

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE
Group Dynamics & Facilitation of Emergency Management Systems
Course Number: EXT 464 (3 Credits)

COURSE SYLLABUS:

Instructors: Judy MacDonald, MBA, MA
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Instructor Biographies:

Judy MacDonald, MBA, MA has more than 20 years experience in the field of adult education and training. She has been adjunct faculty at City University, Shoreline, Olympia, and Tacoma Community Colleges where she has taught a variety of courses in management and leadership skills. She is also runs her own small business offering training to businesses and individuals in the field of management, human relations and interpersonal skills. She has first-hand disaster related experience from many years working for the U.S. Forest Service in their fire management program, and, most recently, is employed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as an instructional designer and trainer. She has worked in several disaster field offices around the U.S. and has trained Federal, State, and local emergency managers on topics related to managing staff in disaster situations. She is certified in Critical Incident Stress Management with the International Critical Incident Stress Management Foundation.

Class Schedule: Winter

Course Purpose: Evaluate group systems in relation to the effective implementation of emergency management systems. Review the influence of personality styles, identify the process of problem solving, determine solutions to organizational problems in terms of work motivation/group dynamics, and assess the role of conflict management in an emergency management setting. Emphasis will be on participation in and facilitation of task-oriented or decision-making groups and leadership theory.

Course Description: The course introduces students to the concepts of group dynamics and behaviors to facilitate group effectiveness in emergency management systems. Groups in emergency settings can present unique challenges requiring sound knowledge and skills on the part of both group leaders and group members if the group goals are to be accomplished. Through reading

assignments, written papers, self-assessments, case studies and threaded on-line discussions, students will learn the many facets of a group in an emergency management system. Students will gain increased self-awareness and develop skills and knowledge applicable as both a group leader and a group member.

Course Objectives: The overall objective of this course is to assist students in developing skills to increase group effectiveness in an emergency management system. This goal will be achieved by:

- Explaining the concepts of group dynamics
- Assessing personal group role(s)
- Improving conflict management skills
- Identifying appropriate leadership styles for managing groups
- Developing decision making/problem solving skills

Course Texts:

Terry R. Bacon, PhD *Effective People Skills*, Colorado: International Learning Works, Inc., 1996

Daniel Levi, *Group Dynamics for Teams*,. California: Sage Publications, 2001.

Course Readings: Readings from other texts and Internet resources as assigned.

Course Format: Course material will primarily be delivered via issue papers and diverse electronic media with student discussion and participation expected. Students will be expected to apply information learned throughout the course in a term paper.

Student Requirements:

Class participation includes attendance via weekly log-ins for a Question and Answer session. Each unexcused session will lead to a partial grade reduction. Class participation is more than attendance. You are expected to contribute, disagree and engage in on-line discussions. You should feel free to ask questions of the instructors if you do not understand any information presented or assignments required of you.

All readings should be completed as indicated on this syllabus.

Written Assignments: One or more short (1-5 pages) written assignments will be required during the course along with a maximum seven-page term paper. All papers will be typed, double-spaced using proper grammar, format and spelling.

Unexcused late papers will be downgraded by one-half a grade.

Students will prepare a term paper evaluating the group in the movie '12 Angry Men.' Applying concepts and information gained throughout the course, write a five to seven page paper analyzing the group process. A format will be provided later in the course.

Grading:

- 30% - Class Participation
- 30% - Self-assessment paper
- 40% - Final paper

Grading Guidelines:

98-100 = A+	85 - 86 = B-	71 - 73 = D
95- 97 = A	82 - 84 = C+	69 - 70 = D-
93- 94 = A-	79 - 81 = C	68 = F
90- 92 = B+	77 - 78 = C-	
87- 89 = B	74 - 76 = D+	

Incompletes:

Because of the nature of work in the Emergency Management field, accommodations will be made for students when emergencies arise that postpone course completion. A grade of K (incomplete) may be assigned only upon request of the student and agreement of the course instructor.

