentation

### Week 4, Week 5

*Intercultural Communication (ch 3)*

Assign: Intercultural Communication Paper and Letter to Representative  
Impromptu

### Week 6

*Verbal and Nonverbal Communication (ch 4, 6)*

Assign: Service Learning and Leadership  
Impromptu

Week 7

Due: Intercultural Communication Paper and Letter to Representative  
 Assign: Group Video Assignment  
 Due: Service Learning and Leadership

Week 8

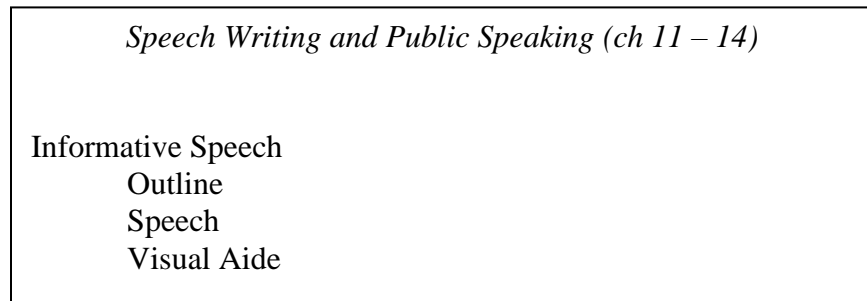
*Small Group Communication (ch 9, 10)*

Due: Group Video Assignment  
 Impromptu

Week 9

*Organizational Communication and Ethics/Leadership*

Assign: Ethical Dilemma  
 Due: Ethical Dilemma

Week 10Week 11Week 12Week 13

Work: Research/Presentations

Week 14

*THANKSGIVING BREAK*

Week 15

Due: Research paper/Begin presentations  
 Post-semester assessment (post-test PRCA-24)  
 Final Exam Review

Week 16

Final Exam (See university final exams schedule)

**SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies**  
**Listening**

You will be given a set of disposable ear plugs by the instructor. Place and keep the ear plugs in your ears during a social event (i.e. dinner with friends or family, baby shower, etc.). Take note of any increase or decrease in the ease of conversation. Think about how you feel and what you want to do to fix the way you feel.

Consider the lecture by guest speaker and Hearing Loss Resource Specialist from the DARS Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) (ex. Michael Wilcox), and what you have learned from the textbook regarding listening. Write a 2-page paper [APA Style, Times New Roman, Double Spaced, 12-Font, plus a minimum of 2 academic references] regarding your experience. Document the following items:

1. What was your experience? (Where did you go? What did you do? – Family Dinner?)
2. How did having the earplugs in during this event make you feel? What are some of the thoughts that went through your mind while experiencing less listening ability?
3. Document a concept from the DHHS guest lecturer (ex. Michael Wilcox) or the textbook that reflects your experience. (Make a clear connection between your experience and the guest speaker and/or textbook).
4. Discuss the importance of learning how to effectively communicate with the Hard of Hearing co-culture. Moreover, discuss how you plan to change the way you communicate with those who have a difficult time hearing.

Due Wednesday – Week 2

Paper: 25 pts.

**SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies**  
**Communication Research Paper and Presentation**

Research Paper (*Written*)

Prepare a 3 page paper [APA Style, Times New Roman, Double Spaced, 12-Font, plus a minimum of 3 academic references] on the role of communication in one of the following arenas: international politics, interpersonal relationships, the collegiate setting, or workplace. You must provide, explain, and relate at least two communication theories to your chosen topic. (Example – applying the Social Exchange Theory to the workplace by discussing how interpersonal relationships between co-workers can lead to personal favors, such as promotions and raises.) Papers will be graded on APA format, content, length, and grammar. Papers due Monday of week 15 and each paper is to be accompanied by a receipt of review from the UT Tyler Writing Center. Due Monday – Week 15.

Paper: 100 pts.

