

# SPCH 106: SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

## Citrus College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2025
Credits:	3
Total Contact Hours:	54
Lecture Hours :	54
Lab Hours:	0
Hours Arranged:	0
Outside of Class Hours:	108
Total Student Learning Hours:	162
Strongly Recommended:	ENGL C1000.
District General Education:	A2. Communication & Analytical Thinking
Transferable to CSU:	Yes
Transferable to UC:	Yes - Approved
Grading Method:	Standard Letter

## Catalog Course Description

This course focuses on oral communication in small group settings. Emphasis is placed on rhetorical principles and practices relating to small groups. Additionally, the focus is on the assessment of the efficacy of communication processes such as problem-solving, conflict management, decision-making, and leadership. The course is intended for students pursuing a Communication Studies degree or any discipline requiring effective communication in group settings. Throughout the course, students are expected to speak their own words, not recite words written by others. This course includes faculty-supervised, faculty-evaluated oral presentations in the presence of others (physically or virtually). 54 lecture hours.

## Course Objectives

- Create presentations that incorporate the concepts presented in the course through a variety of well-prepared faculty-supervised, faculty-evaluated speeches delivered to a live audience (one to many) using effective rhetoric and delivery techniques
- In small group settings: understand the theoretical foundations of creating and sharing knowledge, including the understanding of the rhetorical situation, canons of rhetoric, and the Aristotelian proofs of ethos, pathos, and logos
- Explore and practice various contexts and theories of group discussion such as leadership, conflict, rules and network theories
- Finding, critically examining, and using supporting materials from primary and secondary sources for credibility, accuracy, and relevance in their speeches, presentations, and small group reports
- Knowing and adhering to ethical communication practices which include truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason as essential to the integrity of communication
- Conceptualizing and effectively using compelling arguments in support of a guiding thesis and organizational pattern appropriate for the audience, occasion, and across a variety of contexts, particularly a small group setting
- Employing effective verbal and nonverbal practices while delivering a speech and managing communication apprehension to enhance the small group efficacy
- Explain the psychological, social, and cultural basis and significance of oral communication as it occurs in small groups.
- Demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility
- Identify and analyze the tasks, maintenance, and processes impacting the small group communication
- Demonstrate effective critical listening to speakers and small group members
- Applying rhetorical principles to analyze historical and contemporary public discourse in small groups
- Exhibit effective rhetorical choices to problem-solve and manage conflict in the small group setting.
- Identify and analyze the various roles participants play in small groups and the related rhetorical influences

## Major Course Content

1. Effective Public speaking, negotiation, and communicative interaction in group settings
  - a. Finding, critically examining, and using supporting materials from primary and secondary sources for credibility, accuracy, and relevance in their speeches and presentations
  - b. Employing effective verbal and nonverbal practices while delivering a speech and managing communication apprehension
  - c. Public speaking and related rhetoric with a small group audience (e.g., effective rhetoric to an organizational audience).
  - d. Oral Communication through small group negotiations (e.g., effective rhetoric in contractual negotiations)
  - e. Oral Communication in small group interactions (e.g., communicating among members)
  - f. Understanding the rhetorical challenges and opportunities in various speaking mediums (e.g., in person, online, etc.)
2. Ethics of Small Groups
  - a. Knowing ethical communication practices which include truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason as essential to the integrity of communication
  - b. Adhering to ethical communication practices, particularly in the small group setting.
  - c. Components of Small Group Communication
    1. Definition of Small Group Communication
    2. Features of Small Group Communication
    3. Types of Small Groups
3. Communication Principles for Group Members
  - A. Communication is symbolic
  - B. Communication is personal
  - C. Communication is a transactional process
  - D. Communication involves content and relational dimensions
4. The Small Group Socialization Process
  - A. Why Individuals Join Groups
  - B. Small Group Socialization
  - C. Model of Small Group Socialization
  - D. Outcomes of Socialization
  - E. Socialization Guidelines
5. Diversity Among Small Group Members
  - A. Definition and Outcomes of Diversity
  - B. Diversity of personality

- C. Cultural Diversity
  - D. Demographic Diversity: Sex and Gender
  - E. Cognitive Diversity: Learning Styles
6. Models of Small Group Development
    - A. Group Development
    - B. Developmental Models
    - C. Characteristics of Group Development
    - D. The small group as a system
      - a. Defining a system
      - b. Characteristics of systems
  7. Characteristics of Small Group Tasks
    - A. Characteristics of a Task
    - B. Engaging in Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Tasks
    - C. Functional Perspective of Small Group Communication
    - D. Groupthink
  8. Small Group Decision-Making Procedures
    - A. Definition of Decision-Making Procedures
    - B. Types of Decision-Making Procedures
    - C. Decision-making Procedures
  9. Development of Small Group Roles
    - A. Functional Approach to Roles
    - B. General Propositions of Roles
    - C. Role Development
    - D. Types of Roles
  10. Approaches to Small Group Leadership
    - A. Being a Leader vs. Sharing Leadership
    - B. Classic Leadership Approaches
    - C. Leadership Dynamics
      - a. The functional concept of group leadership
      - b. The contingency concept of group leadership
  11. Popular Communication Leadership Approaches
  12. Guidelines to Enhance Leadership Competence
  13. Using verbal and nonverbal communicative messages in a group
    - a. Verbal Communication in Small Groups
    - b. Adjust to the symbolic nature of language
    - c. Organize remarks
    - d. Be sensitive to the feelings of others
    - e. Following the rules of the group
    - f. Functions of verbal communication
  14. Nonverbal Communication in Small Groups
    - a. Categories of nonverbal communication
    - b. Principles of nonverbal communication
    - c. Functions of nonverbal communication
  15. Listening: Receiving, Interpreting, and responding to messages from other group members
    - a. Listening defined
    - b. Listening actively
    - c. Effective critical listening
    - d. Effective comprehensive listening
    - e. Listening and peer critiques of an oral presentation
  16. Conflict in the Small Group
    - a. Definition of Conflict
    - b. Types of Small Group Conflict
    - c. Conflict management Styles
    - d. Guidelines for managing conflict effectively
  17. Effective Oral Communication Presentations

- a. Rhetorical Principles
    - i. The study of effective communication in formal speeches
    - ii. The study of effective communication and social interaction.
  - b. How to Organize an Oral Presentation
  - c. Conduct Scholarly Research
  - d. Organize the Speech
  - e. Traditional Rhetoric and Public Speaking
  - f. Rhetorical Devices
  - g. Effective Delivery
18. Communication as the Process of Human Symbolic interaction
    - a. Reasoning and Advocacy
    - b. Organization and Accuracy
    - c. Critical Evaluation and Reporting of Information
    - d. Reading and Listening Effectively as well as Speaking and Writing.

## Suggested Reading Other Than Required Textbook

Current peer reviewed research in the field of speech communication.

## Examples of Required Writing Assignments

Critical analysis of the rhetorical impact of various communication devices on group communication, reflection essay on group speech performance, research paper that focuses on a review of literature in the field of speech communication, detailed formal outline of oral presentation in APA format, critical thinking responses to course topics and discussion prompts.

## Examples of Outside Assignments

Students will be required to complete the following types of assignments outside of the regular class time: 1. Group interactions and introductions to class 2. Group problem solving activity 3. Group role playing activity 4. Presentation to demonstrate group conflict styles and management. 5. Study for Midterm Exam 6. Observe and report on a group meeting outside of class.

## Instruction Type(s)

Lecture, Online Education Lecture

## IGETC Area 1: English Communication

1C. Oral Communication