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2018

### Zero Textbook Cost Syllabus for COM 3078 (Group Communication)

Elizabeth Minei

*CUNY Bernard M Baruch College*

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**COM 3078: GROUP COMMUNICATION**  
**Course Syllabus – Fall 2018**  
**T/TH – 2:30-3:45p**

Professor: [Dr. Elizabeth M. Minei](#)

Office:

Office Phone:

E-mail:

Class Facebook Page:

[CPP](#) Director/ [Flyer](#)

Mailbox:

Office Hours: T/R by appt./ Virtual

Skype Username:

[A good list on how I feel about you.](#)

[Click here to go directly to the reading and assignment schedule.](#)

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on small-group communication in private, public, and business settings. Topics include types and functions of groups, group-communication theory, issues of power and trust in group communication, effective communication in face-to-face and virtual teams, group conflict, group cohesiveness and team-building, and communication strategies for collaborative problem-solving and decision-making.

The format of the course is designed so you will have the opportunity to develop and **practice** your group communication skills. Therefore, the goal is to provide you with new perspectives on the process of group and team communication, as well as increased options for communicating effectively in group and team settings. You will take part in student-facilitated discussion, group/team interaction and projects, lectures, and individual assignments. This course relies heavily on **self-initiated learning** and is enhanced by group interaction and personal reflection.

**Textbook:** This class relies solely on Open Educational Resources (OER's) and as a result, there is no cost to the student to access the materials for class. All readings and materials for class can be found in the "[Readings/Handouts](#)" folder of the Google Drive. Additionally, you are responsible for engaging with free publications that make up the supplemental readings (posted within the schedule).

Reading List:

1. [Mello, T \(2017\). Why Building a Strong Team Should be One of Your Biggest Investments. Forbes Magazine](#)
2. [Unit 1: Small Group Communication, UMinnesota OER Publication](#)
3. [Unit 2: Group Norms and Team Management, Beebe & Masters Pearson Online](#)



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4. [Duhigg, C. \(2016\). What Google learned from building a strong team. New York Times Online.](#)
5. [Unit 3: Member Roles and Deviants, UMinnesota OER Publication](#)
6. [Unit 4: Watkins M. D. \(2013\). Making Virtual Teams Work, Harvard Business Review.](#)
7. [Bryant, A. \(N.d.\) How to Run a More Effective Meeting. New York Times Online](#)
8. [Talkin' Cloud \(2017\). Why Introversion and Extroversion do not Make or Break a Job. Channel Features.](#)
9. [Unit 5: Decision Making in Small Groups, UMinnesota OER Publication.](#)
10. [Alexander, M. \(2017\). How to Deal with Toxic Project Team Members, CBS Techrepublic](#)
11. [Unit 6 Active Listening: Greater Good Science Center Online PDF](#)
12. [Unit 7 Conflict Resolution: UMinnesota OER Publication](#)
13. [Kim, J. \(2017\). 7 Ways to Say You're Sorry, Psychology Today.](#)
14. [Unit 8: Leadership, Roles and Problem Solving in Groups, UMinnesota OER Publication.](#)
15. [Weick, K., & Suttcliffe, K., \(2013\). HRO: Managing the Unexpected, Library Reserve](#)
16. [Duarte, N. \(2012\). Create a Presentation Your Audience Will Care About. Harvard Business Review](#)
17. [Duarte, N. \(2012\). Do your Slides Pass the Glance Test? Harvard Business Review](#)
18. [Melymbrose, M \(2016\). How to Start a Presentation Strong and End Powerfully, Envatotuts+.](#)

### **Learning Objectives (Curricular)**

- to gain knowledge of the key elements and processes of group/team communication,
- to apply small group communication theory to case studies and real life situations,
- to enhance your awareness of your own and others' communication behaviors,
- to understand the impact of your behaviors in group and team settings,
- to develop your ability to analyze interactions within groups and teams,
- to understand the complexities involved in interacting in a variety of groups,
- to recognize the potential constraints and barriers to group effectiveness,
- to increase your analytical and communication skills for effectively participating in group and team settings (including interpersonal and role conflicts, stress, and politics),
- to develop the ability to provide suggestions for aiding dysfunctional groups and teams,
- to learn how to motivate team members to contribute to the group's/team's cause.

