Welcome to Communication Studies 120 Small Group Communication - Hybrid at College of the Canyons. I am excited to guide you through the principles and practices of effective group communication. The skills you learn in this course will serve you well in other courses, at work, in life events, and in many contexts of human interaction.

My name is Kerry Osborne, and I look forward to meeting you in person on the first day of class. Failure to attend the first class meeting, regardless of the circumstances, results in an automatic drop.

Your attendance at every class meeting is required to pass this course. Check the meeting dates in the schedule of classes. If you have a conflict, you must clear it or drop the class now. There is no accommodation for absences in a hybrid course with only five meetings. **N.B.** Arriving late/leaving early entails missing class and is not permitted. You must also be available between meetings for full online participation. Work commitments, family events, vacations, etc., that prevent you from participating fully in the course will result in an instructor drop. You need to completely clear your calendar to succeed in this class.

In our first class meeting, I will provide you with your syllabus and instructions for acquiring your textbook and accessing your course materials. Please do not pay for a textbook until we meet.

Four of our class meetings will cover the course fundamentals in lecture, discussion, and activities. You will work with your term group in the activities in those meetings. The final meeting will be a presentation day, in which each group will present its term project. There will be two online exams, which I will explain in detail in our first class meeting.

**Very important:** This is a Community-Based Learning course, which means your project requires civic contribution at an approved partner or agency. The typical strategy is to volunteer at least one time at your chosen agency, then base your presentation on that cause, using your experience as the heart of your term project. Alternatives to this approach must be negotiated on a group basis after our first class meeting when the term groups are formed.

**MATERIALS:** “WHERE DO I BUY THE BOOK?” Your textbook is available in print and digital formats, for purchase or rent. I will give you details in class.

You will also need to access our course in Canvas, COC’s course management system. You are automatically enrolled in our Canvas course when you register for the class. I will give a brief Canvas tutorial in our first class meeting.
REQUIREMENTS: DO YOU HAVE WHAT YOU NEED?

TECHNOLOGY:

- You need a computer with Internet access that you can use regularly, almost daily, and for as long as you need. If you do not have what you need at home, you can use the computers on campus or perhaps in a local library. You can use multiple computers – you do not need to be on the same computer each time you log in to the course. The key here is that you have enough time on a computer, often enough, to participate fully in the course and complete all the assignments and exams.

You do not need the “latest and greatest.” Your computer should meet the following requirements:

  PC - Pentium IV Processor, 800 MHz or higher, 1 GB MB RAM, a sound card, 8X DVD-ROM drive or higher, 40 GB hard disk or larger
  or
  MAC - Apple Macintosh G3, 1 GB MB RAM, sound card, 8X DVD-ROM, 40 GB hard disk or higher, OS X or higher

- You need software as follows:

  Internet Browser with JAVA, Flash enabled
  (e.g., Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Chrome),
  Word Processing application that creates .pdf files
  Adobe Acrobat Reader 8.0 or higher
  Multimedia software that plays video and audio files
  (e.g., Windows Media Player, QuickTime Player)

- You need proficiency as follows:

  Use of web browser software, including configuration of browser preferences for security, printing, and other advanced settings. This sounds a bit daunting, but it refers to such things as knowing how to modify the options in case you can’t see or print a web page, a video isn’t playing in the web page, etc.

  E-mail sending, receiving, forwarding, saving, printing, attaching files, and retrieving attachments. **N.B.** I send frequent e-mail messages, and only to your COC e-mail address, so you need to check your COC e-mail at least once daily.

  Use of web-based communication tools, such as discussion forums, chat, and webinars. (You will have most of these tools in Canvas.)

  Word processing software including creating, modifying, saving, retrieving and designing files, with complete control over font color and size, page layout and orientation, margins, tabs, bullet lists, hyperlinks, and media file insertions.

  Troubleshooting and getting assistance. Online students must know where to go, and have the impetus to do so immediately, when outside assistance is needed. “I couldn’t log in [upload my file, find my document, see the video, etc.]” are never acceptable assignment replacements in an online course. All resources have support, and online students must be proficient and expedient at obtaining support when needed. I am not your Technical Support resource.
**Scholarship:**

- **Self-starter** – online classes are quite different from on-ground classes. Many classroom students are passive learners. They wait for learning to “come” to them. Students who avoid being called on, neglect to read ahead for class, sit mute during class discussions, and otherwise remain inactive will not succeed in this hybrid class. Online students are not “called on,” nor is there the possibility of being “passed over” in discussions and activities. Online class participation is proactive.

- **Disciplined, especially at time management** – it is simply not possible to fall behind, and then scramble to catch up in this hybrid course. Failing to meet deadlines is the equivalent of failing to take the class, and too many missed deadlines result in an instructor drop or a failing grade (see syllabus for specific deadlines and policies.) Only students who can discipline themselves to participate regularly and frequently should consider taking this online course.

- **Comfortable with working outside a classroom environment** – most of this course occurs asynchronously. On-ground students often express a need for immediate, face-to-face interaction with the instructor and classmates, to maximize their learning potential. If the thought of an online class makes you feel empowered by your control over time, location, distractions, etc., you might be a great candidate for a hybrid course. If the whole idea makes you feel isolated and unsupported, you might not want to stay in this class. (Do keep in mind that there are synchronous tools available. If you just think you might need to “chat” with students sometimes, see if you can encourage classmates to form “chat” groups.)

- **Writing proficiency.** You need to be both comfortable expressing yourself almost entirely in writing, and proficient at writing with regard to grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Are you permitted to drop the occasional smiley into a discussion board post? Certainly. Does spelling, grammar, and punctuation “count?” Oh, yes, it does. I don’t expect perfection, but I do expect college-level skills in all submissions, including discussion posts.

**DID I SCARE YOU AWAY?**

I hope not. Now that you see what you need to take the course, I hope you can make the best decision for your learning preferences and current abilities.

**IMPORTANT!!** E-mail exchanges require you to use your MyCanyons e-mail accounts. You will have to decide how you are going to access your COC e-mail, and you are going to have to be diligent in checking that e-mail frequently. COC Computer Support can help you set up your outside mail clients to process e-mail from multiple accounts if you like.

I’m looking forward to being in class with you. To contact me, e-mail me at kerry.osborne@canyons.edu. Don’t hesitate to e-mail me with any questions or comments. The mistake would be not to e-mail me. You won’t “bother” me. This is what I do.