

STMM 554 FOSTERING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

Weekends ~ Spring, 2008

Gretchen Gundrum, Ph.D (gundrumg@seattleu.edu)**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is divided into three units, each emphasizing a different aspect of becoming a minister/leader of a faith community. *First*, students will develop a “working theology” about what each means by “community of faith.” *Second*, they will explore and practice a variety of group theories and skills that are designed to assist facilitators, leaders, and participants in fostering healthy groups. Students will identify those that come more naturally those which will require more intentional effort to acquire over time, and those they hope others will contribute. *Third*, participants will increase their understanding of theories and practices that will assist them in leading inclusive and diversely populated faith communities in action for justice.

Prerequisites: STMM 553; STMM 560.

COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Goal 1: *To foster a sense of community in the classroom in both large and small groups.*

1. Through holding the intention of mutual respect toward all.
2. By creating a classroom environment that is safe, prayerful, hospitable, open to honest communication, and inclusive.

Goal 2: *To provide opportunities to hone skills in group dynamics and leadership and thus continue developing the following competencies for ministry:*

- ✚ Awareness of one’s personality and its impact on leadership style.
- ✚ Awareness of the need to become healthy, balanced persons in honest and honoring leadership relationships.
- ✚ Increased ability to be truly present, attentive and honestly participative within group settings.
- ✚ Ability to form, nurture, and support diverse teams for ministry within diverse communities of faith.
- ✚ Knowledge of group theories regarding the purpose, developmental stages, and healthy functioning of groups.
- ✚ Understanding of the need for and ability to integrate the skills of planning meetings, building agendas, creating climate, designing helpful beginnings, breaks, endings; leading prayer; listening actively, communicating honestly and directly; giving and receiving feedback; managing conflict; building in evaluation and closure processes, and working with diverse populations.
- ✚ Awareness of prayer and personal integration as foundation for effective group leadership.
- ✚ Increased ability to reflect on one’s role as group leader and member.

Goal 3: *To determine personal goals and objectives to focus students’ learning during the course (see Syllabus, pp. 3, 10-11).*

Multiple levels of evaluation throughout the course will indicate whether course and individual goals and objectives are being achieved.

Church is where we go to build community and to be transformed in the process.

Philip Knowles

REQUIREMENTS:**1. Completion of assigned reading:**

- Bass, Diana Butler. *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2006.
- Bolton, Robert. *People Skills*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979, 1986. (Read ONLY Chapters 12-14.)
- Doherty, Jerry C. *A Celtic Model of Ministry*. Collegeville, Liturgical Press, 2003.
- Gundrum, Gretchen. *Coursepak*, Super Copy.
- Linn, Dennis, Sheila Fabricant, and Matthew. *Don't Forgive Too Soon*. New York: Paulist Press, 1997.
- Sofield, Loughlan, Hammett, & Juliano. *Building Community*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 1998.
- Turner, Nathan. *Leading Small Groups*. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1996.
- Yancey, George. *One Body, One Spirit*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.
- Scripture: *Acts of the Apostles, 1 Corinthians and Philippians*.

Recommended readings are listed on the resource bibliography and posted on the Angel site.

2. Use of ANGEL: Web-based threaded discussion:

We will use a “threaded discussion” to experience the kind of contribution that “virtual community” can make to our class community and potentially to the communities we serve. This computer-based community sharing will allow us to write reflections and share them with the entire class. Each person will read all the other postings and choose to respond in a formal way to one, and may respond informally to others. The formal postings and responses will be graded using the “writing rubrics” attached to this syllabus. Increasingly, church communities rely on all technologies to build communities of faith. Your contributions will be interpreted as essential to building community in this class. During the first class session, each will learn how to “sign in.” We will then conduct two dialogues in our virtual community. For each dialogue you will submit two separate contributions.

Writing requirements for the ANGEL postings:

The *first contribution* for each dialogue topic will consist of no more than three paragraphs (one page) of your reflection on the topic. The *best contributions* combine personal experience, reference to the required readings, class lectures and discussions, and your own reading on the topic. You might find that writing your contributions before reading the others’ keeps you focused and fresh in your own response. The *second contribution* on the topic will be no more than two paragraphs (half a page). The second contribution on each topic should pick up on an idea put forward by another student’s first contribution. This second contribution should build on the other student’s ideas and relate to your own experience and reading. I will read the threaded discussion frequently, noting the quality of the postings, and attempting to integrate some of the ideas into the class sessions. Using the writing rubric for each posting (see pp. 16-18 of this syllabus), I will assign a grade for that posting. Here are the assignments:

