

Please note, this is a template of what needs to be included in your syllabus. You are welcome to change the font, spacing, and layout of the document to better fit your style, but please keep ADA guidelines in mind when making changes.

SPCH 2333: DISCUSSION AND SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION Master Syllabus Fall 2021

SECTION SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Include section number, synonym, campus, room, and time of day of class

INSTRUCTOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Include your name, office phone number, office location and hours, information on how conferences outside of office hours can be arranged and ACC email address

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Discussion and Small Group Communication applies theories and techniques of group communication to the practices of group processes and interaction. This course examines small group theories and principles as they relate to group structure, interactions, and process improvement for the purpose of building and sustaining teams in organizations. Topics of study include team dynamics, trust and collaboration, climate, conflict resolution, norms, leadership, and the role of the individual in the team.

Skills: E

- Credit Hours: 3
- Classroom Contact Hours per week: 3

COURSE RATIONALE

Developing communication skills can give you a competitive edge in your professional and academic career. Not only are communication skills highly valued in the workplace, communication courses taken at ACC transfer to all colleges and universities in Texas.

You will be expected to communicate in groups in your work and personal life. The [2019 Job Outlook from the National Association of Colleges and Employers](#) reports that 80% of employers are looking for workers who have problem-solving skills and the ability to work in teams. Discussion and Small Group Communication will help you understand the theories behind communicating in groups and provide you with practical tools to be the best team member you can be.

COURSE SKILL LEVELS

In accordance with H.B. 2183, students who enroll in Communication Studies courses at ACC are expected to demonstrate competent English speaking and listening skills:

- “Competence in speaking is the ability to communicate orally in clear, coherent, and persuasive language appropriate to purpose, occasion and audience.”
- “Listening at the college level means the ability to analyze and interpret various forms of spoken communication.”

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Describe the principles, theories, processes of team building, interaction, and communication
- Collaborate with group members to create and maintain a supportive, culturally sensitive climate for group discussion
- Recognize and competently perform various task and social roles when working with a group
- Identify interpersonal skills as they relate to group dynamics
- Demonstrate techniques for team problem solving and use discussion strategies to work effectively with a group
- Demonstrate effective conflict management and resolution techniques to deal with difficult group members and complex situations
- Explain how effective leadership behaviors are used when working with a group
- Identify your personal strengths and plan strategies to improve your effectiveness as a group member
- Illustrate the skills involved in meeting planning, facilitation, and participation.

GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES

Upon completion of this course, you will demonstrate competence in:

- **Communication Skills:** Develop, interpret, and express ideas and information through written, oral and visual communication that is adapted to purpose, structure, audience, and medium.
- **Critical Thinking Skills:** Gather, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and apply information for the purposes of innovation, inquiry, and creative thinking.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Identify and apply ethical principles and practices to decision-making by connecting choices, actions and consequences.
- **Social Responsibility (Civic and Cultural Awareness):** Analyze differences and commonalities among peoples, ideas, aesthetic traditions, and cultural

practices to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

- **Teamwork:** Consider different points of view to work collaboratively and effectively in pursuit of a shared purpose or goal.

REQUIRED TEXT

Select a textbook from the department's approved list

<https://sites.google.com/a/austincc.edu/spch-faculty/textbooks>

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

Provide a statement identifying the format in which the instruction occurs in your class. Examples include lecture, distance learning online, distance learning hybrid, service-learning, etc.

DISTANCE EDUCATION (for online or hybrid courses only)

Advise students, many of whom may be new to online learning, about the differences between online and traditional face-to-face learning. In particular, advise students of the time management and study skills required to be a successful online student. Encourage students new to distance education to review the ACC Distance Education General Information available at <https://online.austincc.edu/faq/> Likewise, use of the college approved learning management system should be clearly stated for hybrid and online courses. Some suggested wording might be: "Students will use the Blackboard learning management system for assignment instructions, submitting assignments, and collaboration."

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Austin Community College provides free, secure drive-up WiFi to students and employees in the parking lots of all campus locations. WiFi can be accessed seven days a week, 7 am to 11 pm. Additional details are available at <https://www.austincc.edu/sts>.

Students who do not have the necessary technology to complete their ACC courses can request to borrow devices from Student Technology Services. Available devices include iPads, webcams, headsets, calculators, etc. Students must be registered for a credit course, Adult Education, or Continuing Education course to be eligible. For more information, including how to request a device, visit <http://www.austincc.edu/sts>.

