

Team Project Assignment:

Team Project Assignment: Proposing a Student Group as a “Third Place” Community for Northeast Lakeview College

(Please Note: All hyperlinks are active in the digital version of this project assignment sheet which can be found on the [Assignments & Score Sheets page of the Learning Materials Website](#) linked on the Canvas Homepage.)

Project Overview

In this team project, you will explore the concept of a “**Third Place**”—a social setting distinct from home and work that encourages connection, communication, and community. [Click here for a summary on Third Places](#) and [click here for a summary of Robert Putnam’s book *Bowling Alone*](#).

Your task is to research the idea, then design a realistic Third Place in the form of a student group that could potentially be implemented at NLC.

This project will help you apply key communication concepts (such as interpersonal communication; group dynamics; identity, self-concept and group membership; and context in communication) in a practical, real-world setting.

This project will share a team grade. Peer review results will be considered when determining the final grade for the project.

Written Proposal (Minimum 5 pages)

- **Research & Rationale (1 page):**
 - Define the concept of a Third Place using **two to three (2 to 3) credible sources**; your team can use the following to help with your research:
 - i. [1311 Menchaca Third Places LibGuide](#); in particular the “Sample Mega Searches”
 - ii. Some search terms to use: Ray Oldenburg, Third Places, Community or Communities
 - Explain how Third Places support communication and a sense of belonging and community. (Any course modules can be consulted to help with this portion of the proposal.)
 - Provide 1 real-world example with brief analysis as to how it functions as a Third Place by bringing people together and building community; this example can be one that already exists on campus or can be found around the San Antonio area [examples of this are varied: game nights at local comic book store, farmers market at the Pearl, local movie watching group on Meet-Up app (this is an example of a virtual and IRL community experience), etc.].

- **Design Proposal (2-3 pages):**

- Your task is to develop a detailed profile for a proposed student group your team would like to start on campus. Think of this as a pitch that highlights the group's mission, purpose, and how it would benefit the college community.

For example, if your team wants to propose a student group centered around teaching and playing various forms of Poker, your profile might include a brief history of card games (with a focus on Poker), current trends in the game's popularity, and how the group would bring students together through shared interests.

Your proposal should focus on building community and fostering meaningful connections among students. Be sure to address the following questions:

- What is the purpose of your student group?**
 - What inspired the idea?
 - Why is it relevant or needed on campus?
 - Who is the target audience for your student group?**
 - What are the group's goals?**
 - What do you hope to achieve in the short and long term?
 - How will your group make a positive impact?
 - What will your student group do?**
 - Describe the kinds of events, activities, or initiatives the group will host.
 - Will there be regular meetings, workshops, volunteer opportunities, etc.?
 - What resources will your group use to build community and connection?**
 - Consider space, materials, partnerships, online tools, and campus support services.
 - How will you keep members engaged and coming back?**
 - What strategies will you use to maintain interest, encourage participation, and grow membership?
- Research your team's proposed student group using **four to five (4-5) credible sources**; these sources should pass the CRAAP test found on the [1311 Menchaca Third Places LibGuide](#). Credible websites can be used for some, but NOT all of the research for the proposal. You may also include findings from Alamo Experience.

- **Implementation Plan (1 page + pics):**

- Suggest a possible campus location and justify the choice. Include one to two (1 to 2) pics of the ideal location on campus for this student group to meet. Because this group is a Third Place, think about open, easy to access communal/community places that already exist around

campus. Please, no pictures of classrooms!

- List required resources (e.g., seating, signage, tech, games, art supplies, food and drinks, etc., whatever your student group might need to be successful here on campus)
- Offer ideas for how the student group will be promoted. In other words, how will you market the student group to other NLC students? Will you use word of mouth, flyers, social media, etc.

Additional Requirements:

- All documents for this project are to be established in Google Docs and should be shared with all team members. All team members should have editing rights also.
 - All expectations for college-level academic writing apply. Type using Arial (**NOT** Times New Roman!), 11 or 12 point size, double-spaced, and use 1 inch margins.
 - Include a Work Cited or References page with your proposal, as this is also expected for college-level academic writing. Use either MLA or APA for your proposal. Pick one and be consistent throughout the proposal.
 - Only one team member needs to upload the proposal into Canvas by the due date.
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Frequently Asked Questions

Is this a group grade?

- Yes. The grade for this assignment is shared by the group.

What if we have conflict?