- a. Log on and indicate you are “here.” **We will demonstrate this during our first session, and you will sign in as soon as possible after the first session.**
- b. **Topic One:** Address the question: **What does community of faith mean to me?** In your *Coursepak*, you will find a reflection on *ubuntu* and the African concept/experience of being human. You will also find a reflection from Ron Rolheiser suggesting the Church is by its essence communal. Bellah, et alii., present the idea of the Church as a community that necessarily contributes to the common good. Yet a North American, dominant cultural emphasis on individualism challenges community in many churches. Draw insights from the *Coursepak* writers as well as from Sofield, Hammett and Juliano, who develop small group theory within the context of community (pp. 43-46), the *Acts of the Apostles* (which depicts the ideal Christian community), chapters 1-4 in Doherty’s *A*

- Celtic Model of Ministry*, and chapters 1-9, 13, and 14 in *Christianity for the Rest of Us*. Include insights from your own experience in faith communities. Write your reflection; footnote your insights as they draw from these and other readings. Be prepared to post the resulting paper as your **first contribution to Topic One by 8:00PM April 14, 2008**. Pick another person's paper to launch your reflection and post your response as your **second contribution to Topic One by 8:00 PM April 22, 2008**.
- c. **Topic Two:** Address the **dilemmas faced by communities that embrace diverse individuals**. If people each bring co-cultural identities with specific styles and personality types, how does one honor the differences while nurturing the community? What are some of the tensions? The benefits? The challenges? How does diversity impact this juxtaposition? Draw on insights you bring from your own experience, as well as those you find in *Christianity for the Rest of Us*, chapters 10, 11, 12, 15, and 16; all of *One Body, One Spirit*, and chapter 6 in *A Celtic Model of Ministry*. Write your own reflections, footnoting texts you use, and post them as your **first contribution to Topic Two by 8:00PM April 29, 2008**. Pick another person's paper to launch your reflection and post your response as your **second contribution to Topic Two 8:00PM May 14, 2008**.
3. **Decide what you most want to learn in this course.** Create goals and objectives to define your learning goals and to organize strategies toward achieving those goals during the quarter. **Submit your goals and objectives for the course on the first morning of class (April 5)**. These must be typed and should be no more than one page. Two goals with one or two objectives each will be sufficient, or one goal with several objectives. To help draft your goals, look at the competencies on page 1 of this syllabus; then study pages 10-11, which describe how to write goals and objectives. I will return the first draft to you with comments and suggestions. **Please revise your copy and return it to me in my STM mailbox by April 16, 2008**. I will keep the final draft of your goals.
4. **Offer consistent, active and reflective participation** in your small group during class sessions. This will include preparation for small group sharing based on the small group processes. It also includes giving your small group members careful feedback, as well as ownership for your participation as a member. Willingness to enter conflict negotiation, vulnerability and openness to deeper levels, and participation in discussion topics are some of the contributions you make to any group. Your journaling will assist you in reflecting on your contribution both to your small group and to the large group of the class. Your participation in the threaded discussion using the ANGEL course tool will offer both you and your peers the opportunity to explore the material in the readings and in the class presentations. Additional supportive and interactive comments on the ANGEL postings increase your participation in the course.
5. **Journaling throughout** the course (as time and energy permit) is highly recommended, using the process outlined on page 5 of this syllabus packet. You will not hand in the journal. The discipline of the process is designed to assist you in meeting competencies of reflection as a leader as listed on the first page of the syllabus. In addition, your ongoing reflection recorded throughout the course will impact your participation in your small group, increase your skill level in other groups, and provide you with material you will be able to use to complete your final reflection paper. Some areas for consideration in this reflection practice include: your participation in your small group process or in the class process; your new or deepened insights and connections especially as they relate to the readings; previous and/or current experience in other groups; and unfolding understandings about your own ability to contribute to the health of a group. Attend to resistances as they surface in you. These often teach us a lot about our expectations, assumptions, and judgments.

6. Give written feedback to student participants in your small group:

- a. All group members will give written and specific feedback to the facilitator of the small group session. This is for your colleague's growth and reflection.
- b. After the small group session during the morning of the last day of class (**May 4, 2008**), give each person in your small group written feedback concerning your experience of their participation and facilitation in the group. The feedback needs to be specific and concerned with observable behavior. Please address both your assessment of each person's contribution to the group and identify an area of growth. Refer to the Essentials of Feedback Processes in this syllabus (p. 15) and the course competencies listed on page 1 for help in framing your feedback to your peers. **You will need to provide me with a copy of the written feedback for each member of your group during the of the second-to-last class session.**
- c. During the last class session (in the afternoon), there is a more light-hearted process of giving feedback related to closing the group, where you offer each member a symbol or verbal image of their contribution (see *Coursepak*, p. 63).