To receive a job related incomplete, a student must provide documented proof of a job related emergency. A letter from an employer is encouraged. To receive a K (incomplete) you must obtain a contract form from the instructor and negotiate a formal agreement with the course instructor specifying the work done and the remaining work needed to complete the course and earn a grade.

You are encouraged to complete the work agreed upon during the next quarter. If a final grade has not been submitted after one year, the K automatically reverts to a failing grade (Z).

Course Evaluation:

WWU Extension Services has established a policy that all courses and instructors are evaluated quarterly. To facilitate this process, WWU testing Center has

developed a secure website on which this evaluation takes place. The evaluation document used speaks specifically to the on-line educational process and experience. A URL is set up during the latter third of each quarter by Extension Services and is forwarded to the instructor. Registered students will be provided a URL by the instructor. WWU Testing Center compiles the evaluation information and disseminates the report after grades have been submitted. Your participation in this evaluation process is strongly encouraged.

For additional information regarding incompletes, please see page 35 of the WWU 2004-2005 catalog.

COURSE OUTLINE

Session I - **Course overview & expectations**
Faculty/Student Introductions
Introduction to Group Dynamics

Objectives: Students will:

1. Explore different types of groups
2. Discuss characteristics of effective groups

Assignment: Read *Making Groups Effective*, Chapters 1- 3 and additional reading assigned by instructors.

Session II - **Stages of Group Development**

Objectives: Students will:

1. Identify stages of group development
2. Discuss obstacles to group development

Assignment: Read *Group Dynamics for Teams*, Chapter 3, Stages of Group Development papers and additional reading assigned by instructors.

Session III - **Group Roles and Functions**

Objectives: Students will:

1. Learn various roles & functions of groups
2. Assess their primary role(s) & functions as a group leader & a group member

Assignment: Read *Group Dynamics for Teams*, Chapters 4-6, plus additional reading assigned by instructors. Complete group roles self-assessment.

Session IV - **Understanding Personality Styles/Differences**

Objectives: Students will:

1. Identify their primary personality style
2. Discuss how personality styles affect group dynamics

Assignment: Read *Effective People Skills*, pages 3-22, and *Group Dynamics for Teams*, Chapter 8.

Complete Myers-Briggs self-assessment as assigned.

Session V - **Exploring Leadership Theories**

Objectives: Students will:

1. Explore various leadership theories
2. Discuss how leadership styles impact groups
3. Determine their dominant leadership style & discuss

Assignment: Read *Group Dynamics for Teams*, Chapter 10 And leadership theory descriptions and papers. Complete leadership questionnaire assigned by instructors.

Session VI - **Conflict Management**

Objectives: Students will:

1. Identify their conflict management style
2. Identify causes of conflict in an emergency management system
3. Improve conflict management skills

Assignment: Read *Effective People Skills*, pages 83-107 Read *Group Dynamics for Teams*, Chapter 7.

Complete self-assessment as assigned.

Session VII - **Problem Solving, Decision Making & Motivation**

Objectives: Students will:

1. Identify potential problem solving challenges that may exist in an emergency situation
2. Develop skills for effective decision making & problem solving in an emergency situation.
3. Discuss personal motivators.
4. Describe factors that motivate behavior in an
5. emergency management setting.

Assignment: Read *Group Dynamics for Teams*, Chaps. 9, 11, and 12. Read additional reading assigned by instructors.

Session VIII - Stress Management & Models for Debriefing

Objectives: Students will:

1. Identify causes of stress in a disaster
2. Learn stress reduction techniques
3. Discuss defusing & debriefing techniques and benefits

Assignment: Read Stress Warning Signals & Stress Tips
Read '*Models for Defusing & Debriefing. Defusing: Basic CISM*' by A. Dyregon, PhD

Session X - Assessing Group Dynamics

Assignment: Read material as assigned by instructors

Objectives: Students will:

1. Discuss the movie '12 Angry Men'
2. Evaluate the group dynamics
3. Assess the group maturity

NOTE: This syllabus may be modified at the instructors' discretion as necessary to meet the objectives of the course and/or the needs of the students.

