FAC125 Collaborative and Interpersonal Communications

## Case Study 2

The dean of student affairs at your college has become sensitive about reports from students that the activities scheduled for orientation week each year are silly. Specifically, students have been reacting to two of the dean’s favorite activities at the first orientation mixer: a pass-the-orange-under-your-chin race and a find-your-own-shoes-in-the-middle-of-the-room relay race. Students claim to feel undignified during these activities. They feel they are being treated more as children than as adults. Bewildered, the dean remembers how much the class of 2021 enjoyed these activities and is at a loss about what to do. Therefore, the dean appoints a group of students to rethink the matter. You are one of those students.

The committee is composed mostly of juniors and seniors. The dean thinks they have been around long enough to “know the ropes.” As president-elect of next year’s sophomore class, you are the youngest of the six committee members. The chairperson is a graduating senior.

You arrive at the first meeting ready to work. The committee is to plan activities that are “more closely aligned with the needs of today’s college men and women.” You are excited about being a part of a decision-making process that will have a real effect. To your dismay, the other members of the group seem to disregard their task and spend the meeting discussing the prospects for the e-sports team, hardly mentioning orientation-week activities for next fall. You leave the meeting confused but hopeful that the next meeting will be more fruitful. You resolve to take a more active role and to try to steer the meeting more toward the committee’s task.

At the second meeting, you suggest that the committee discuss orientation week. Members concur, then make jokes about past orientation-week activities. When the chairperson makes no effort to keep the group on track, you feel overwhelmed and bewildered. You know that the dean expects a report within a week.

Questions:

1. What are the important factors of the team members’ behavior that are causing your unease?
   1. Everybody is distracted and nobody is willing to take initiative to get everyone back on track.
   2. Too much joking around makes the atmosphere hard to get meaningful planning done
2. If you were really in this situation, what would you do?
   1. We would talk to the dean, try and get them to make the rest of the group shut up and be on task, if the dean fails us we would cry and do the work ourselves