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*Creating a Transfer Student Experience  
Course Developed within an IPE  
Curriculum using Active  
Learning & Technology*

**Diane Alonso, Ph.D.  
UMBC Psychology**



# Why?



- People work in groups/teams. Effective communication among members is important.
- Groups are often interdisciplinary. It is necessary to learn about and appreciate what these different disciplines and approaches bring to the table.
- Group members communicate both in-person and online. Technology can help teams achieve their goals, especially if the members are in different locations.





Salisbury



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UMBC



PSYCHOLOGY

COMMUNICATION  
& the iSCHOOL

# The Course

Offered in  
SU2016 at USG

Targeted for  
incoming  
transfer students

Uses F2F and  
online (hybrid)

Gets students to  
work in inter-  
disciplinary  
teams both in  
person and  
online

“Groupwork”

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graph TD; A[Offered in SU2016 at USG] --> E((Groupwork)); B[Targeted for incoming transfer students] --> E; C[Uses F2F and online (hybrid)] --> E; D[Gets students to work in interdisciplinary teams both in person and online] --> E;
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# The Team



Dr. Leah  
Waks

UMD  
COMM



Dr. Vedat  
Diker

UMD  
iSchool



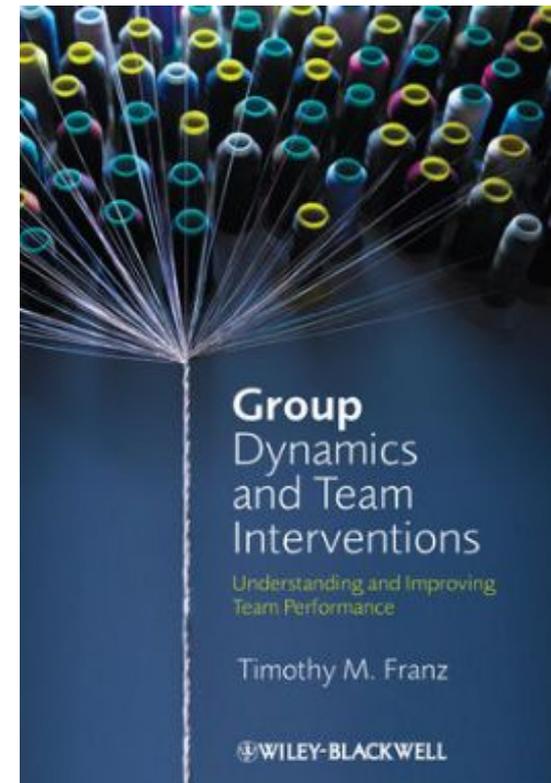
Dr. Diane  
Alonso

UMBC  
Psychology



# The Curriculum

- 6 weeks (Mondays online, Wednesdays in class)
- Assignments:
  - Pre-class readings and “Prep” tests
  - Warm-ups
  - In-Class exercises (The Moon challenge, origami crab, telephone, building a house of cards)
  - Brief lectures and in-class discussions
  - Post-class Summary Papers
  - Post-class on-line discussions
  - Team Project (incremental assignments with iterative feedback) and presentation



# The Active Learning Classroom



# The Students and The Teams

Institution	Major	
UMD	Public Health Science	
	Criminal Justice/Criminology	 
	Communication	
UMBC	Psychology	 

N = 10

Key:

Team 1 (n = 5) = 

Team 2 (n = 5) = 

# The Assessments

- A modified **Team Skills Scale (TSS)** [*Pre- and Post*]  
A self assessment tool that measures perceived interprofessional team skills. Two parts:
  - Students rate their ability to carry out each of 17 tasks on a 5-point scale.
  - Students respond to open-ended questions.
- A **Student Satisfaction survey**. [Last day only]. Two parts:
  - Students provide open-ended feedback on the course.
  - Students rate, on a 5-point scale (1 being “Not at all” and 5 being “I felt that this was covered completely”), how well they feel the course met the stated Learning Objectives from the syllabus.

# The Results: TSS

Significant findings on the following items:

- Q6 (Handle disagreements effectively):  $Z=-1.983$ ,  $p=.047$ ,  $r = .63$
- Q7 (Strengthen cooperation among disciplines):  $Z=-2.251$ ,  $p=.024$ ,  $r= .71$
- Q17 (Help draw out team members who are not participating actively in meetings):  $Z=-2.050$ ,  $p=.040$ ,  $r=.65$

## **Student Statements**

Responses to items asking: (Post-1) “What did you gain from working in teams?”, and (Post-6): “What did you learn about the role of communication and teamwork from this experience?”

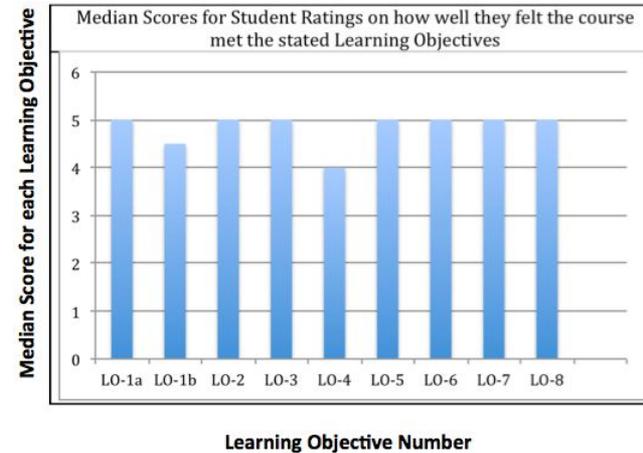
*“A lot of new ways to learn about how to work in teams, and apply them to the real-world.”*

*“Knowledge and experience on how groups function, how conflict and problems arise, and how they're overcome and the goal is accomplished.”*

*“Effective communication is VITAL for successful teamwork! Teams have to communicate goals, issues, tasks, and any questions early and often.”*

# The Results: Satisfaction Survey

- Learning Objectives: The Median scores for **all** questions were above 4.0 on a 5.0 scale (N=10). No individual scores were lower than 3.0 on any item.
- Students liked: Group project, interactive group activities, in-class activities, Bb organization, discussions
- Students didn't like: Too many assignments, wanted more time to work on group project, noted summer session was too short, confusing/difficult quiz questions, requirements for discussion board were vague
- **Usefulness:** All students responded either "Yes" or "Most Likely" to the question, "Do you think you will use the info in college? In work?"



## Final Thoughts/Quote:

*"We discussed things that are rarely if ever discussed in any of my other courses and discussed information that can really improve performance in whatever we choose to do."*

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