



**NYU**

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Building Effective Teams  
EXEC-GP 4112 & PADM-GP 4112 002  
Fall 2019**

**Instructor Information**

**Professor Patricia Satterstrom**

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Office: Puck Building, 3059

Office hours: Wednesdays, 2:30pm – 4:00pm, sign up on [Calendly](#)

(<https://calendly.com/patricia-satterstrom/prof-satterstrom-fall-2019-office-hours>)

**Course Information**

**Section Information**

Time: Fridays, September 27 and October 4, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Location: 7 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 123

Writing tutors: <https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/advisement/writing-center#>

**Course Description**

Teamwork has become the solution to just about every organizational problem: So, why do so many of us hate working in teams? This course aims to develop your ability to lead high-performing teams and to be an effective team member. We will focus on best practices for designing and launching teams and, importantly, what to do when things are not going as planned. We will discuss when and when not to use a team, as well as how to promote collaboration. Through readings, exercises, lectures, and reflection, you will also learn how to manage team processes, diversity, leadership, and problem-solving. This course will be of most value to those who have some work experience.

**Course Material**

You are expected to be prepared for class discussions and participate fully. You are encouraged to share your experiences relevant to the topics and cases we are exploring.

- [NYU Classes](http://newclasses.nyu.edu/) (<http://newclasses.nyu.edu/>): You will find the course syllabus, assignments, exercises, surveys, and slides here. If you have not activated your NYU Net ID or have forgotten your password, you can activate or change your password at [Start NYU](#) (<http://start.nyu.edu>).
- You will need to [purchase a digital course pack](https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/656641) (<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/656641>) To keep costs down, NYU Classes will have links to readings you can access from the NYU library.

- Harvard Business Review articles can be access through the NYU library. [Please watch this video on how to find articles in Harvard Business Review](#) in the NYU library.
  - Go to <https://library.nyu.edu>, click the "Journals" tab, and search for "Harvard Business Review".
  - Click the first result in BobCat, then on the next page select "EBSCOhost Business Source Complete".
  - Click "Search within this publication", then enter the article title and change the search box to search the "Title" of documents.
  - The first result should have the full text and PDF of the desired article.

### **Course Objectives**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Decide when (and when not) to use a team at work
- Launch a team project effectively, including selecting team members and managing roles and responsibilities
- Facilitate key team processes, including brainstorming, decision making, conflict management, and inclusion of diverse team members
- Identify common problems that derail teams and strategies for addressing them
- Use best practices for complex teams (e.g., teams with rotating membership or geographically distributed members)

### **Assessment and Grading Policy**

#### **Class participation (30%)**

Your active participation is critical. Productive discussion depends on reading and analyzing the materials beforehand and coming to class ready to present a diagnosis of the problems presented and possible solutions. You are expected to attend both day-long classes, have thoroughly prepared the assigned cases and readings, participate fully in small group and class discussions, and act as group spokesperson for case presentations.

Specific expectations are that you:

- \* Make valuable contributions about topics under discussion
- \* Accurately exhibit knowledge of assignment content
- \* Demonstrate excellent listening—respond appropriately to comments others make
- \* Bring up questions that need further exploration
- \* Clarify points that others may not understand
- \* Draw on personal experience or opinion when clearly relevant to class discussion
- \* Offer relevant, succinct insights and challenges to others
- \* Demonstrate ability to apply, analyze, and synthesize course material

#### **Individual assignments (30%)**

Each student will complete two individual assignments that allow you to explore your understanding and learning about teams. Please see details on these assignments below:

1. Please write a 1-page reflection (single-spaced, Times New Roman, font 12) that: (1) briefly summarizes your key learning from Day 1 of the course; (2) identifies specific behaviors you will use to make your future teams effective based on this learning; and (3) describes how you will overcome barriers to engaging in these behaviors. Please upload to NYU Classes under Assignments, “Individual Assignment 1,” by 9:00 pm on Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

2. Please write a 1-page analytical memo (single-spaced, Times New Roman, font 12) that: (1) very briefly summarizes a problem or opportunity gap you have personally faced on a group or team; (2) briefly analyzes what caused this problem or opportunity, and 3) describes your specific recommendation for addressing this problem or opportunity. Please upload to NYU Classes under Assignments, “Individual Assignment 2,” by 9:00 pm on Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Team project (40%)**

In your team project, please apply what you learned in class to one of your organizations. In five pages or less (single-spaced, 1-inch margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font), please provide a proposal to a senior member of the selected organization (e.g., CEO, manager, Dean, etc.) for how to improve team effectiveness in this organization. The proposal can be organized like a memo.

This proposal should include:

- A brief summary paragraph of the problem (e.g., teams that did not meet their targets) or opportunity (e.g., use teams for a new project) related to teams that exist in your organization. You can discuss a past or present organization. Please specify your level of analysis: all teams in the organization, teams in one division, or a particular team.
- Using the frameworks, readings, and discussions from class, please identify the root causes of the problem or explain why you think there’s an opportunity to use teams in a new way. You can use an approach similar to those we covered in class. For example, what was going on at the individual, team, and organizational levels? Were people under a performance/proving mindset instead of a learning mindset? Why? Were teams launched? If not, why not? Were personality, cognitive, leadership style, and/or demographic differences raised and productively used? Was the team creative? Why not?
- Apply any of the concepts you learned in class to suggest how you might address these problems or craft teams to effectively address a new opportunity. What are your specific recommendations? Reasoning? Alternatives? How should your recommendations be implemented? What are the priorities? For example, how and when should poorly performing team be relaunched? How can you teams in your organization better use diversity? How can you foster creativity?