7. Final Paper:

- a. A **4-7 page paper** is due in the STM office by **noon June 3, 2008**. The paper needs to demonstrate a growth of understanding of your ability to both lead and participate in a community of faith. It will also address the specific ways in which your leadership and participation will foster those communities for justice and action. Include insights from: your journal, feedback from your peers, your goals and objectives, your ANGEL contributions and those of your peers, your experience in your small group, class lectures and discussions, and your experience and reading. Be sure to cite specific texts and resources. I look both for your integration of skills and learning in practical application (your small group, other groups) and understanding of the literature that is available in the area of fostering communities of faith. Please use the STM writing guidelines as contained in your Student Advising Handbook. (You may use another source for writing format if you are more familiar with it.)
- b. **Your suggested self-grade with a rationale** for assigning the grade is due with your final paper on June 3, 2008 (deposited in my STM mailbox by noon that day). Direct your rationale toward the listed competencies of the course, your energy and commitment to the processes outlined in the syllabus, your reading, and your assessment of your skill level and your attaining your goals as submitted in writing on the first day of class. Include your learning from self and peer evaluation throughout the course. Remember that completion of all the requirements earns a "B." To earn an "A" one needs to demonstrate *superior* use of skills and processes, read beyond the requirements, and demonstrate in the final paper and other assignments a level of excellence beyond the norm.

8. Grading

Each of the grades from your four ANGEL postings and your final paper are averaged, along with a grade for class participation, to arrive at your final grade for the course. To determine your class participation grade, I consider the following:

- Your classroom contribution—comments, quality of participation, and demeanor;
- Your self-evaluation (to bring contributions to attention that I might have missed and to assess the congruency between your sense of your work and my own);
- The written evaluations from your peers in terms of your contribution to the group;
- The quality of the written evaluations you gave your peers.

In other words, it all matters.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS:

The same four questions are intended to guide your reflection for the entire course. These are intended to help develop a habit of reflection on your skills, your body, your gifts and your growth areas in a group. These questions are not intended to limit, rather they are proposed as “pump primer.” You may wish to use both your class group experience and other group experience. Please feel free to do so. It is hoped that over the course you will be able to read your disciplined responses to discover the growth, the continuing themes, and the insights.

Each time you write, take time to breathe and to center yourself. Image the group process you are considering. Image yourself in that group. Try to create the scene through your senses, identifying sights, sounds, and smells (what were people wearing? what did you see in your space? how did the room smell? what noises did you notice? how did people’s voices sound?, etc.) As you replay the group, tune into your own body responses to the discussion. When did you feel relaxed? tense? anxious? confident? angry? hopeful? excited? etc. Try to listen to your remembered body responses as you replay the group time in your imagination. If you are experiencing some resistance to the group, the course, or a particular person, let yourself enter into dialogue with that resistance. Resistance can often be a signal of a growth area.

Reflect and write on these questions:

1. What did I experience as energizing/life-giving in my small group?
2. What did I experience as de-energizing/ life draining in my small group?
3. What specifically made the experience life-giving? life-draining?
4. In what specific way did each experience affirm me? invite me to grow?

We are God’s work of art.
Ephesians 2:10

4/5/08 CLASS ONE: INTRODUCTIONS AND BEGINNINGS

- Goal: To begin to form small groups through personal introductions and sharing stories.
- Readings Required: *Coursepak*:
 Goals and objectives;
 Small group guidelines;
 Michael Battle's chapter "the Delicate Networks of Interdependence"
 Ron Rolheiser's "A Spirituality of Ecclesiology"
 Robert Bellah's "Conclusion: Competing Visions of the role of Religion in American Society"
 Robert Bellah's "Religion and the Shape of National Culture"
 Desmond Tutu's definition of *ubuntu*
Building Community, p. 43-46
Acts of the Apostles, which depicts the ideal Christian community
A Celtic Model of Ministry, chapters 1-4
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapters 1-5
- Assignments: Bring your completed Student Survey to first class (syllabus, pp. 9-10).
 Goals and Objectives for the class turned in during the class [April 5].

