

Teamwork in Organizations: MGT 6106
Georgia Institute of Technology

Class Sessions:

Thursdays 4:30-7:30pm

Scheller College of Business, **Room 223**

Professor:

Dr. Jennifer Carson Marr

Office: Scheller College of Business, Room 451

Phone: 404.894.1745

E-mail: Jennifer.marr@scheller.gatech.edu

Office hours: By appointment.

Course Description

Working in teams is an integral part of organizational life. The purpose of this course is to prepare you to succeed as an effective leader, manager and member of teams. As such, this course will introduce you to the important theories, concepts and frameworks that can be used to successfully identify the threats and opportunities teams face and improve team outcomes. It will also provide you with opportunities to design effective teams, implement effective team processes and practice leading and managing teams. Class sessions will be comprised of interactive discussions, group activities, and case studies in order to highlight key applications of team research and to practice team leadership skills.

By the time this course is complete, you should:

- Apply concepts, theories and research on team effectiveness to critically analyze group processes and outcomes;
- Improve their team leadership skills, including those related to communication, decision-making, and conflict management;
- Actively engage in self-reflection of their own personalities, skills, and experiences as important and relevant predictors of their effectiveness as leaders of teams in organizations; and,
- Develop confidence as a team leader, knowing that leadership happens everywhere in organizations (not just at the top) and that long-term effectiveness as a manager depends on the ability to lead others.

Course Materials

The readings, cases and simulation used in this course are available from Harvard Business Publishing. You will need to register and follow the prompts to purchase and download the materials.

Articles: <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/38237871>

Cases: <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/38238192>

Course Format

The course is primarily experiential. It involves working in different teams each session. Every student should lead a team at least once during the term. Following these team activities, we will debrief the performance of the leader and team by engaging in self-examination and feedback.

Course Evaluation

Grades will be computed by weighing your scores on each component of the course as follows:

- 1) Participation – 30%
- 2) Team Case Presentation – 10%
- 3) Team Final Project (Report, Presentation and Learning Assignments) – 35%
- 4) Individual Final Assignment - 25%

- 1) Participation (30%). Participation in this course is not only key to achieving your learning objectives but also essential for us to have fun in class! As such, you will be expected to attend all classes, contribute to class discussions with quality questions and comments, and provide insightful feedback to one another after class exercises. All of these will be monitored and graded on a class by class basis. Your participation is worth 30% of your grade and will be assessed in the following ways:
 - a) Attendance (10%). You cannot learn from this class if you do not attend. Therefore, this class has an attendance policy. If you need to miss a class for a legitimate reason (e.g., illness, or religious holiday) please email the professor at least 3 hours before class, so that teams can be rearranged for class exercises, if necessary. Unexcused absences result in a 1 point deduction from your 10 point participation grade for each half class you miss. It is also critical that you come to class on time. Team activities will often take place at the beginning of each class. I will reassign teams at the last minute if you are late. It is not fair to your team-mates to enter a discussion late.
 - b) General class contribution (10%). You are expected to come to class prepared (i.e., having completed the required content and case readings) to contribute to class discussion. You will be evaluated on the quality (not just quantity) of your contributions and insights. Please note that behaviors that detract from your contribution to the class (e.g., checking phone, surfing internet, talking while others are speaking) will negatively impact your contribution grade. Expect to talk in each class session and be prepared that I may “cold call”. If you are not prepared for a specific class please let me know in advance. Quality comments should:
 - Offer a unique and relevant perspective,
 - Contribute to moving the analysis forward,
 - Build on the comments of others,
 - Go beyond the "I feel" comment to include some evidence or logic, and
 - Not go off on tangents.
 - c) Providing peer feedback (10%). After each exercise/case, you will be asked to reflect and provide written feedback for the team and its leader. This feedback sheet will be the basis for debriefing the exercises and case analyses in your teams. I will also collect and evaluate these sheets based on the quality of feedback you provide your peers. Criteria for evaluating these reflection papers are the same as for evaluating your class contribution. For example, written reflections should go beyond vague comments like ‘good job’; rather, they should incorporate specific leader behaviors that affected the group’s experience and key takeaways about how the group worked together.
- 2) Team Case Presentations (10%). Your team will be asked to make a 15 minute presentation of a case. Each team member must participate in this presentation. You will be graded on:
 - a. Description of the situation and context (30 points)

- b. Analysis of the case/exercise (40 points)
 - c. Conclusions/recommendations (20 points)
 - d. Structure and style of presentation (10 points)
- 3) Team Final Project (35%). The objectives of the Final Team Project are to demonstrate that you have mastered and can build upon the concepts learned in this class.

