

DI612: Working in Teams
University of Waterloo
Masters in Digital Experience Innovation
Fall Term 2012, Mondays 4:00-7:00 pm

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Required Text: *Group Dynamics for Teams*, 3rd edition, by Daniel Levi

Overview

Working in Teams draws from the disciplines of Organizational Psychology, Communication, Social Psychology, Cultural Psychology, and Economics. The course is taught in a true scientist-practitioner tradition, balancing the goals of 1) developing a strong knowledge of scientific theory on teams from multiple disciplines, 2) learning and practicing skills in managing and leading teams, and 3) learning the basics of how to conduct empirical research in the field of digital experience innovation.

In the course, you will learn to recognize individual work, communication, and decision making styles and how they combine in a team setting. We will examine the design, management, and leadership of teams, focusing on interpersonal processes and structural characteristics that influence team effectiveness. Through observation and reflection, students will analyze and tackle the many hurdles teams face, including negotiation, decision making, conflict resolution, and interactions with the organization and external stakeholders.

Objectives

Course objectives include learning:

- Basic theories of team development, dynamics, and leadership
- How to apply theory to critically analyze your own experiences working in teams
- Skills in basic team functions including: designing team contracts, assigning roles, managing communication, handling conflict, providing feedback and evaluating performance
- How to work in virtual teams & multicultural teams
- The different styles and strategies of team leadership
- To recognize your own personal work and communication style, identifying both strengths and opportunities for improvement
- Best practices for brainstorming and team creativity

Format

True to the scientific-practitioner approach, Working in Teams utilizes two basic learning approaches. In the traditional style of a graduate seminar in the arts, we will read, discuss, and analyze key scientific readings on working in teams. In the style of a professional MBA-type graduate course, we will have multiple opportunities to apply and practice skills with case studies and team exercises that are designed to teach the fundamentals of teamwork in an applied, real-world setting.

Course Materials

- 1) Required text: *Group Dynamics for Teams*, 3rd edition, by Daniel Levi.
- 2) Courseware case packet: *MDEI Working in Teams*
- 3) There may be small additional course fees for experiential exercises handed out in class.
- 4) The final course outline is posted on the UW-Learn course site (<http://learn.uwaterloo.ca>). Weekly slides will be posted to the course site on Learn 24 hours following each class. In addition, please check Learn for weekly announcements.

Course Requirements

	Value
Team Project	60% (10% ind, 50% team)
Individual Article Presentation, Leading Discussion	20%
Individual Class Participation	20%

Team Project: User Interface Design Project (60%)

The semester-long assignment involves identifying and analyzing a commonly used web interface that users find difficult or unfriendly. The assignment includes 4 parts and should be completed in 4-6 person teams. You will have two class sessions during the term to work on your project.

Part 1) Create team contract (DUE: September 24; 10% team grade)

- Read Levi chapter on team contracts
- See samples posted on Learn
- Your team contract must include at least the following elements:
 - 1) Specific goals
 - 2) Clearly defined roles for each team member
 - 3) Detailed Timeline, including specific meetings (specify face-to-face or virtual) for major project milestones and deliverables
 - 4) Communication methods
 - 5) How you will handle conflict
 - 6) Rules and norms
- Team contract should be 3-5 pages and should be signed by all team members

Part 2) Develop, administer, and evaluate results of survey to identify project topic and goals (DUE October 29; 20% team grade):

- Read on-line materials on survey basics
- Brainstorm and decide user interface to research
- Identify population to survey/interview about user experience and what could be improved
- Develop survey (minimum 10 questions) and/or interview protocol (10% team grade)
- Administer and evaluate results of your research in a team written report (4 pages) and project abstract (1 page) (10% team grade)

Part 3) Individual 360 Feedback (in class November 12; 10% individual grade): This portion of your grade will be based on your teammates' evaluation of your contribution and work for the User Interface Design Project (10% individual grade)

Part 4) Team in-class presentation (DUE December 3; 20% team grade): Design presentation, addressing how you identified a problem, evaluated the problem, and assessed the problem with your design proposal (20% team grade)

Individual Article Presentation & Leading Class Discussion (dates to be selected in class on September 10; 20% individual grade): Each student will be required to lead a 20-30 minute class discussion of one article or case analysis during the term. We have 12 articles and 24 students, so two students will be assigned to each article. You should read the article and prepare your own questions and notes individually. Then, you can meet with your partner to coordinate how to present it to the class. When you are discussion leader, you will:

- 1) Individually prepare 3-5 discussion questions for the class, writing your own possible responses and follow-up questions to be handed in to Professor on day of presentation
- 2) One student will present a 2-3 minute summary of the article to the class
- 3) Both students will lead the discussion (calling on classmates, deciding how long to spend on each question, leading discussion if it goes astray)
- 4) One student will conclude the discussion with a critical and analytical summary of the article & discussion

Class Participation (20% individual grade)

You are expected to attend class in person each week. If you need to miss a class, please let the instructor know at least 24 hours in advance. For illness, please provide proper documentation. The class participation portion of your grade will be based on your individual class attendance and quality contribution to discussion and in-class activities.

