

**COMM 5 Course Outline as of Fall 2023****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: COMM 5 Title: GRP DISCUSSION PROB SOLV

Full Title: Group Discussion and Problem Solving

Last Reviewed: 11/4/2024

Units	Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks		Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	5	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade or P/NP

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly: SPCH 5

**Catalog Description:**

Students will engage in an experiential study of small-group discussion including problem solving, conflict resolution, group roles, leadership styles, interest-based negotiating, group-meeting protocols, organizational communication, and cultural diversity.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:****Recommended Preparation:**

Course Completion of ENGL 100 OR Course Completion of EMLS 100 ( or ESL 100)

**Limits on Enrollment:****Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: Students will engage in an experiential study of small-group discussion including problem solving, conflict resolution, group roles, leadership styles, interest-based negotiating, group-meeting protocols, organizational communication, and cultural diversity. (Grade or P/NP)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Course Completion of ENGL 100 OR Course Completion of EMLS 100 ( or ESL 100)

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
	B	Communication and Analytical Thinking	Fall 1981	

<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
	E	Lifelong Learning and Self Development	Fall 1981	

<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
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<b>CSU Transfer:</b>	Transferable	<b>Effective:</b>	Fall 1981	<b>Inactive:</b>
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<b>UC Transfer:</b>	Transferable	<b>Effective:</b>	Fall 1981	<b>Inactive:</b>
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### **CID:**

CID Descriptor: COMM 140	Small Group Communication
SRJC Equivalent Course(s):	COMM5

### **Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Both Certificate and Major Applicable

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Employ a systematic method within a group to solve a problem.
2. Communicate effectively within groups.
3. Observe and explain effective group processes.

### **Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe, compare, and analyze a variety of small-group communication behaviors.
2. Choose and practice methods for communicating with other members of a small group.
3. Describe, compare and analyze some culturally based differences in cognitive styles and worldviews of group members.
4. Describe and practice supportive communication behaviors.
5. Discuss and practice listening skills related to small-group communication.
6. Discuss and practice communication skills related to leadership and decision making.
7. Demonstrate an appreciation for the sociological and behavioral differences between people, especially those of various cultures, personality types and learning styles.
8. Strategize and practice methods for individual and group problem solving.
9. Discuss and practice both task and maintenance roles and behaviors.
10. Discuss and practice methods of group consensus building, rather than less inclusive means of decision-making, such as majority vote or trading.
11. Define, discuss, identify, and avoid groupthink.
12. Create a meeting agenda and lead a group meeting utilizing parliamentary procedure.
13. Observe and explain concepts or organizational communication, including organizational

culture.

14. Explain and practice methods of effective leadership in a variety of situations.

## **Topics and Scope:**

### **I. The Nature of Small Group Discussion**

- A. The importance of groups in society
- B. Group roles and norms
- C. Supportive versus defensive behaviors
- D. Definitions of terms
  - 1. Small group
  - 2. Communication
  - 3. Conflict
- E. Maintenance and task roles
- F. Consensus building
- G. Group decision making
- H. When groups make better decisions than individuals
  - 1. Synergy and assembly effect
  - 2. Process loss
- I. When groups are not the best decision-making vehicle
  - 1. When conditions are changing rapidly (such as on a battlefield or during an emergency)
  - 2. When group members are unknowledgeable or immature

### **II. Diversity in Group Communication**

- A. Cultural diversity
- B. Learning styles
- C. Personality types

### **III. Conflict Resolution**

- A. Conflict management
- B. Negotiations
- C. Avoidance of groupthink
- D. Consensus
- E. Compromise
- F. Avoidance and accommodation

### **IV. Systematic Approaches to Problem Solving (Procedural Model of Problem Solving or Reflective Approach)**

- A. Understanding, researching, and analyzing the problem
- B. Generating possible solutions
- C. Evaluating possible solutions
- D. Selecting the best solutions
- E. Implementing solutions

### **V. Systems Theory (or Substitute Theory)**

- A. Input, throughput, output
- B. Environment
- C. Open versus closed systems
- D. Group as system

### **VI. Leadership**

- A. Understanding and managing diversity
- B. Employing lawful and ethical leadership strategies
- C. Using interpersonal power ethically and positively
- D. Employing effective communication
- E. Fostering a positive communication climate
- F. Evaluating group and organizational leadership

G. Employing the most appropriate style of leadership for the situation, organization, or group

## VII. Components of Group Communication

- A. Beliefs
- B. Values
- C. Behaviors (norms)
- D. Listening
- E. Practicing supportive communication
- F. Avoiding defensive communication
- G. Methods of collecting and analyzing group communication data

## VIII. Nonverbal Communication

- A. Kinesics
- B. Proxemics
- C. Dress
- D. Vocalics
- E. Oculistics
- F. Haptics
- G. Chronemics

## IX. Understanding an Individual's Place in the Group

- A. Interdependence as the goal
- B. Independence
- C. Dependence, co-dependence

## X. Critical Thinking and Research Gathering in Group Contexts

## XI. Participating in and Running a Meeting

- A. Parliamentary Procedure
- B. Agenda
  - 1. Soliciting input
  - 2. Constructing an agenda
  - 3. Promulgating the final draft agenda to all members
- C. Taking and distributing minutes
- D. Archiving a group's history

## XII. Organizational Communication

- A. Organizational culture
- B. Group and institutional evaluations
- C. Management evaluations

### **Assignment:**

The course will include some or all of the following assignments:

1. Experiential games and simulation exercises
2. Group discussions
3. Written group presentation(s) (1-3)
4. Oral group presentations (2-6)
5. Oral and written analysis of group communication
6. Problem solving exercises and projects (2-4)
7. Exams and quizzes (2-20)
8. Weekly reading (10-30 pages)

### **Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:**

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Written group presentations; analysis of group communication

Writing  
10 - 20%

**Problem Solving:** Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

Experiential games and simulations; problem solving exercises and projects

Problem solving  
15 - 25%

**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

Group discussions; group presentation(s); analysis of group communication

Skill Demonstrations  
15 - 25%

**Exams:** All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Exams and quizzes

Exams  
15 - 25%

**Other:** Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Class participation and attendance

Other Category  
15 - 25%

### **Representative Textbooks and Materials:**

Communicating in Groups: Applications and Skills, 11th ed. Adams, Katherine and Galanes, Gloria. McGraw-Hill: 2021.

Communicating in Small Groups: Principles and Practices, 12th ed. Beebe, Steven and Masterson, John. Pearson: 2020.

Effective Group Discussion: Theory and Practice, 15th ed. Galanes, Gloria and Adams, Katherine. McGraw-Hill: 2019.

In Mixed Company: Communicating in Small Groups, 11th ed. Rothwell, Dan. Cengage: 2021.  
Systems Approach to Small Group Interaction, 11th ed. Tubbs, Stewart. McGraw-Hill: 2011 (classic)