For the Team Final Project you and your assigned team will analyze a real-world team of your choosing. This can be a team that one of your members has prior experience with, or it can be a team you have identified independently. Your student team should work directly with the real-world team to identify a specific problem or opportunity in their work towards which you can leverage the material and learning from this course. The project should focus on analyzing the team and developing feasible prescriptions for their work going forward.

There are three components to the Final Project including: a) report, b) presentation and c) learning assignments.

- a) Team Final Project Report (20%). Written report (10 pages max) detailing your project including: description of the context, identification of the problem, methods used by your team to investigate, and your team's diagnosis and recommendations. The report should also include a brief analysis of how your team worked together and what you might have done differently. (due Thursday Nov 12th)
 - b) Team Final Project Presentation (10%). In class, you and your team will give a brief professional presentation explaining the problem you examined and outlining a concrete plan of recommendations. During the presentation, the presenters will role play team consultants and the class will role play the team receiving the feedback. (Thursday Nov 12th)
 - c) Team Learning Assignments (5%). As a group that will be working together throughout the semester, you will be asked to participate in a number of group activities designed to facilitate more effective teamwork. Specifically, you will be asked to develop and turn in:
 - A team contract (due Sept 10th, in class)
 - 1 page final project proposal (due Oct 8th, in class)
 - Peer evaluations (due Nov 12th, 10pm)
- 4) Individual Final Assignment (25%). You will complete a take-home final assignment. The assignment will be handed out in-class on TBD. (due Thursday December 3rd, 7:30pm)

Extra Credit (2% bonus). You can earn up to two extra credit points in the course by bringing in (or emailing) examples of team and organizational leadership that relate to class material from the popular press, movies, magazines, short stories, etc. To get full credit, please bring me a description of the example and a brief write-up of the team concept it illustrates. You can earn one extra-credit point for each example that you turn in. These points will be added to your final grade (based on 100 points). Extra credit will not be accepted after Monday December 7th.

Guidelines for Disputing a Grade

If you wish to dispute a grade on an assignment, please do the following within one week of receiving the grade in question:

1. Send me a written statement describing the issue you have with your grade.
2. Indicate specific questions/items which you would like me to consider, and back up your claims with specific notes, page numbers, cites, etc.

If you follow this procedure, I will re-grade your assignment. Be prepared, however, that re-grading may result in an upward or downward adjustment of your grade.

Academic Dishonesty

As a student of this course you acknowledge that you are a member of a learning community at Georgia Tech that is committed to the highest academic standards. As a member of this community, you agree to uphold the fundamental standards of honesty, respect, and integrity, and you accept the responsibility to encourage others to adhere to these standards.

This means that students will not engage in activities like plagiarism, multiple submissions (submitting a paper for credit to more than one class), cheating on exams, or collaborating on individual assignments. Please see the Academic Honor Code <http://www.osi.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=46#II> for more information. In short, academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated in any form and will result in a zero grade on the assignment and could result in more severe penalties as allowed by University policy.

Example Schedule

On the next page you will find an example of the schedule for the term. Because the time to cover a topic varies, we make adjustments as we go along, based on our progress throughout the semester.

MGT 6106: Week At-A-Glance

Week 1	Introduction	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday August 20 th	Introduction		
	What are teams? Exercise: Lego man	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The discipline of teams Leading Teams Why some teams are smarter than others http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/18/opinion/sunday/why-some-teams-are-smarter-than-others.html?_r=0 	
Week 2	Leading Teams	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday August 27 th	What do leaders do?	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What Leaders Really Do 	
	Leadership Styles Exercise: Tower Building	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership that gets results. <u>For fun:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Games of Thrones' leadership lessons for the office http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2015/05/04/game-of-thrones-leadership-lessons-for-the-office/ 	
	Team Final Project: Introductory meeting		In-class: exchange contact details and discuss meeting schedule with team members.
Week 3	Designing Teams	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday September 3 rd	Setting objectives and Team Composition	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting virtual teams right. <u>For fun:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Teamwork lessons from the Iditarod http://www.foxbusiness.com/business-leaders/2015/03/06/4-teamwork-lessons-from-itarod/ 	