Course Outline

Before First Class

Readings: Levi Chapters 1-2

Week 1	Basic Team Processes
September 10	4:00-7:00 pm

In Class: Article presentations
Review basic team processes
Team experiential exercise
Select teams for Team Project & initial Team Project meeting

Readings: Levi Chapters 3 & 4

Coutu, D. (2009) Why teams don't work: An interview with J. Richard Hackman, *Harvard Business Review*.

*Moreland, R.L. (2010). Are dyads really groups? *Small Group Research*, 41: 251-267.

*Williams, K.D. (2010). Dyads can be groups (and often are). *Small Group Research*, 41: 268-274.

Week 2
September 17 **Brainstorming and Creativity**
4:00-7:00 pm

In Class: Article presentations
Brainstorming methods & Povernoodle Intro
Brainstorming video
Team Project meeting to create team contract

Readings: Levi Chapters 5 & 12

*Paulus, P.B. & Yang, H.C. (2000). Idea generation in groups: A basis for creativity in organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 82, 76-87.

*Gersick, C.J.G. (1989). Marking time: Predictable transitions in task groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, 32, 274-309.

Week 3
September 24 **Communication & Social Influence**
4:00 pm-7:00 pm

In Class: Article presentation
Team experiential exercise

Readings: Levi Chapters 6 & 8

*Pentland, A.S. (2012). The new science of building great teams. *Harvard Business Review*.

Smart Survey Design, pp. 4-19.

<http://help.surveymonkey.com/euf/assets/docs/pdf/SmartSurvey.pdf>

Driscoll, D.L. (2006). "Creating Good Interview and Survey Questions.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/559/06/>

Hand in: *Team Contract*

Week 4
October 1 **Team Leadership**
4:00-7:00 pm

In class: Article presentations
Orpheus Video
Case discussion

Readings: Levi Chapters 10 & 11

*Dvir, T., Kass, N. & Shamir, B. (2004). The emotional bond: Vision and organization commitment among high-tech employees. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 17(2), 126-143.

*Barsade, S. (2002). The ripple effect: Emotional contagion and its influence on group behavior. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47 (4), 644-675.

Week 5 **No Class**
October 8 **Thanksgiving Holiday**

Week 6 **Conflict Management in Teams**
October 15 **4:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

In Class: Case analysis
Team experiential exercise

Readings: Levi Chapters 7 & 9

Polzer, J.T., Vargas, I., & Elfenbein, H.A. (2003). Henry Tam and the MGI team. *Harvard Business School case # 9-404-068*

Week 7 **Team Project Session**
October 22 **4:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

Week 8 **Group Composition**
October 29 **4:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

In Class: Article presentations
Team experiential exercise

Readings: Levi Chapters 13 & 14

*Homan, A.C., Hollenbeck, J.R., Humphrey, S.E., Van Knippenberg, D.V., Ilgen, D.R., & Van Kleef, G.A. (2008). Facing differences with an open mind: Openness to experience, salience of intragroup differences, and performance of diverse work groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, 31, 1204-1222.

*Earley, P.C. & Mosakowski, E. (2000). Creating hybrid team cultures: An empirical test of transnational team functioning. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43, 26-49.

*Gibson, C.B. & Zellmer-Bruhn, M.E. (2001). Metaphors and Meaning: An Intercultural Analysis of the Concept of Teamwork. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46, 274-303.

Hand in: *Team Project Research Report*

Week 9
November 5 **Team Learning, Performance, & Rewards**
4:00-7:00 pm

In Class: Article presentation
Team experiential exercise

Readings: Levi Chapters 15 & 16

*Edmonson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behaviour in work teams. *Administrative Sciences Quarterly*, 44, 350-383.

Week 10
November 12 **Team Feedback**
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

In Class: Article presentation
360 team feedback

Readings: Review Levi Chapter 16

*Milliman, J., Taylor, S., & Czaplewski, A.J. (2002). Cross-cultural performance feedback in multinational enterprises: opportunity for organizational learning. *Human Resource Planning*, 25: 29-43.

Week 11
November 19 **Guest Speaker TBA**
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Week 12
November 26 **Teams in Organizations**
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

In Class: Article Presentation
Team experiential exercise

Readings: Levi Chapter 14

*Ancona, D.G. Outward bound: Strategies for team survival in an organization. *Academy of Management Journal*, 2, 334-365.

Week 13
December 3 **User Interface Design Presentations**
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

In Class: Present User Interface Design Project
(Note: no written assignment.)

University Notes

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline,

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4,

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals,

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.