4/5/08 CLASS TWO: GROUP DEVELOPMENT

- Goal: To initiate the process of becoming a group/community.
 To define group goals and identify group norms.
- Readings Required: PowerPoint on community posted on Angel

4/6/08 CLASS THREE: INDIVIDUAL STYLES

- Goal: To become more aware of how one's personality and values impact every group experience.
- Readings Required: *Coursepak*:
 Rag Tag Band a Community? How did it happen?;
 Theories of Group Development chart
 Which Way Are You Bent?
 Simplified Approach
One Body, One Spirit, all
A Celtic Model of Ministry, chapter 6
 Turner, chapters 1-3
 Sofield, Hammett and Juliano, chapters 1-6
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapters 6-9
- Assignments: See chart on next page.

4/6/08 CLASS FOUR: PERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

Goal: To embrace diversity in fostering communities of faith

Readings Required: *One Body, One Spirit*, all
Christianity for the Rest of Us, chapters 10-14. 16

ASSIGNMENTS BETWEEN WEEKENDS

April 14, 2008	Posting Topic One on ANGEL	(Syllabus, p. 2)
April 16, 2008	Revised Goals & Objectives	(Syllabus, p. 3)
April 18, 2008	Graded papers available for pick-up after 3:00 PM in STM Office	
April 22, 2008	Response to Topic One on ANGEL	(Syllabus, p. 2)
April 29, 2008	Posting Topic Two on ANGEL	(Syllabus, p. 3)
May 6, 2008	Graded papers distributed during class weekend	
May 14, 2008	Response to Topic Two on ANGEL	(Syllabus, p. 3)
June 3, 2008	Final paper & self-evaluation due	(Syllabus, p. 4)
	(submit large, self-addressed, stamped envelope with \$1.00 postage for prompt response or pick-up later in STM office)	

5/2/08 CLASS FIVE: PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: To understand the value and dynamics of a group's planning, decision making and agenda setting processes.

Readings Required: *Coursepak*: Consensus Model, Sample Agenda
 Sofield, Hammett, Juliano, chapters 9, 10, 14 & 15.
 Turner, chapters 5 & 6;
 Butler Bass, chapter 6, 15, 17

Assignment: Small group process sheet due tomorrow (See *Coursepak*, p. 60)

5/3/08 CLASS SIX: PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

Goal: To understand the value and dynamics of a group's planning, decision making and agenda setting processes.

Readings Required: Same as previous session

For all of us, pluralism can be a rock of stumbling.
 But for God, it is the cornerstone of the universal design.

Lamin Sanneh

5/3/08 CLASS SEVEN: COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT

- Goal:** To identify styles of conflict, and specifically what works and what obstructs conflict resolution or management.
- Readings Required:** Sofield, chapters, 7-8, 16, 17
Turner, chapter 4
Read *1 Corinthians*
The Linns, *Don't Forgive Too Soon*
- Assignment:** Ponder your own conflict style; think of a conflict you recently had and describe it—the data, facts, interactions, etc. Try to recreate the actual physical scene, and then move to what “triggered” your reaction to conflict and what it takes for you to reconcile, ameliorate, or solve the conflict. Be prepared to share parts of this in the small group in class.

5/4/08 CLASS EIGHT: COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT

- Goal:** To identify styles of conflict, and specifically what works and what obstructs conflict resolution or management.
- Readings Required:** *Philippians*
- Assignments:** Written feedback to give to each of your small group members. See Syllabus, pp. 3, 15. You will hand the feedback to each member of your small group during or immediately after class today.

5/4/08 CLASS NINE: CLOSING AND EVALUATING

- Goals:** To provide feedback to group members about their contributions to the group; to close the group.
- Readings Required:** None

ASSIGNMENT CHART

Assignment	Find description on Syllabus page	Due date
Student Survey	9-10	April 5, 2008
Goals & Objectives	3, 11-12	April 5, 2008
Angel Posting Topic One	2	April 14, 2008
Final, Revised Goals & Objectives	3	April 16, 2008
Second Contribution to Topic One	2	April 22, 2008
Angel Posting Topic Two	2	April 29, 2008
Small Group Assessment	<i>Coursepak</i> , 60	May 3, 2008
Written feedback to group members	3, 15	May 4, 2008
Second Contribution to Topic Two	2	May 14, 2008
Final paper with grade rationale	4	June 3, 2008

STUDENT SURVEY FOR THE FOSTERING COMMUNITIES OF FAITH COURSE

Please complete and hand in at the first class session

Name: _____ Program _____

1. What is your most effective communication skill? _____

2. How do you know this is true? _____

3. What I hope to get out of this class is _____

4. One specific skill I want to learn/hone is: _____

5. One thing I am anxious about or afraid of (regarding this class) is _____

6. The specific group(s) I have facilitated include: _____

7. Some groups I might facilitate or participate in the future are: _____

8. One of my best experiences of a small group was _____

9. What made it especially good was _____

10. One of my worst group experiences was _____

11. What made it especially bad was _____

[Remember to change names and locations to protect confidentiality in story-telling.]