- Conflict is part of the small group process. I expect group members to handle the group conflict within the group, be professional, accept responsibility for your actions and be accountable. *If a conflict disrupts the group's progress on the project, then I am willing to meet with ALL the group members at once to resolve the issue. Part of learning to work in groups means learning how to communicate about conflict.* It is also possible to divorce a group member. Here's how :

Team Divorce Procedure

When a team member seriously violates team agreements, then the rest of the team has the option to start team divorce proceedings. Teams should contact Dr. Menchaca about their concerns. Dr. Menchaca decides if the team has grounds to start divorce proceedings. If so, the team will write a respectful message to the team member about their concerns. This person has 12 hours from the time the message is sent to respond.

Dr. Menchaca has the final decision as to whether or not a team member will be divorced from their team. The divorced team member has the right to keep his or her intellectual property.

Team Management

Teams are to:

- Divide responsibilities fairly and document contributions
- Use collaborative tools (e.g., Google Docs, group chat, etc.) to stay connected, as well as use the Team Project Planning Tools to support the team's work on this project
- Peer evaluation may be factored into final grades

Team Project Planning Tools

All of the team project planning tools will be submitted under the Team Project Planning Tools assignment in Canvas. [Click here for these templates](#)--they can also be found on the course materials website on the Assignments, Rubrics and Scoresheets page.

1. **Team Roles** and **Rules**: Before beginning any planning for the project, the team will decide who is taking which task role. Take a few minutes to have a brief discussion about the expectations each of you has for the project and of each other. See the role descriptions below. Be sure to discuss your team's expectations of each other and how you will hold each other accountable for them.
2. **Meeting Notes/Minutes**: The notetaker(s) is(are) responsible for writing summary notes (see role description below).
3. **Team Project Planner and Goal Sheet**: All teams would use this project planner sheet to "map out" the project as well as to establish tasks and deadlines for the group project.

Team Role Descriptions

Team Lead(s)--the project manager(s) (TL):

- Comfortable with leadership, coordination, keeping the group on task, and making sure the scheduled work gets done
- Keeps in contact with all group members, particularly when someone misses a meeting; is a point of contact for the team
- Knows where the project is at all times--the progress the project is making, the plan of action and makes sure that deadlines are set and met
- Negotiates team conflicts and should remain neutral in those conflicts

Notetaker(s)--the group record keeper (NT):

All groups will have a notetaker. If the notetaker is absent for a meeting, then another group member will take the meeting notes. The notetaker is the group's record keeper.

- Creates a written summary in Google Docs using the [Team Meeting Notes template](#) that is brief but detailed of what takes place in every group meeting / work session, and then shares that summary with all group members and Dr. Menchaca; be sure to **give everyone editing or commenting rights**
- Here's an example of what a meeting summary should look like:

Meeting Date & Time:

Thursday, November, 20, 2025, 12:30 PM,

Location: Comal 128

Meeting Notes Recorded by: Mark

Members Present: Mark, Roberto and Carol were present; Kris was absent

- **Summary of meeting:**

- We moved up the deadline by a day so we had time to finalize slides and get a few practice sessions in. All present at the meeting agreed this was a good idea. The deadline is now Tuesday, Nov 25th, 8pm. Roberto will send a group text so that Kris knows about the new deadline.
- We decided to meet outside of class to finish working on slides. Meeting at Carol's house on Saturday, November 22nd at 4pm; we're ordering pizza; Carol will text directions

Devil's Advocates-- the group dissenters (DA):

- Provides an opposing point of view to stimulate discussion and help the group make a high-quality decision
 - Isn't afraid to speak up and *respectfully* advise the group that an idea isn't the best for the project
 - Helps the team avoid common pitfalls of group decisions--groupthink, confirmation bias, and overconfidence bias
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Final Submission Checklist: Third Place Student Group Proposal

Submitting Proposal

- ☐ Only one team member needs to submit the completed proposal on Canvas.

General Formatting

- ☐ Proposal is at least 5 full pages, not including the References/Works Cited page
- ☐ Typed in Arial font, 11 or 12 pt size, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins
- ☐ Clear section headings used for organization (e.g., "Research & Rationale," "Design Proposal," etc.)
- ☐ Includes proper citations and a Works Cited (MLA) or References (APA) page
- ☐ File is in an accepted format (PDF, as required by Canvas)

Research & Rationale (1-2 Page)

- ☐ Defines the concept of a Third Place using 2–3 credible sources
- ☐ Explains how Third Places support communication, belonging, and community
- ☐ Includes 1 real-world example with analysis of how they function as Third Places
- ☐ Used search tools like the 1311 Menchaca Third Places LibGuide or NLC databases