Student Technology Services offers phone, live-chat, and email-based technical support for students and can provide support on topics such as password resets, accessing or using Blackboard, access to technology, etc. To view hours of operation and ways to request support, visit <http://www.austincc.edu/sts>.

REQUIRED COURSE WORK

The requirements listed below are the **minimum** requirements that every section of SPCH 2333 offered at Austin Community College must meet. The instructor may require additional assignments and/or exams.

- **Two (2) graded group projects.** These projects may include, but are not limited to: group formation assignment, team charter, decision-making project, problem-solving discussion, team pitch presentation projects. Your professor may require you to complete more than two graded group projects.
- **One (1) meeting project.** This project may include, but is not limited to: creating an agenda, running a meeting, meeting evaluation. Your professor may require you to complete more than one meeting project.
- **One (1) graded demonstration of group communication skills.** Your professor will observe and assess your group communication skills during at least one assignment. This demonstration may include, but is not limited to: managing group conflict, managing group climate, managing group interaction. Your professor may require you to complete more than one graded demonstration of group communication skills. This graded demonstration of group communication skills may be assessed as part of a group or meeting project, or it may be assessed as a separate assignment.
- **Two (2) exams.** Your professor may require you to complete more than two exams.

Your professor may assign other work. **You are required to successfully complete all work assigned by your professor.** These assignments may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Analysis of written, videotaped, and live group interaction.
2. Written self-assessments of communication: your own, your peers', or both.
3. Analysis of communication concepts in film or television programming.
4. Participation during in-class activities.
5. Papers or journal entries.

COURSE POLICIES

Detail your course specific policies. At a bare minimum the department requires an attendance, withdrawal, incomplete, and missed exam/late work policy.

Attendance/Class Participation

Regular and punctual class and laboratory attendance is expected of all students. If attendance or compliance with other course policies is unsatisfactory, the instructor may withdraw students from the class.

Or for online courses:

“Regular and timely class participation in discussions and completion of work is expected of all students. If attendance or compliance with other course policies is unsatisfactory, the instructor may withdraw students from the class.”

And to cover situations where classes are cancelled because of weather, pandemic, or other emergencies:

“The student is responsible for communicating with their professor during the closure and completing any assignments or other activities designated by their professor.”

The Communication Studies Department at Austin Community College maintains that your attendance is crucial to your success in this course. You must be present in order to master the skills you need to achieve the course objectives. The individual instructor shall inform the students of specific attendance requirements at the first class meeting. It is the student’s responsibility to withdraw from the course by the official withdrawal date if personal circumstances prevent attendance.

Withdrawal Policy

It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that his or her name is removed from the roll should he or she decide to withdraw from the class. The instructor does, however, reserve the right to drop a student should he or she feel it is necessary. If a student decides to withdraw, he or she should also verify that the withdrawal is submitted before the Final Withdrawal Date. The student is also strongly encouraged to retain their copy of the withdrawal form for their records. Students who enroll for the third or subsequent time in a course taken since Fall, 2002, may be charged a higher tuition rate, for that course. State law permits students to withdraw from no more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career at Texas public colleges or universities. With certain exceptions, all course withdrawals automatically count towards this limit. Details regarding this policy can be found in the ACC college catalog.

Missed Exam and Late Work Policies

Clearly detail class policies regarding missed exams and speeches and late work.

Incompletes

An instructor may award a grade of “I” (Incomplete) if a student was unable to complete all of the objectives for the passing grade in a course. An incomplete grade cannot be carried beyond the established date in the following semester. The completion date is determined by the instructor but may not be later than the final deadline for withdrawal in the subsequent semester.

COURSE OUTLINE/CALENDAR

Provide course calendar/outline identifying test and due dates, readings, and class content. You may wish to include a statement of variance such as “Please note that schedule changes may occur during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class and posted as a Blackboard Announcement.”

COLLEGE POLICIES

[Students must be provided with a copy of the new college policies on the first day of class. This document can be a separate handout uploaded onto Blackboard, distributed in class, or incorporated into the syllabus. The college policies are statements of which all students should be aware and which are consistent across the institution. ***The wording of these statements should not be changed by instructors.***]

Health & Safety Protocols

Operational areas of ACC campuses and centers are fully open and accessible through all public entrances. While some health & safety protocols are no longer mandatory, the college encourages its staff, faculty, and students to be mindful of the well-being of all individuals on campus. If you feel sick, feverish, or unwell, please do not come to campus.