12. Looking back at your worst experience, what suggestions could you offer the facilitator/leader that could have improved the experience? _____

13. What values do you bring to fostering communities of faith? Please mention why these values are important to you _____

14. What is your experience with diverse people in faith communities? _____

15. What excites you about working with people who are different than you in a group?

16. What do you most want me to know about you as we begin this course? _____

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Assignment: Please write one or two goals with appropriate objectives for your intentional growth as an effective group leader/participant during the *Fostering Communities of Faith* course.

Why Goals and Objectives?

Organizations, teams, families, students, and groups set goals to guide their time together. **Goals** help individuals move intentionally toward a vision. That vision can be as simple as a family vacation or as complex as creating a new world order. Goals are broad statements about what the vision is—what someone wants to accomplish. In other words, goals answer the question “WHAT are we (am I) going to do?” While they may be long-term in nature, please develop your personal goals for the duration of the quarter. **Objectives** are measured steps toward achieving a goal. These are smaller, incremental advances. Objective statements usually answer the question, “HOW will we (I) make the goal a reality?” One way to remember the components of an objective is by using the acronym SMART. Effective objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Responsibilities-identified, and Time-bound.

As a student in a course, you receive a vision about what the faculty and the university hope you will learn. I have provided you with an extensive syllabus based on competencies. The document presents my *vision* of the course. Notice the weekly topics or *goal* that will help us reach the vision for the course.

As an effective leader, you set and will continue to set goals. Peter F. Drucker sums up the essence of effective leadership in terms of the leader’s ability to name an organization’s mission and then set the goals and the priorities to accomplish it (*Managing the Future*, p. 21). As you anticipate this course, design goals and objectives that will assist you in organizing your own learning. As you look at the stated competencies of the *Fostering Communities of Faith* course, identify one or two areas in which you perceive a need to grow, deepen, or develop your understanding or skill levels. Use these needs to help you define what you hope to gain from your reading, reflection, class time, and interaction with others in the course. Many of us participate in groups daily. Our families, friends, and co-workers supply unlimited group experiences for us. The following explanation and examples are intended to help you write specific goals and objectives to assist your becoming an intentional learner in those groups this quarter.

GOAL
(WHAT: THE VISION)

Goals are broad-based but clear. A person is best served by choosing only one or two goals to work on at a time. This allows individuals to be intentional and focused about their learning. Remember, a goal is an attainable, intended outcome that is simply written. It must be manageable.

OBJECTIVES
(HOW: THE STEPS YOU WILL TAKE TO ACHIEVE THE VISION)

An objective is specific, measurable, tangible, and under the effective control or influence of the one setting the goals. Objectives allow us to measure our progress by establishing limits and boundaries. To help you remember all of these items, the acronym SMART is useful: Objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Responsibilities-identified, and Time-bound.

EXAMPLES

Goal 1: “*To increase my skill in reflecting on group process so that I can be a better participant and facilitator.*”

Objectives:

1. Each week I will use the suggested journaling questions to write about the processes that I observed. I will chart my own feelings and responses to the processes.
2. During our small group sessions each week, I will be particularly attentive to body language, noting what I respond to as it happens, and reflecting upon my response. I will include these reflections in my journal.
3. During our small group sessions each week, I will check with the group about how each feels the process is going. I will use paraphrasing and summarizing skills.
4. Twice during the quarter I will check out my perceptions by asking [name the individual] for feedback. I will adjust my process if my perceptions and his/hers differ greatly.

Goal 2: *To deepen my skill and comfort level in participating in and leading more highly diversified small groups.*

Objectives:

1. By the fourth week, I will have read at least one article and one book that consider personality and diversity issues.
2. As a result of such reading, I will, by the end of this course, identify challenges and growth areas to continue to address in my process.
3. I will add the concept of *co-culture* to my journal questions. Thus, each week I will ask myself “What co-cultural lenses are contributing to the feelings, assessments, or evaluations I just recorded?”
4. I will practice my skills of attending to individuals, checking out assumptions, being present, and developing acceptance and trust in all the group sessions. I will ask [name] to give me feedback each week about his/her observations of my skill level in these areas.

