

EXPECTATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Respect:

In order for each of us to receive a valuable education in this class, we will all need to listen openly and discuss ideas respectfully. College policies on harassment and discrimination outline behaviors that will not be tolerated. Please talk with me if you feel threatened or disrespected in group exercises or class discussion. ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF (or confiscated)!

Attentiveness/Attendance:

Class participation is often in the form of graded activities that cannot be made up at another time. In addition to your oral feedback in class, I will be evaluating your nonverbal feedback. Sleeping, reading, or writing your grocery list is unacceptable during class. Since it violates expectations of respect, distracting and inattentive students will be dismissed.

If you are not in class, that is your responsibility and you will knowingly accept the consequences. Rely on group members for mutual support if you need class notes or assignments. If you foresee missing more than one class session due to extraordinary college or personal events you should discuss these conflict with me. Any absence requires that you discuss with me *prior* to dates missed.

Responsibility:

Late work will not receive full credit. In nearly all cases it will result in zero points. Questions concerning "but" are not particularly useful to the individual trying to develop a professional persona. Time management is a necessary skill for all professionals. Assignments are due during class unless otherwise noted.

Honesty:

Plagiarism or cheating in any form is inexcusable. Plagiarism or cheating in any form will destroy your credibility as a communicator -- academically and professionally. Plagiarism is defined by the university as misrepresenting as one's own anything done by another. Take credit for your work. Cite others for theirs; failure to do so will result in a F in the course. If you don't know what academic dishonesty is, ASK!

Honesty about absences or late work will not be questioned. Your best *intentions* are assumed. Don't spend your time trying to convince me that you are a good person. I believe you. I will evaluate the *outcome* of course assignments, however.

Equal Opportunity:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations for any reason, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Open Mind:

Please talk with me about any concerns, confusion, or difficulties. An open mind is essential. The nature of this course is demanding. Most of us rarely evaluate our communication habits. Often when we are frustrated by the conflict that inevitably emerges in groups, we blame it on the incompetence of others. This will be a comfortable tendency for you, too.

In this class, we will examine group dynamics through several critical perspectives. You will be expected to focus on the group dynamics, not on individuals. We cannot choose all future co-workers and employers. We can, however, come to the given group with strategies that enable us to positively contribute and cooperate.

Building and maintaining a collaborative classroom is everyone's responsibility. Come to class prepared to rethink the assigned material and share your reactions. I welcome critical thinking during class.

Grades defined:

A -- Achievement *outstanding* relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B -- Achievement *significantly above* the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C -- Achievement *meeting the basic course requirements* in every respect.

D -- Achievement *worthy of credit* even though it does not fully meet the basic course requirements in every respect.

F -- Performance *failing to meet* the basic course requirements.

I -- Incomplete; arranged in *extreme* cases only.

Holistic approach:

I do not grade partially. For example, I will not deduct one point per grammatical error. Rather, I

evaluate the assignment as a whole. Specific criteria will be included in major assignments. I also do not grade from a deficit model. Some students assume they have an A and the burden of proof lies with the professor. Wrong. I do not need to explain why a completed assignment was short of an A. Rather, students will work from C if the assignment has completed all requirements adequately and work upward from there.

Performance not performer:

It is common and maybe natural, given our competitive culture, for students to feel that the instructor's grade is an evaluation of them as persons. "She gave me a C, she hates me." I am not hired to make such evaluations. I do not judge your personality, your intellectual potential, or your intentions with a grade. I judge your performance in our class. Your completed work and class participation is evaluated.

Grade disputes:

Understanding the above comments, you are invited to discuss any written evaluation with me further *after* you have thoughtfully read my comments. If you think a grade is unwarranted, you should: (1) reread the assignment, (2) reread/view your work, (3) reread my evaluation, and (4) type a justification for the grade you think you earned. I will accept your written justification 24 hours after you received my grade. We will then arrange a time to discuss both evaluations.

General guidelines on papers:

Type, double space, staple, and either APA or MLA styles are acceptable. Font size 12. Be consistent. Grammar is graded.

Exam/Quizzes:

With exception of the final exam, exams/quizzes are not an inherent part of the assessment process for this course. However, if my perception is that the group is not coming to our meetings prepared, exams/quizzes including a combination of multiple-choice, identification, true-false, and essay, will be given. Exams/quizzes may reference in-class comments by students as well as instructor lecture and course text.

Class Activities:

There will be random assignments requiring you to respond to the reading, engage in group exercises, or provide brief written reactions to questions provided in class. Any remaining points will consist of overall quality and quantity of class participation.