Some important things to remember:

- If you have not done so, ACC encourages all students, faculty, and staff to get vaccinated. COVID-19 vaccines are now widely available throughout the community. Visit www.vaccines.gov/ to find a vaccine location near you.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms, please get a COVID-19 test as soon as possible before returning to an ACC facility. Testing is now widely available.
- If you test positive, please report it on the [ACC self-reporting tool located here](#).
- ACC continues to welcome face masks on campus. Per CDC guidelines, face masks remain a good way to protect yourself from COVID-19. The college cannot mandate indoor masking, but is encouraging it during this spike in cases as a result of the Delta variant.
- The college asks that we all continue to respect the personal space of others. We are encouraging 3 feet of social distancing.

- Please be sure to carry your student, faculty, or staff ID badge at all times while on campus.

Because of the everchanging situation, please go to ACC's Covid website at <https://www.austincc.edu/coronavirus?ref=audiencemenu> for the latest updates and guidance.

Statement on Academic Integrity

Austin Community College values academic integrity in the educational process. Acts of academic dishonesty/misconduct undermine the learning process, present a disadvantage to students who earn credit honestly, and subvert the academic mission of the institution. The potential consequences of fraudulent credentials raise additional concerns for individuals and communities beyond campus who rely on institutions of higher learning to certify students' academic achievements and expect to benefit from the claimed knowledge and skills of their graduates. Students must follow all instructions given by faculty or designated college representatives when taking examinations, placement assessments, tests, quizzes, and evaluations. Actions constituting scholastic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, collusion, falsifying documents, or the inappropriate use of the college's information technology resources. Further information is available at <https://www.austincc.edu/about-acc/academic-integrity-and-disciplinary-process>

Any course specific policies, expectations, or procedures could be included here.

Student Rights & Responsibilities

Students at ACC have the same rights and protections under the Constitution of the United States. These rights include freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, petition and association. As members of the community, students have the right to express their own views, but must also take responsibility for according the same rights to others and not interfere or disrupt the learning environment. Students are entitled to fair treatment, are expected to act consistently with the values of the college, and obey local, state, and federal laws.
www.austincc.edu/srr

As a student of Austin Community College you are expected to abide by the Student Standards of Conduct.
<https://www.austincc.edu/students/students-rights-and-responsibilities/student-standards-of-conduct>

Senate Bill 212 and Title IX Reporting Requirements

Under Senate Bill 212 (SB 212), the faculty and all College employees are required to report any information concerning incidents of **sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking** committed by or against an ACC student or employee. Federal Title IX law and College policy also require reporting incidents of **sex- and gender-based discrimination and sexual misconduct**. **This means faculty and non-clinical counseling staff cannot keep confidential information about any such incidents that you share with them.**

If you would like to talk with someone confidentially, please contact the District Clinical Counseling Team who can connect you with a clinical counselor on any ACC campus: (512) 223-2616, or to schedule online:

<https://www.austincc.edu/students/counseling> .

While students are not required to report, they are encouraged to contact the Compliance Office for resources and options: Charlene Buckley, District Title IX Officer, (512) 223-7964; compliance@austincc.edu .

If a student makes a report to a faculty member, the faculty member will contact the District Title IX Officer for follow-up.

Student Complaints

A defined process applies to complaints about an instructor or other college employee. You are encouraged to discuss concerns and complaints with college personnel and should expect a timely and appropriate response. When possible, students should first address their concerns through informal conferences with those immediately involved; formal due process is available when informal resolution cannot be achieved.

Student complaints may include (but are not limited to) issues regarding classroom instruction, college services and offices on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or disability.

Further information about the complaints process, including the form used to submit complaints, is available at:

<http://www.austincc.edu/students/students-rights-and-responsibilities/student-complaint-procedures>

Statement on Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects confidentiality of students' educational records. Grades cannot be provided by faculty over the phone, by e-mail, or to a fellow student.

Class grades should be posted in Blackboard, and this could be mentioned here.

Recording Policy

To ensure compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student recording of class lectures or other activities is generally prohibited without the explicit written permission of the instructor and notification of other students enrolled in the class section. Exceptions are made for approved accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Recording of lectures and other class activities may be made by faculty to facilitate instruction, especially for classes taught remotely through BlackBoard Collaborate or another platform. Participation in such activities implies consent for the student to be recorded during the instructional activity. Such recordings are intended for educational and academic purposes only.