These samples suggest the variety of strategies a person could use to accomplish a goal within the context of our course. Two goals with two objectives or one goal with three or four objectives

will be adequate. *Please notice that each set of objectives includes a feedback person to assist in achieving the goals. This strategy is to be included in your goals and objectives as well.*

Group Guidelines

***We will honor and respect each other
by:***

***LISTENING without interruption or side
conversations.***

***Listening to UNDERSTAND, suspending
judgment.***

***ACKNOWLEDGING each other's
experiences and truth.***

***RECOGNIZING that multiple truths can
exist simultaneously.***

***Maintaining CONFIDENTIALITY of each
person's sharing.***

***ASKING if there are other guidelines
anyone needs to feel honored or respected.***

GUIDELINES TO FOSTER RESPECT*

- ❖ ***Take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others.***
- ❖ ***Use EMPATHIC listening***
- ❖ ***Be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles.***
- ❖ ***THINK ABOUT what you hear and feel before you speak.***
- ❖ ***EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions.***
- ❖ ***Keep CONFIDENTIALITY.***
- ❖ ***TRUST/TOLERATE ambiguity because we are not here to debate right and wrong.***

Based on Eric Law's *Inclusion

ESSENTIALS OF FEEDBACK PROCESSES*

By Sharon Henderson Callahan, in Collaboration with Mary LaCourse Mauren

Feedback refers to the process of giving someone accurate information about the impact of his or her behavior on you, other people, and/or the completion of a task.

We give feedback all the time. It is the method we use to change behavior, improve performance, deal with stress, and enrich relationships.

To be helpful, feedback intends to (a) motivate the receiver to continue effective behavior; (b) supply information that will help solve a problem; (c) enable the person to become more effective. The feedback process is a mutual exchange in which some level of trust is established, the recipient of the feedback is open to hearing and receiving the input, and the feedback giver is intending to be helpful.

Good feedback is analogous to holding up a mirror so that individuals can see themselves as others see them. This can help them learn how their actions have been affecting others. The feedback giver offers perceptions and describes feelings in a nonjudgmental manner, so that the recipient can use what they find appropriate for change.

GUIDELINES FOR GIVING FEEDBACK:

1. *Examine your own motives.* Be sure your intention is to be helpful. “Create in me a clean heart, O God.”
2. *Consider the receiver’s readiness to hear your feedback.* Feedback is most useful when someone seeks it, rather than when it is volunteered.
3. *Give feedback promptly.* Feedback close to the event has a better chance for being concrete, “in the moment,” and accessible.
4. *Be descriptive rather than evaluative.* Use your best pastoral care skills to name the reality, as Angeles Arrien says, “without blame or judgment.” (Example: “You interrupted me and that frustrates me, because I lose track” is descriptive; “You were rude” is evaluative.)
5. *Deal in specifics, not generalities.* Global statements do not help in identifying the specificity of the behavior. (Example: “You interrupted me when I was reviewing...” rather than “You try to hog all the air time.”)
6. *Offer feedback, do not try to impose it.* Feedback is ultimately a gift that a person can choose to explore, change, or ignore. The one giving the feedback must remain unattached to the outcome.
7. *Offer feedback in a spirit of tentativeness.* Feedback is one person’s experience—that of the one giving the feedback. It is truth as that person experiences it. One person’s experience is not ultimate truth, so the humility of acknowledging that goes a long way with the one hearing and receiving the feedback.
8. *Be open to receiving feedback yourself.* The process of feedback works best when it is mutual.
9. *Avoid overload.* Discern what is most important, helpful, and which behavior lies within the ability of the receiver to change. Acknowledging your own care for the receiver helps in monitoring overload.

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

1. Listen carefully.
2. Try to not become defensive; mentally note questions or areas that need clarification.
3. Paraphrase what you hear.
4. Ask questions for clarification and request examples if the information is unclear or if you disagree. Paraphrase the answers you receive.
5. Carefully evaluate the accuracy of the information and its potential value.
6. Gather additional information from other sources or by observing your behavior and others’ reaction to it.