Research Presentation (*Oral and Visual*)

Present your paper to the class beginning week 15 (all papers due at this time). Presentation should be approximately 2-3 minutes in length and cover your paper content in a manner interesting to the class audience. Please do not simply read your paper to the class. The presentation must include a visual aide of some kind (Power Point or Video). Presentations will be graded on content, length, relation to audience, and overall presentation effort/style/quality. Presentations being Monday – Week 15.

Presentation: 50 pts.

**SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies**  
**Intercultural Communication Paper and Letter to Representative**

Paper

Search and locate a current international issue (an issue that affects more than one culture). Write a 2-page paper [APA Style, Times New Roman, Double Spaced, 12-Font, plus a minimum of 3 academic references] that covers the following points regarding your chosen international issue:

1. Describe the issue
2. Define and discuss the two or more cultures involved in the issue
3. Explain what has been done and what you think should be done about the issue based on your findings regarding the potential positive or negative effects of our actions on this other culture.
4. Describe the intrapersonal and meta-cultural consequences of these actions on/within the people of these cultures.

Examples: United States and North Korea discussions regarding nuclear weapons, Muslim presence and political influence in the United States post September 11, 2001, Ebola outbreak, etc.

Paper will be graded on content, APA style and Grammar, as well as length.

Paper due – Monday Week 7.

Paper: 40 pts.

Letter to Representative

Draft a professional letter to one of the Federal Representatives from Texas regarding the international issue you addressed in your paper. Briefly explain your position to the Representative and ask him or her to consider your findings as further pertinent decisions are made. All three academic sources must be cited in the letter. This letter must be previewed by the professor and proof of mailing the letter must be provided for final grading. Letter due (cleared by professor / proof of mailing – Friday Week 7).

Letter: 10 pts.

## **SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies Service Learning Leadership Project and Paper**

### Service Learning Leadership Project

You will be allowed to choose from various service opportunity options in the community. All service is to relate to verbal and nonverbal communication. For example, some students may choose to visit Sterling House, a small assisted living home across the street from campus. Students learn to stretch their communication abilities, while communicating both verbally and nonverbally a sense of care to the residents. You are encouraged to complete the assignment in pairs, but write about their communication experience on an individual basis. Service-mindedness is a great leadership quality, so thank you for investing your time in the lives of others.

### Paper

Write no less than one page (APA format, TNR, 12 font, double-spaced) about your service experience. Incorporate at least one communication theory related to either verbal or nonverbal communication and cite the source using APA format. Paper due – Friday Week 7.  
Service Learning Leadership Project and Paper: 25 pts.

## **SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies Small Group Communication Video Assignment**

### Small Group Communication Video Assignment

Work in an assigned, short-term group to prepare and present a 5-minute video to the class. The video must be interesting to fellow students and incorporate small group communication theory in an educational, yet entertaining manner. As a group, you will decide upon and research a topic/theory within Small Group Communication and develop an idea for the video and produce the video together. The video will present the Small Group Communication theory to the viewing audience. Each group member must be visible in the video for at least 2 minutes. Work will be graded on understanding/incorporation of theory into video, length of video, and level of effort. Group members share a grade for this presentation; however, the professor reserves the right to reward exceptional work of one group member or award a lower grade to a member who does not do a sufficient amount of work. Video due - Friday Week 8.

Video: 50 pts.



**SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies  
Organizational Communication and Ethics/Leadership**

Organizational Communication and Ethical Dilemma

Work in an assigned, short-term group to develop an organizational workplace ethical dilemma utilizing one Organizational Communication theory from the textbook. Once the ethical dilemma is developed, they will be collected and redistributed among the groups so that each group will possess an ethical dilemma developed by another group. With an ethical dilemma in hand, each group is to discuss the written situation and develop a plan of action and prepare a brief, informal presentation to the class (from your seats within your group) regarding the dilemma and your projected solution and justification. The presentation should address how a person can display personal responsibility and leadership through ethical decision making. This assignment is to take place in class.

Assignment graded on quality of ethical dilemma developed, solution to ethical dilemma, and justification for the solution. In-Class assignment.

Ethics Teamwork: 20 pts.