Safety Statement

Health and safety are of paramount importance in classrooms, laboratories, and field activities. Students are expected to learn and comply with ACC environmental, health and safety procedures and agree to follow ACC safety policies. Emergency Procedures posters and Campus Safety Plans are posted in each classroom and should be reviewed at the beginning of each semester. All incidents (injuries/illness/fire/property damage/near miss) should be immediately reported to the course instructor. Additional information about safety procedures and how to sign up to be notified in case of an emergency can be found at <http://www.austincc.edu/emergency>

Everyone is expected to conduct themselves professionally with respect and courtesy to all. Anyone who thoughtlessly or intentionally jeopardizes the health or safety of another individual may be immediately dismissed from the day's activity and will be referred to the Dean of Student Services for disciplinary action.

In the event of disruption of normal classroom activities due to an emergency situation or an outbreak of illness, the format for this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, students will be provided an addendum to the class syllabus that will supersede the original version.

Campus Carry

The Austin Community College District concealed handgun policy ensures compliance with Section 411.2031 of the Texas Government Code (also known as the Campus Carry Law), while maintaining ACC's commitment to provide a safe environment for its students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Beginning August 1, 2017, individuals who are licensed to carry (LTC) may do so on campus premises

except in locations and at activities prohibited by state or federal law, or the college's concealed handgun policy.

It is the responsibility of license holders to conceal their handguns at all times. Persons who see a handgun on campus are asked to contact the ACC Police Department by dialing 512-223-1231. Please refer to the concealed handgun policy online at <http://austincc.edu/campuscarry>

Discrimination Prohibited

The College seeks to maintain an educational environment free from any form of discrimination or harassment including but not limited to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

Faculty at the College are required to report concerns regarding sexual misconduct (including all forms of sexual harassment and sex and gender-based discrimination) to the Manager of Title IX/Title VI/ADA Compliance. Licensed clinical counselors are available across the District and serve as confidential resources for students.

Additional information about Title VI, Title IX, and ADA compliance can be found in the ACC Compliance Resource Guide available at:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o55xINAWNvTYgl-fs-JbDyuaMFDNvAjz/view>

Use of ACC email

All College e-mail communication to students will be sent solely to the student's ACCmail account, with the expectation that such communications will be read in a timely fashion. ACC will send important information and will notify students of any college-related emergencies using this account. Students should only expect to receive email communication from their instructor using this account.

Likewise, students should use their ACCmail account when communicating with instructors and staff. Information about ACC email accounts, including instructions for accessing it, are available at:

<http://www.austincc.edu/help/accmail/questions-and-answers>

Use of the Testing Center

For Fall, 2021, the Testing Centers will allow only limited in person testing and testing time will be limited to the standard class time, typically one and one-half hours. Specifically, only the following will be allowed in the Testing Centers:

- Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Testing: All approved SAS testing
- Assessments Tests: Institutionally approved assessment tests (e.g., TSIA or TABE)
- Placement Tests: Placement tests (e.g., ALEKS)

- Make-Up Exams (for students who missed the original test): Make-up testing is available for all lecture courses but will be limited to no more than 25% of students enrolled in each section for each of four tests
- Programs incorporating industry certification exams: Such programs (e.g., Microsoft, Adobe, etc.) may utilize the ACC Business Assessment Center for the industry certification exams (BACT) at HLC or RRC

The instructor should provide additional information about how they will conduct examinations and other assessments here.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The success of our students is paramount, and ACC offers a variety of support services to help, as well as providing numerous opportunities for community engagement and personal growth.

Student Support

ACC strives to provide exemplary support to its students and offers a broad variety of opportunities and services. Information on these campus services and resources is available at <http://www.austincc.edu/students>. A comprehensive array of student support services is available online at: <https://www.austincc.edu/coronavirus/remote-student-support>

Student Accessibility Services

Austin Community College (ACC) is committed to providing a supportive, accessible, and inclusive learning environment for all students. Each campus offers support services for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who need classroom, academic or other accommodations must request them through Student Accessibility Services (SAS).