*Adapted from materials from the Center for Creative Leadership (1988), and from A.R. Cohen, et al., *Effective Behavior in Organizations*, 4th ed. Homewood, IL: Irwin, 1988, p. 292.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR THREADED DISCUSSION POSTINGS (Topics 1 & 2)

Introduction

10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0
Very Effective: introduces main points; explains questions and topics to be addressed; ends with thesis statement; provides needed context.	Generally effective but some problems: weak thesis statement; unfocused problem or contribution statement; unclear or tensionless thesis statement; need more cues about direction and purpose of contribution.	Ineffective: may lack thesis statement; may fail to provide initial context or focus; unclear problem or thesis or contribution to the discussion; reader has no cues about the direction and purpose of the contribution.

Overall quality of ideas and argument

30 27 24	21 18 15 12	9 6 3 0
Overall argument is effective and clear; strong thesis; original or challenging insight; effective evidence and support; appropriate complexity of thought; anticipates others' views.	Generally clear and effective; some problems- some lack of clarity; less original or fewer original insights; occasional gaps in evidence or reasoning; may neglect alternative views	Frequently unclear or ineffective; significant gaps in reasoning or evidence; ideas undeveloped; thin or superficial, little or no attention to alternative views

Names your own experience

30 27 24	21 18 15 12	9 6 3 0
Clearly reflects your own experience; uses "I" statements without blaming or judging others' experience; demonstrates reflection on the experience with some original images, concrete description, attention to both sensate detail and feelings during the experience; respect for confidentiality as appropriate; obvious and coherent connection of your experience to the topic you are addressing.	Generally rooted in your experience but some problems in naming your own reality through some generalizations, some potential blaming or judging words or phrases. Less rooted in your own description of sensate detail, images or metaphors that may be more global and less original, or communicative of your experience. Less connection of your experience to the topic you are addressing.	Frequently expressed in generalities; uses global statements that include others' experiences rather than your own; not as reflective of your concrete experience; little or no connection to the topic you are addressing; may contain more judgment, blame or arrogance in the text.

Relates to the research, reading, faculty presentations, and peer conversations

30 27 24	21 18 15 12	9 6 3 0
Very effective: relates your experience to the reading of the course, the faculty presentations and the peer exchanges. Demonstrates original synthesis; well-organized; good management of old and new information; effective transitions; points are effectively developed and supported with evidence; reader doesn't get lost; good use of sources; appropriate amount of relying on others' points of view to support your thesis.	Generally effective: at times relates your experience to the reading, the faculty presentations, and the peer exchange. May omit one or another of these research sources. Synthesis less comprehensive, or original. Reader occasionally gets lost because of confused organization, unfocused paragraphs, or weak transitions. Textual support may be weak or thin, or may rely on too long quotes.	Ineffective with over-emphasis on personal experience or on stringing too many experts' quotes together. Reader often lost because of organizational problems. Lack of effective textual detail, little or no synthesis. Frequent violation of grammatical rules.

Name: _____

Grade: _____

GRADING RUBRIC FOR RESPONSES TO POSTINGS

Introduction

10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0
Very Effective: introduces main points; explains questions and topics to be addressed; ends with thesis statement; provides needed context. Demonstrates understanding of the posting to which you are responding; furthers the discussion.	Generally effective but some problems: weak thesis statement; unfocused problem or contribution statement; unclear or tensionless thesis statement; need more cues about direction and purpose of contribution. Less clear about the connection of your response to the initial posting.	Ineffective: may lack thesis statement; may fail to provide initial context or focus; unclear problem or thesis or contribution to the discussion; reader has no cues about the direction and purpose of the contribution. Very unclear about why you are responding to this posting.

Overall quality of ideas and argument

30 27 24	21 18 15 12	9 6 3 0
Overall argument is effective and clear; strong thesis; original or challenging insight; effective evidence and support; appropriate complexity of thought; anticipates others' views. Clear connection to previous responses and initial posting.	Generally clear and effective; some problems- some lack of clarity; less original or fewer original insights; occasional gaps in evidence or reasoning; may neglect alternative views. Generally clear connection to previous responses and initial posting.	Frequently unclear or ineffective; significant gaps in reasoning or evidence; ideas undeveloped; thin or superficial, little or no attention to alternative views. Unclear connection to previous responses and initial posting.