## **Course Requirements and Policy:**

**Class Attendance and Participation:** The nature of this course is such that your consistent, active involvement is required. Understanding small group and team communication, as well as creating productive interpersonal relationships within the class, entail your engagement with the course material, with me, and with other class members. Thus, you are expected to attend each class, arriving on time with assigned readings and preparations for experiential exercises completed. There will be a variety of unannounced participation points throughout the semester. Attendance is mandatory to receive these points. If there is some school related reason that you must miss a presentation day, you must speak with me in advance so that arrangements can be made. Missing opportunities to earn participation points because of tardiness harms your final grade.

### **Absence Overview:**

- More than 3 absences is a 10-point deduction from participation per day.
- If you are absent, participation points cannot be earned.
- Missing participation points due to tardiness cannot be earned.
- Missing a presentation day as an audience member is a 10-point deduction.
- If you miss 6 or more class periods, you fail the course, no exceptions.

**Group Work:** Since you will spend a great deal of time working in small groups, you will be given time during regular class meetings to work with your group on various projects. However, you will need to meet with your groups outside of class as well in order to complete the assignments and projects for the course. Thus, missing group work times during and outside of class will affect your group participation evaluation. Therefore, I strongly suggest you make sure you will be able to faithfully attend class and actively participate in group meetings during and outside of class. **If your work or personal schedule conflicts with class attendance and participation in your group outside of class, you should reconsider taking this course this semester.**

**Assignment of Teams:** Since this is a team-based class, we will do a majority of our work in teams and your grade will be partially dependent on your group's work. In order to enhance realism and applicability of your classroom experience, each team member will be assigned the SAME GRADE—no exceptions. You should ensure that the work you do in your group reflects the grade you wish to receive for your work. If there are issues with members of your group not doing the quality of work expected of them, it is your responsibility to communicate with that group member. **IF those efforts fail,** bring

the group member's social loafing to my attention BEFORE the project is presented so that this issue can be dealt with properly. You will be randomly assigned into a team throughout the semester for work on various projects. Your team will not be altered because you must learn how to adapt to and work with team members with differing personalities and goals over a long duration. Therefore, you must discern how to function within the team to which you are assigned. Conflict is a natural process groups must manage. Use what you have learned about effective communication to overcome! If you experience group conflict, my role will be to listen and provide guidance. However, I encourage you to maintain a sense of cohesion and balance within the team. The group members are responsible for resolving conflicts and problems in order to complete the various projects throughout the semester. I will only act as a consultant in these matters. Groups usually find that the sooner they address growing problems, the easier those problems are to resolve in a professional, mature manner.

**Deadlines:** All work is due on the designated due date. Any work not submitted to Turnitin.com in is not eligible for consideration. No make-up exams will be given and participation points cannot be earned after the fact. Medical Exceptions and Family emergencies require proper documentation and proof.

**Submitting Work:** All written assignments must be **typed** unless otherwise specified. Think about self-presentation and impression management as you assemble and compose your written and presentational assignments. Also, remember that for group projects/assignments, submitted materials reflect the efforts of your **entire** group—each group member is personally responsible for making sure the assignment to be submitted is acceptable. Specific written requirements for each assignment are shared on the syllabus, in-class, and posted to within this document.

**Writing Tips:** All papers and written contributions are expected to reflect university-level writing quality. I personally require that you adhere to these [Top 10 Writing Tips](#) in your work. Continuous spelling, organizational, and grammatical errors will greatly reduce your final grade. To aid your composition, I recommend the [university writing center](#). Additionally, I can review any written work 48 hours prior to the due date and provide feedback so you can make appropriate changes. If you would like to take advantage of this opportunity, please make an appointment or send drafts to my email.

**Course Access:** All students enrolled in this course have access to this document and any supporting documents on the course platform Googledocs. All email will be sent through the Gmail system. I will make every effort to respond to your e-mails in a timely way. However, occasionally, it can take me up to 48 hours to respond, and I often don't

check my messages on the weekend. For this reason, you must plan ahead. You should also exchange information with classmates who can help to answer your question in the event that I'm unavailable.

**Turnitin.com Directions:** Most solo assignments in this class will be handed in via Turnitin.com. This site allows for a quicker turnaround time on graded assignments and allows students to take ownership of their work. Directions for registering for turnitin.com are as follows:

1. Go to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)
2. Click on "Create Account" link in the upper right corner.
3. Find "Create a New Account" choose the "Student" link.
4. Follow the directions on the New User page. You must have a Class ID# and class enrollment password to complete your profile.