Design Proposal (3 Pages)

- ☐ Clearly states the purpose of the proposed student group
- ☐ Explains what inspired the group and why it's relevant to NLC
- ☐ Identifies the target audience
- ☐ Lists the group's goals (short- and long-term impact)
- ☐ Describes specific events, activities, or initiatives the group will host
- ☐ Discusses resources the group will use (space, materials, tech, etc.)
- ☐ Outlines strategies to keep members engaged and growing
- ☐ Includes 4–5 credible sources, not all from websites
- ☐ Sources pass the CRAAP test and align with college research standards

Implementation Plan (1 Page + Images)

- ☐ Suggests a specific location on campus (NOT a classroom)
- ☐ Includes 1–2 photos of the proposed location
- ☐ Lists required resources (furniture, tech, supplies, etc.)
- ☐ Details a promotion plan (flyers, social media, word of mouth, etc.)

Final Tasks

- ☐ Proposal has been proofread for grammar, clarity, and formatting
- ☐ A team member has submitted the final version on Canvas
- ☐ All group members have completed the Peer Evaluation form (required)
- ☐ Everyone's contributions are acknowledged within the team

Score Sheet for A Student Group as a “Third Place” Community for Northeast Lakeview College

Total Points: 150

Excellent (A: 135–150 points)

- Research & Rationale: Exceptionally thorough research with multiple credible sources; clear, insightful analysis of real-world examples.
- Design Proposal & Visuals: Highly creative, detailed, and realistic design that thoughtfully supports communication; excellent, polished visuals.
- Implementation Plan: Extremely realistic and detailed; clear justification of choices with well-thought-out resource planning.
- Communication Concepts: Explicit, accurate, and insightful application of multiple communication theories.

Very Good (B: 120–134 points)

- Research & Rationale: Strong research using credible sources; examples are clearly explained with minor areas for deeper analysis.
- Design Proposal & Visuals: Creative and well-organized design; visuals support the ideas but could be more detailed.
- Implementation Plan: Realistic and organized; some minor areas could be developed further.
- Communication Concepts: Good application of communication concepts with mostly clear connections.

Good (C: 105–119 points)

- Research & Rationale: Adequate research with some credible sources; examples provided but explanation lacks depth.
- Design Proposal & Visuals: Satisfactory design with basic visuals; creativity and detail are limited.
- Implementation Plan: Plausible but lacking in some detail or clear justification.
- Communication Concepts: Some attempt to apply course concepts, though connections may be weak or superficial.

Fair (D: 90–104 points)

- Research & Rationale: Minimal research with few or unclear credible sources; examples are basic or poorly connected.
- Design Proposal & Visuals: Basic design; visuals are unclear, incomplete, or minimally helpful.
- Implementation Plan: Plan lacks realistic details and/or justification.
- Communication Concepts: Few or unclear references to communication theories; minimal integration.

Poor (F: 89 points and below)

- Research & Rationale: Insufficient or missing research; examples are missing or irrelevant.
 - Design Proposal & Visuals: Incomplete, unrealistic, or missing design; no usable visuals.
 - Implementation Plan: Unfeasible, incomplete, or missing plan.
 - Communication Concepts: No clear application of communication theories.
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Research & Rationale (45 points)

- Defines Third Place clearly using 2–3 credible sources (15 pts)
- Explains how Third Places support communication and a sense of belonging/community (15 pts)
- Provides 1–2 real-world examples with analysis of how they build community (15 pts)

Design Proposal (60 points)

- Clearly outlines the purpose and relevance of the proposed student group (10 pts)
- Identifies and analyzes the group's goals and intended impact (10 pts)
- Describes detailed events, activities, and structure of the group (10 pts)60
- Lists specific resources to support community-building (10 pts)60
- Outlines strong member engagement/retention strategies (10 pts)
- Uses 4–5 credible sources to support the proposal, integrated effectively (10 pts)

Implementation Plan (30 points)

- Suggests and justifies a suitable, accessible campus location; includes 1–2 pictures (10 pts)
- Lists resources needed for successful implementation (10 pts)
- Proposes effective marketing strategies to recruit and retain members (10 pts)

Academic Writing & Formatting (15 points)

- Follows all academic writing conventions (grammar, clarity, tone) (5 pts)
- Proper formatting: Arial font, 11 or 12 pt, double-spaced, 1 inch margins (5 pts)
- Includes a correctly formatted MLA or APA Works Cited/References page (5 pts)