**SPCM 1311 Introduction to Communication Studies  
Speech Writing and Public Speaking**

Informative Outline

Research and prepare a formal, topical outline on a topic of your choice. The purpose of this speech is to inform, so choose a topic less familiar to the audience so that the content of the outline is more likely to inform. All topics must be cleared through the professor. Utilize the topical, keyword information from your text book as well as the outline guide posted below when preparing the outline. Minimum of 3 academic sources. Due Monday – Week 14.

Outline: 50 pts.

*Informative Speech Topical Keyword Outline (Guide)*

General Purpose:

Specific Purpose:

Introduction

- Attention Getting Element
- Introduce Topic
- Build Credibility and Rapport
- Thesis Statement: Today, I hope to inform you about . . . .

Transition:

1. Main Point 1

- a. Subpoint (source)
- b. Subpoint (source)

Transition:

2. Main Point 2

- a. Subpoint
- b. Subpoint (source)

Transition:

Conclusion

- Summarize (Restate Thesis)
- Final Statement

Works Cited/References (3 Legitimate Sources)

### Informative Speech

Practice and deliver a 4-5 minute informative speech based on the informative speech outline. The speech will be graded on delivery (presentation quality), content, and time. Begin speeches Monday – Week 14.  
Speech: 100 pts.

### Visual Aide

Prepare and present/utilize a Power Point presentation that coincides with/is complimentary to your informative speech outline and presentation. Visual aide will be graded on guidelines below. Due, presented, and graded during speech.  
Visual Aide: 30 pts.

#### *Power Point Presentation Guidelines*

Power Point is only complimentary to speaker – Speaker is focal point.

#### Guidelines

5-6 minutes speech = 3 slides (predominantly an outline of your speech)

One solid color (no fades and be consistent)

High contrast color (text to background)

Use large standard font (be consistent across slides)

No full sentences

Pictures – use sparingly, picture border, cite picture unless you took picture (very small, centered under picture)

One complete thought per slide (don't mix points on slides)

A good method for 3 slides for a 2 point speech might be: Introductory slide (title, your name), second slide = 1<sup>st</sup> main point, third slide = second main point.

#### Example

Slide # 2

<p style="text-align: center;">Main Point One</p> <p>Subpoint (a)</p> <p>Subpoint (b)</p>
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#### Presentation

Stand to side of projector

Gesture to presentation

Don't face screen – face audience

Practice with Power Point for flow

Be sure to cover topics in the same order they appear on the slides to minimize confusion

### Visual Aide Grading Rubric

Dept. of Communication

Dr. Justin Velten

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work	Grade
Visual Aide (Power Point) closely adheres to required guidelines, including correct number of slides. Power Point serves as compliment to, not focal point, of presentation/presenter. Photos are cited and there is an evident strong effort and high concern for the assignment.	A
Visual Aide (Power Point) mostly adheres to required guidelines, including correct number of slides. Power Point is a bit distracting from presentation/presenter. Above average effort/concern for assignment. Photos cited.	B
Visual Aide (Power Point) somewhat adheres to required guidelines, including correct number of slides. Power Point is unclear and distracting from presentation/presenter. Average effort/concern for assignment. Photos cited.	C
Visual Aide (Power Point) mostly does not adhere to required guidelines, including correct number of slides. Power Point is awkward and very distracting to audience, possibly due to incoherent nature, too much video, etc. Below average level of effort and concern for the assignment. Photos cited.	D
Visual Aide (Power Point) does not adhere to required guidelines, including correct number of slides. Power Point is very unclear, extremely too short or long, and/or displays a strong lack of effort and concern for the assignment. Distracts from the presentation/presenter. Photos not cited.	F