Please use paragraph headings where appropriate. Explain your reasoning clearly, succinctly, and convincingly. When you present your recommendations, make sure they are realistic and take the individuals, context, and timing into account (e.g., short-term versus long-term actions). You can include exercises, pictures, or figures as an appendix that will not count towards your page count. Please upload to NYU Classes under Assignments, “Team Project,” by 9:00 pm on Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.

## Course Policies

### Attendance.

You should arrive to class on time. Since the class only meets on two days, absences will result in an incomplete grade.

### Late assignments.

Extensions will be granted only in case of an emergency, out of respect for those who abide by deadlines despite hectic schedules. Late submissions without prior permission will be penalized by 1/3 a letter grade per day (e.g., from A to A-).

### Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

### NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

### Statement of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If you are unsure about what is expected and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

### Pre-work

**Due Monday, September 23, at 5:00 pm**

Myers Briggs Assessment

<http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp#questionnaire>

Leadership Style Assessment:

Exercise PDF & Scoring PDF in *NYU Classes*

Survey

[Building Effective Teams Introductory Survey:](#)

([https://nyu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bftcBfifxJbKRaR](https://nyu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bftcBfifxJbKRaR)). Please input your assessment results.

## Day 1: Foundations of Teams (September 27, 2019)

Please prepare in the order presented in the syllabus; bring your notes for discussion.

<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Introduction to the course</b>
<b>Topics</b>	Course goals; factors that make teams effective
<b>Reading</b>	Snook, S. & Polzer, J. (2004). Army Crew Team. Harvard Business School Case. 9-403-131. <i>In course pack.</i>
<b>Discussion questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Why does the Varsity team lose to the JV team?</li><li>2. At the end of the case, what action should Coach P. take on Tuesday?</li></ol>
<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Best-practices for building high-performing teams</b>
<b>Topics</b>	When to use and not use teams; conditions for creating effective teams
<b>Reading 1</b>	Leonard, D., & Straus, S. (1997). Putting your company's whole brain to work. Harvard Business Review, 75(4), 110-122. <a href="#">Please watch this video on how to find articles in Harvard Business Review in the NYU library.</a>
<b>Reading 2</b>	Phillips, K. W. (2014). <a href="#">How diversity works</a> . Scientific American, 311(4), 42-47. Don't click; copy and paste in browser, then download the pop-up: <a href="https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Megan_Bang/publication/280845360_Particular_Points_of_View/links/57485c2808ae18b6dce91abf.pdf">https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Megan_Bang/publication/280845360_Particular_Points_of_View/links/57485c2808ae18b6dce91abf.pdf</a>
<b>Discussion questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What strategies have you used (or experienced) when designing teams?</li><li>2. What are the benefits and challenges in creating diverse teams?</li></ol>
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Launching teams for success</b>
<b>Topics</b>	Clarifying purpose; developing norms; agreeing on a leadership approach
<b>Reading 1</b>	Haas, M. & Mortensen. (2016). The Secrets of great team work. Harvard Business Review. <a href="#">Please watch this video on how to find articles in Harvard Business Review in the NYU library.</a>
<b>Reading 2</b>	Team definition document <i>NYU Classes</i>
<b>Discussion question</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What topics are critical to cover in your team launches?</li></ol>
<b>Module 4</b>	<b>Leading teams and day 1 wrap</b>
<b>Topics</b>	Leadership style; group emotional intelligence; inheriting teams
<b>Assignment 1:</b>	First individual assignment due Wednesday, October 2, at 9:00 pm

## Day 2: Advanced Topics in Teams (October 4)

<b>Module 5</b>	<b>Teaming</b>
<b>Topics</b>	Using team concepts to collaborate effectively
<b>Reading</b>	Edmondson, A.C., Rashid, F., & Leonard, H. (2014). The 2010 Chilean Mining Rescue (A). Harvard Business School Case. 9-612-046. <i>In course pack.</i>
<b>Discussion questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What allowed the miners to survive, physically and psychologically, until they were found?</li><li>2. How did the engineers, geologists, and politicians address the challenges they faced?</li></ol>
<b>Module 6</b>	<b>Adaptable team processes</b>
<b>Topics</b>	New forms of team; conflict; psychological safety; learning from failure
<b>Reading 1</b>	Edmondson, A. C. (2012) Teamwork on the Fly. Harvard Business Review 90, no. 4. <a href="#">Please watch this video on how to find articles in Harvard Business Review in the NYU library.</a>
<b>Reading 2</b>	Eisenhardt, K. M., Kahwajy, J. L., & Bourgeois, L. J. (1997). How management teams can have a good fight. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , 75(4), 77-85. <a href="#">Please watch this video on how to find articles in Harvard Business Review in the NYU library.</a>
<b>Discussion question</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What approaches do you use to collaborate effectively when groups are geographically distributed, rotate membership, or only work together for short periods of time?</li></ol>
<b>Module 7</b>	<b>Creativity</b>
<b>Topics</b>	Creativity; innovation; divergent and convergent approaches; decision making, prototyping; human-centered design
<b>Reading</b>	Creativity and Creative Groups: Two Keys to Innovation. (2003). Chapter 6 in <i>Managing Creativity and Innovation</i> . Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press. <i>In course pack.</i>
<b>Module 8</b>	<b>Closing: From Knowledge to Practice</b>
<b>Topics</b>	Review individual and team learning; prepare plan for continued development as a team leader and member; review team assignment
<b>Assignment 2:</b>	Second individual assignment due Wednesday, October 9, 9:00 pm
<b>Assignment 3:</b>	Team project due Wednesday, October 30, at 9:00 pm