Class ID: and Password:

Once enrolled, your class will show on your homepage. Click on the class name to see the assignments and submissions for that class. Once the initial student account with profile is complete, you will only need to log into your account to see the class, or classes, in which you are enrolled. If you are enrolled in multiple Turnitin classes, you will need a class ID# and enrollment password for each class, in order to add the classes to your Turnitin account. Once you are enrolled in each class, you do not need that class ID and password again. **You are solely responsible for making sure that the paper is uploaded successfully. You must check your email for submission receipt when you turn in assignments. There are no acceptable excuses for missing the Turnitin deadline (including: underestimating the time needed for the computer to turn on; the website to load; process completion; internet failures).**

**Evaluation:** Students are encouraged to discuss their progress with me anytime throughout the semester. Any student wishing to discuss a grade for an assignment or exam may do so **until one week (seven days) after that grade has been assigned.** Please visit me during my office hours or make an appointment for discussing grades rather than before or after class.

**Plagiarism/Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this class. Students are expected to complete their own work unless otherwise specifically allowed by me (e.g., group speech assignment). Students are also required to give credit (both in writing and orally) to any source used for completing an assignment. All sources should be cited according to APA 6th edition guidelines. Penalties range from a zero on an assignment to expulsion from the university. If you do not have a copy of the

APA manual, please refer to the Baruch College writing center for information on proper citation: <http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/writingcenter/OnlineWritingGuides.htm#src6>  
Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. For more information, please consult the [College's Academic Honesty website](#).

My policy is to give a 0 to any assignment that has been plagiarized or an exam in which you have cheated. **Multiple incidents result in automatic failure from the course.** In addition, I am required by College policy to submit a report of suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. This report becomes part of your permanent file

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations please see me privately in regard to your needs in this course as soon as possible. To receive an accommodation, you must be registered with the University.

**Classroom Behavior and Participation:** As this is a university course, you are expected to behave in a respectful manner. This includes:

- Informing the instructor prior to the class you will be unable to attend.
- Obtaining class notes, assignment information, and materials from classmates.
- Behaving with academic integrity and honesty on all assignments.
- Completing assignments before or on the date they are due.
- Treating members of the class with the respect afforded to all human beings.
- Recognizing and accepting the consequences for your actions and choices.
- Actively participating in each class meeting. **If you fall asleep during class time, read the newspaper, study for another class, surf the internet, use your cell phone in any manner**, disrespect the instructor or another classmate and so on, you will be asked to leave and this day will be considered an absence.

### **Charter: Participation Expectations**

These are my expectations for participation in class. Please read over the descriptions so that you are aware of the expectations for each range. If you are shy or introverted, please come and see me so that we can develop strategies and ways in which you can feel comfortable participating.

- **91-100:** Come to class prepared; contribute readily to the conversation without dominating the flow, make thoughtful contributions that advance the conversation; shows interest in and respect for others' views; participate actively in small groups.

- **81-90:** Come to class prepared and makes thoughtful comments when called upon, contribute occasionally without prompting: shows interest in and respect for others' views; participate actively in small groups.
- **71-80:** Come to class but participate in discussion in a problematic way like: rambling or tangential contributions; continually interrupting with digressive questions; bluffing through answers because of unpreparedness; dominating discussions.
- **61-70:** Come to class prepared but do not voluntarily contribute to discussions, or give only minimal answers when called upon.
- **60 or Below:** Come to class but don't participate because you haven't read the material or done the homework. This range also reflects disruptive behavior, hostile or bored body language, or overtly rude gestures such as cell phone use or interruptive entries and departures to and from class.

### Com 3078 Assignment Breakdown

Lab Journals (any 2 you choose)	50 points each
Prompts, annotations, short-writes, Lab add-on's	5-25 points each
Final Project Proposal	50 points
Final Project Presentation	50 points
Final Project Portfolio	100 points
Final Project Peer Feedback	25 points
Exam	100 points
Participation	100 points

### COMM 3078 Final Grade Calculation

Grade	Percentage Equivalent	
A	93.0 -100.0	Final grade note: This scale is the scale that will be used to calculate your final grade. Final grades are based on points, which you can calculate to figure out your grade. To calculate your grade throughout the semester, you need to multiply the points you earned by 100, then divide by what you could have earned. (100 x Points Earned/Points Possible= Grade Percentage). Please note: "working very hard" is not justification for a higher grade. If you want a certain
A-	90.0 – 92.9	
B+	87.1 – 89.9	
B	83.0 – 87.0	
B-	80.0 – 82.9	



C+	77.1 – 79.9	grade, then you should do work that earns you that grade. I do not round grades.
C	73.0 – 77.0	
C-	70.0 – 72.9	
D+	67.1 – 69.9	
D	60.0 – 67.0	
F	Below 60.0	