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

## Assigned Paper Grading Rubric

Dept. of Communication

Dr. Justin Velten

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work	Grade
The paper is free of grammatical errors, closely adheres to the required style format, and is the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is clearly covered and is done so in a manner that displays a high level of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays a high level of effort and originality in thought and writing and makes a clear point.	A
The paper is nearly free of grammatical errors, adheres to the required style format, and is the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is covered and is done so in a manner that displays an adequate level of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays a good level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	B
The paper has a few grammatical errors, somewhat adheres to the required style format, and is near the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is mostly covered and is done so in a manner that displays a marginal level of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays an evidently average level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	C
The paper has a significantly noticeable amount of grammatical errors, does not adhere to the required style format, and is not quite near the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is only partially and is done so in a manner that displays a lack of understanding and application of theory or course concepts to the paper topic(s). The paper displays an inadequate level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	D
The paper has numerous grammatical errors, does not adhere to the required style format, and is not near the correct length (with appropriate spacing and margins). Content from the assignment is not covered and a strong lack of topic-understanding is evident. The paper displays an evidently low level of effort and originality in thought and writing.	F

Please see university policy on plagiarism and work hard to not plagiarize. If you are unsure as to whether you are plagiarizing the work of another person it is best to be cautious and take the appropriate steps to insure you are not plagiarizing. In the event that you are caught plagiarizing on this paper you will receive either a reduction of 50% on the assignment (if the plagiarism is minor or not seemingly blatant) or a 0% on the assignment (if the plagiarism is major and seemingly blatant). There are clear guidelines available for what constitutes plagiarism so please do not plan to plead ignorance in the event your grade is reduced for plagiarism. I hope this is not an issue with your paper and do not expect it to be so.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity/Work/Video/Presentation/Speech Grading Rubric

Dept. of Communication

Dr. Justin Velten

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work	Grade
The work meets the guidelines of the assignment. Each group member participated and there was an evidently high level of effort placed into the project. Class theory/concepts are applied to the assignment as required and teamwork is evident. The overall presentation quality and effort was high.	A
The work mostly meets the guidelines of the assignment. Each group member participated and there was an above average of effort placed into the project. Class theory/concepts are applied to the assignment as required and teamwork is somewhat evident. The overall presentation quality and effort was above average.	B
The work somewhat meets the guidelines of the assignment. Each group member participated and there was an average level of effort placed into the project. Class theory/concepts are applied to the assignment as required and teamwork is marginal. The overall presentation quality and effort was above average.	C
The work does not meet the guidelines of the assignment. Each group member participated and there was an evidently inadequate level of effort placed into the project. Class theory/concepts are not applied to the assignment as required and teamwork is not very clearly represented. The overall presentation quality and effort was below average.	D
The work does not meet the guidelines of the assignment. Each group member participated and there was an evidently low level of effort placed into the project. Class theory/concepts are not applied to the assignment as required and there is a clear lack of teamwork. The overall presentation quality and effort was inadequate.	F

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

## Group Work Peer Evaluation

Dept. of Communication

Dr. Justin Velten

Group #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student Assessed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student Assessing: \_\_\_\_\_

In each of the following sections, rate your fellow group member on a scale from 1 – 8 with 8 being the highest score. Once you have completed 5 scales, total the scales for a score out of 40. In some cases, students create a strong bond while working with classmates. These relationships can be a wonderful product of teamwork, but please do your best to offer an objective evaluation of your group members. Your responses remain confidential and are averaged for the group.

Description of Work	Grade (1-8)
<p><i>Attendance</i> This group member was timely and present at most all group meeting.</p>	
<p><i>Initiation</i> This group member seemed engaged in group meetings, offering thoughtful comments and feedback. Generated original ideas and worked with <u>other</u> group members to further develop <u>their</u> ideas.</p>	
<p><i>Workload</i> This group member carried his or her allotted and fair amount of work within the group.</p>	
<p><i>Relational</i> This group member worked to build and maintain strong and positive working relationships with fellow group members. This section is not about popularity or personality differences as much as it is about effort to work together in a positive way.</p>	
<p><i>Overall</i> This section is designed to capture other elements not mentioned above. You can offer an overall grade here or even write in comments regarding your teammate and offer a score on this overall scale.</p>	

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ / 40

Comment:

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Assessment reflective, though not completely related to, The Nine Core Small Group Communication Competencies (Beebe & Masterson, 2012)

Beebe, Steven A., Masterson, Jonn T. (2012). Communicating in small groups: Principles and practices. Boston: Pearson Education.