Workplaces have changed in fundamental ways over the last few decades. One of the most significant changes is the enormous growth in teamwork, employee involvement, communication, and other forms of “empowerment.” This course will examine the interpersonal dynamics and effects of these developments: how they are experienced in daily work.

We will study strategies to create effective teamwork and factors that affect team formation and functioning. To do so, we will read academic and industry writing on these topics, and explore issues through case studies and real-life events.

Because our objective is to understand team functioning, there will be significant in-class and group work in addition to lecture and discussion. Each week you will engage in online individual writing and team discussions or tasks. You will also complete a team case analysis and a team research presentation.

Grading will be based on the team projects, online individual and team assignments, a midterm and final, in-class team workshops, and lecture attendance.
Learning Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

i. Display the ability to structure team projects and work productively in teams
ii. Display the competence in diagnosing team performance problems using appropriate theories and models
iii. Display an understanding of how social status affects team functioning
iv. Display an understanding of effective groups in simulations and discussions
v. Display an understanding of fundamental social science theories, and concepts relating to the dynamics of work teams, including the necessary conditions for effective cooperation and motivation
vi. Display a proficiency in written and oral communication

Course Breakdown

Workshop participation and lecture attendance (35% of grade) Everyone is expected to participate in class. This requires being present in class. Students can learn best by actively engaging with material from course rather than memorizing names and concepts. This includes asking as many questions as are needed to understand the material, and working through the implications of new ideas. Participation includes asking questions or making comments in class, facilitating small group work, and participating in team activities. If you’re wondering about something, it’s likely there are other students who don’t fully understand either. There are no stupid questions! Discussion is a way to experiment with ideas.

Exams (35% of grade) There will be a cumulative, in-class final exam. You will choose to answer 20-25 questions, and short-answer essays of a concept or practice.

Assignments (30% of grade) Each week, you will be required to submit a short report—One-page, single-spaced, font size 12, Times New Roman—of one of the assigned readings. These reports should describe the takeaways from the literature. You must also include your thoughts on the readings (e.g., whether you disagree with the literature / why, etc.)
Course Format & Policies

This course requires regular attendance: there will be considerable group work and open discussion during class. You are expected to attend all classes with your teams. If you expect to miss lecture, be sure to use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Absences with good cause will be excused, but must be discussed with me in a timely manner. Be sure to contact me well in advance of a due date or exam if you foresee difficulties. More than one unexcused absences may have an impact on your overall grade.

Course Readings

All course materials will be available for download from the online class site. There will typically be 20-40 pages of reading each week.

All readings and assignments for each week can be found on the class Sakai page in the “Resources” section. Every week before class, students must complete individual (and sometimes group) work. Failure to fully engage with the weekly assignments in a timely manner will result in partial or complete loss of credit for the week.

Phase I Personal and Interpersonal Team Skills

July 7: Introductions
The syllabus

July 9: Personality Types and Group Roles Reading:
✓ Myers, Isabel Briggs. 1980. Introduction to Type (abridged).
✓ Student Learning Style Inventory 48A

July 14: Emotional Intelligence Reading:
✓ Greiner, Larry E. and Elizabeth Collins. 2008. “A Day in the Life of Alex Sanger: Driving in the Fast Lane at Landon Care Products.”
July 16: Addressing Assumption & Inference Reading:
✓ “Mac’s Two-Column Case.”
   http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~kbrown/F2250%20Webpages/mac%27s_case.html

July 21: Negotiation Reading (Virtual Lecture):

July 23: Double-Loop Learning Reading (Virtual Lecture):

Phase II Facing Team Challenges & Achieving Team Goals

July 28: In-Person and Virtual Team Norms and Productivity Reading:

July 30: Team Norms and Inequality Reading:

August 4: Difference and Inclusion Reading (Virtual Lecture):

August 6: Leadership Reading:
✓ Ancona, Deborah and Elaine Backman. n.d. “Distributed Leadership: Initial Framing.”

August 11: Group Problem Solving Reading:
Power Light Quality Improvement Story Exercise.”
✓ PDCA (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_89.htm)
✓ 5 Whys (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_5W.htm)
✓ Root Cause Analysis (http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_80.htm)

August 13: FINAL EXAM