	Motivation	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Motivation <u>For fun:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sales director who turned work into a fantasy sports competition. https://hbr.org/2015/03/the-sales-director-who-turned-work-into-a-fantasy-sports-competition 	
--	------------	--	--

Week 4	Rewarding Teams	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday September 10 th	Rewarding team performance	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why team bonuses are more effective. http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/on-leadership/wp/2015/02/24/why-team-bonuses-are-more-effective/ Massive bonuses might cause poor performance. New York Times. http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/04/business/worldbusiness/04iht-04Forbes-bonus.20589946.html?_r=1 <u>For fun:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most popular employee perks of 2014 http://www.forbes.com/sites/kateharrison/2014/02/19/the 	Hand in individual results from personality test . http://personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/5j/PIPIPIPIPneo120.htm
	Team Final Project Meeting: Team Contract		Team Contract Due at End of Class

Week 5	Team Norms and Culture	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday September 17 th	Culture and Norms	<u>Case reading (handed out in-class in Week 4)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three-Hour Tour. Please read pages 1-4 	
	Exercise: Three Hour Tour		
	Culture and Norms	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be Clear About How Your Team Works 	

Week 6	Team Personality	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday September 24 th	Team Personality	No readings.	
	Team Final Project Meeting: Prepare Project Proposal		

Week 7	Team Decision-Making	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday October 1 st	Simulation: Mount Everest	<i>You will receive instructions in Week 6 for how to prepare for this simulation.</i>	

Week 8	Team Decision-Making	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday October 8 th	Mount Everest Debrief	<u>Content Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • **Mulvey, P. W., Veiga, J. F., & Elsass, P. M. (1996). When teammates raise a white flag. <i>Academy Of Management Executive</i>, 10(1), 40-49. • When those who know won't share http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/business/when-those-who-know-wont-share.html 	Team Final Project Proposal Due at Beginning of Class (1 page)
	Decision-making: Brainstorming Exercise: IdeaCorp	<u>Content Readings:</u> Groupthink: The brainstorming myth. New Yorker. http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/01/30/120130fa_fact_lehrer	

Week 9	Team Trust	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday October 15 th	Case: Team That Wasn't	<u>Case reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team That Wasn't (HBR Case Study). 	
	Team Final Project Meeting	No readings.	

Week 10	Team Conflict	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday October 22 nd	Conflict Exercise: Conflict Role Play	**Not in course pack. Available online from GT Library (http://www.library.gatech.edu/). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • **Brockmann, E. (1996). Removing the paradox of conflict from group decisions. <i>Academy Of Management Executive</i>, 10(2), 61-62. 	
	Case: Henry Tam and MGI Team	<u>Case reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Tam and MGI Team (HBS Case). <u>Content Reading:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • **Braun, C. (1997). Organizational infidelity: How violations of trust affect the employee-employer relationship. <i>Academy Of Management Executive</i>, 11(4), 94-95. 	

Week 11	Team Diversity and Creativity	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday October 29 th	Diversity and Creativity Exercise: Five Tricks	Content Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to Kill a Team's Creativity Want Teamwork? Encourage Free Speech http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/13/jobs/want-teamwork-encourage-free-speech.html Overcome your biases and build a great team. https://hbr.org/2014/12/overcome-your-biases-and-build-a-great-team 	
	Team Final Project Meeting	No readings.	
Week 12	Team Learning and Coaching	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday November 5 th	Learning and Coaching	Case reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should this team be saved (HBS Case)? 	
		Content Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation and Learning in Teams: The Challenges = the Benefits. How to be the Best Coach for Your Team 	
Week 13	Final Project Presentations	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday November 12 th	Presentations	No readings.	Team Final Project Report Team Member Evaluation
Week 14	Team Wrap Up	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday November 19 th	Exercise: C-Suite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why Some Teams Succeed (and So Many Don't) 	
	Team Member Evaluations Summary & Bonus Assignments		
Week 15		Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday November 26 th	THANKSGIVING NO CLASS TODAY		

Week 16	Final Assignment	Readings	Assignments Due Today
Thursday December 3 rd	Final Assignment		Individual Final Assignment