Students are encouraged to request accommodations when they register for courses or at least three weeks before the start of each semester they are enrolled, otherwise the provision of accommodations may be delayed. Students who have received approval for accommodations from SAS for this course must provide the instructor with the legal document titled "Notice of Approved Accommodations (NAA)" from SAS.

Until the instructor receives the NAA from the student accommodations should not be provided. Once the NAA is received, accommodations must be provided. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is in the student's best interest to deliver the NAA on the first day of class.

Please contact SAS@austincc.edu for more information.

Academic Support

ACC offers academic support services on all of its campuses. These services, which include online tutoring, academic coaching, and supplemental instruction, are free to enrolled ACC students. Tutors are available in a variety of subjects ranging from accounting to pharmacology. Students may receive these services on both a drop-in and referral basis.

[An online tutor request can be made here:](https://de.austincc.edu/bbsupport/online-tutoring-request/)

<https://de.austincc.edu/bbsupport/online-tutoring-request/>

[Additional tutoring information can be found here:](https://austincc.edu/onlinetutoring)

austincc.edu/onlinetutoring

Library Services

ACC Library Services will be offering both in-person and extensive online services for Fall 2021, with research and assignment assistance available in-person during limited hours of service. Although all college services are subject to change this fall, plans include ACC students signing up for study space and use of computers at open libraries, extensive online instruction in classes, online reference assistance 24/7 and reference with ACC faculty librarians. In addition, currently enrolled students, faculty and staff can access Library Services online (also 24/7) via the ACC Library website and by using their ACCeID to access all online materials (ebooks, articles from library databases, and streaming videos). ACC Libraries offer these services in numerous ways such as: "Get Help from a Faculty Librarian: the 24/7 Ask a Librarian chat service," an online form for in-depth research Q and A sessions, one-on-one video appointments, email, and phone (voicemail is monitored regularly).

- Library Website: <http://library.austincc.edu>
- Library Information & Services during COVID-19: <https://researchguides.austincc.edu/LSinfoCOVID19>
- Ask a Librarian 24/7 chat and form: <https://library.austincc.edu/help/ask.php>
- Library Hours of Operation by Location: <https://library.austincc.edu/loc/>
- Email: library@austincc.edu

Student Organizations

ACC has over seventy student organizations, offering a variety of cultural, academic, vocational, and social opportunities. They provide a chance to meet with other students who have the same interests, engage in service-learning, participate in intramural sports, gain valuable field experience related to career goals, and much else. Student Life coordinates many of these activities, and additional information is available at <http://sites.austincc.edu/sl/>.

Personal Support

Resources to support students are available at every campus. To learn more, ask your professor or visit the campus Support Center. All resources and services are free and confidential. Some examples include, among others:

- Food resources including community pantries and bank drives can be found here:
<https://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/food-assistance/get-food-now>
- Assistance with childcare or utility bills is available at any campus Support Center: <http://www.austincc.edu/students/support-center>.
- The Student Emergency Fund can help with unexpected expenses that may cause you to withdraw from one or more classes:
<http://www.austincc.edu/SEF>.
- Help with budgeting for college and family life is available through the Student Money Management Office: <http://sites.austincc.edu/money/>.
A full listing of services for student parents is available at:
<https://www.austincc.edu/students/child-care>
- The CARES Act Student Aid will help eligible students pay expenses related to COVID-19:
<https://www.austincc.edu/coronavirus/cares-act-student-aid>.

Mental health counseling services are available throughout the ACC Student Services District to address personal and or mental health concerns:
<http://www.austincc.edu/students/counseling>.

If you are struggling with a mental health or personal crisis, call one of the following numbers to connect with resources for help. However, if you are afraid that you might hurt yourself or someone else, call 911 immediately.

Free Crisis Hotline Numbers:

- Austin / Travis County 24-hour Crisis & Suicide hotline: **512-472-HELP (4357)**
- The Williamson County 24-hour Crisis hotline: **1-800-841-1255**
- Bastrop County Family Crisis Center hotline: **1-888-311-7755**
- Hays County 24 Hour Crisis Hotline: **1-877-466-0660**
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
- Crisis Text Line: **Text “home” to 741741**
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: **1-800-662-HELP (4357)**
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Helpline: **1-800-950-NAMI (6264)**

Some faculty may consider adding a student sign-off page at the end of the syllabus to be removed and handed back to the instructor providing evidence that the student received a copy of the syllabus and had an opportunity to ask questions, but such a page is optional.