Names your own experience

30 27 24	21 18 15 12	9 6 3 0
Clearly reflects your own experience; uses "I" statements without blaming or judging others' experience; demonstrates reflection on the experience with some original images, concrete description, attention to both sensate detail and feelings during the experience; respect for confidentiality as appropriate; obvious and coherent connection of your experience to the topic you are addressing. Clear connection to previous responses and initial posting.	Generally rooted in your experience but some problems in naming your own reality through some generalizations, some potential blaming or judging words or phrases. Less rooted in your own description of sensate detail, images or metaphors that may be more global and less original, or communicative of your experience. Less connection of your experience to the topic you are addressing. Less clear connection to previous responses and initial posting.	Frequently expressed in generalities; uses global statements that include others' experiences rather than your own; not as reflective of your concrete experience; little or no connection to the topic you are addressing; may contain more judgment, blame or arrogance in the text. Unclear connection to previous responses and initial posting.

Relates to the research, reading, faculty presentations, and peer conversations

30 27 24	21 18 15 12	9 6 3 0
Very effective: relates your experience to the reading of the course, the faculty presentations and the peer exchanges. Demonstrates original synthesis; well-organized; good management of old and new information; effective transitions; points are effectively developed and supported with evidence; reader doesn't get lost; good use of sources; appropriate amount of relying on others' points of view to support your thesis. Clear connection to previous responses and initial posting.	Generally effective: at times relates your experience to the reading, the faculty presentations, and the peer exchange. May omit one or another of these research sources. Synthesis less comprehensive, or original. Reader occasionally gets lost because of confused organization, unfocused paragraphs, or weak transitions. Textual support may be weak or thin, or may rely on too long quotes. Less clear connection to previous responses and initial posting.	Ineffective with over-emphasis on personal experience or on stringing too many experts' quotes together. Reader often lost because of organizational problems. Lack of effective textual detail, little or no synthesis. Frequent violation of grammatical rules. Unclear connection to previous responses and initial posting.

Name: _____

Grade: _____

GRADING RUBRIC FOR FINAL PAPER

Introduction

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Very Effective: introduces main points; explains questions and topics to be addressed; ends with thesis statement; provides needed context.			Generally effective but some problems: weak thesis statement; unfocused problem or contribution statement; unclear or tensionless thesis statement; need more cues about direction and purpose of contribution.				Ineffective: may lack thesis statement; may fail to provide initial context or focus; unclear problem or thesis or contribution to the discussion; reader has no cues about the direction and purpose of the contribution.			

Overall quality of ideas and argument

30	27	24	21	18	15	12	9	6	3	0
Overall argument is effective and clear; strong thesis; original or challenging insight; effective evidence and support; appropriate complexity of thought; anticipates others' views.			Generally clear and effective; some problems- some lack of clarity; less original or fewer original insights; occasional gaps in evidence or reasoning; may neglect alternative views				Frequently unclear or ineffective; significant gaps in reasoning or evidence; ideas undeveloped; thin or superficial, little or no attention to alternative views			

Names your own experience

30	27	24	21	18	15	12	9	6	3	0
Clearly reflects your own experience; uses "I" statements without blaming or judging others' experience; demonstrates reflection on the experience with some original images, concrete description, attention to both sensate detail and feelings during the experience; respect for confidentiality as appropriate; obvious and coherent connection of your experience to the topic you are addressing.			Generally rooted in your experience but some problems in naming your own reality through some generalizations, some potential blaming or judging words or phrases. Less rooted in your own description of sensate detail, images or metaphors that may be more global and less original, or communicative of your experience. Less connection of your experience to the topic you are addressing.				Frequently expressed in generalities; uses global statements that include others' experiences rather than your own; not as reflective of your concrete experience; little or no connection to the topic you are addressing; may contain more judgment, blame or arrogance in the text.			

Relates to the research, reading, faculty presentations, and peer conversations

30	27	24	21	18	15	12	9	6	3	0
Very effective: relates your experience to the reading of the course, the faculty presentations and the peer exchanges. Demonstrates original synthesis; well-organized; good management of old and new information; effective transitions; points are effectively developed and supported with evidence; reader doesn't get lost; good use of sources; appropriate amount of relying on others' points of view to support your thesis.			Generally effective: at times relates your experience to the reading, the faculty presentations, and the peer exchange. May omit one or another of these research sources. Synthesis less comprehensive, or original. Reader occasionally gets lost because of confused organization, unfocused paragraphs, or weak transitions. Textual support may be weak or thin, or may rely on too long quotes.				Ineffective with over-emphasis on personal experience or on stringing too many experts' quotes together. Reader often lost because of organizational problems. Lack of effective textual detail, little or no synthesis. Frequent violation of grammatical rules.			

Name: _____

Grade: _____