

OB221 Final Exam – Fall 2016***Honor Statement***

I understand that my honor and integrity define me as a person and as a current and future leader. By affixing my signature below, I acknowledge that I am aware of Questrom's policy on academic conduct (see <http://questromworld.bu.edu/acc/>) and that I am responsible for my own behavior while taking this exam. I am also aware that any violation of this policy may result in suspension or expulsion even on the first offense. The OB221 Final Exam is an **INDIVIDUAL** assignment. Therefore, **I understand that I may not share or discuss the contents of the exam or my responses to exam questions with anyone. Collaboration in any form is prohibited.**

Name: *Meghan Peters*

Instructor's Name: *Professor Sullivan*

Section or Day/Time: *B5, F/9-12*

Date: *December 15, 2016*

The OB221 final exam will be evaluated based on your ability to apply course concepts and theories to thoughtfully analyze your experiences and distill meaningful lessons. This is an open book, open notes exam; you may refer to any of our course materials in preparing your responses. Each question has a **strict page limit**, as specified below. However, you may include a separate appendix (beyond the page count) with photos or materials from your own or your team's experiences, and/or other relevant exhibits.

Specifications:

- Page limits are provided for each response (excludes cover page and any relevant exhibits)
- Requirements: 12 point font, 1" margins, **double-spacing**, page numbers, plus cover page (cover page = your electronically signed Honor Statement page).

You must electronically submit **one integrated document as a single Word or PDF file** into the Assignments folder on Tools for your Discussion section with: Cover page/Honor Statement, your analyses/responses, exhibits and references. **The file name of your submitted Word or PDF document must have your last name in it.**

Part 1

1. Effective communication in group settings occurs when group members transmit information freely, and respectfully. During the forming phase, on my team, we discussed our expectations for each other and ourselves using this method of effective communication to define what we wanted our norms and standards to be. As we reached the norming phase, we had become comfortable with each other and our roles. We took preventative measures to avoid conflict, the most effective being our bi-weekly feedback sessions. During this time, we respectfully commented on the contributions of team members, but first going through and reviewing ourselves. Each member would then comment and respond to your self-analysis. We found it was much more effective to discuss our reviews in person rather than online because it made the experience more genuine and impactful. We also addressed any personal concerns and suggestions. By the time we were in the performing stage, we had developed strong interpersonal relationships with each other and communicated freely. This gave us a platform to resolve any issues quickly, as we had high levels of mutual respect, cooperation and trust. Due to our effective communication, we not only performed well as a team, but we also built meaningful relationships with each other. In future teams I would recommend firstly, to increase team member interaction. It elevates cohesion between members, and it is significantly easier to communicate with people you are comfortable with and respect rather than someone you don't. Before delivering constructive criticism to a teammate, write out or practice what you plan to say. It can help you avoid inadvertently saying anything rude or insensitive while trying getting your point across. The most important and influential recommendation I could provide however, is that one must listen to understand, not solely to respond. This is especially important when discussing conflicting ideas. If you decide that your way is definitively the right way, you are no longer communication, but simply talking at each other.

2. In preparing a team logo, Team 5 displayed incredible willingness to innovate. As a team we understood the purpose of creating a logo was to encapsulate the spirit of our team as well as practice working collaboratively with one another. Since our team members discussed what our shared values would be previously when creating our team contract, we used those values as inspiration. For example, we integrated wings to symbolize our drive to rise above and beyond basic requirements of assignments. Since the assignment was clear regarding the rules of engagement, everyone on the team had a detailed understanding of the expectations and parameters pertaining to the assignment. What we ultimately struggled with as a team was maintaining open communication, and having sufficient resources. Our communication errors stemmed from the difficulty of explaining what you were thinking if you weren't artistically gifted and able to show what you envisioned. Since we lacked any artistic resource, we struggled to discuss our ideas. Time constraints further limited our ability to work through our ideas and create a product that better exemplified our team and our abilities. In future teams, I would work to increase the innovative ability of the team. Time restrains meant that there was little discussion of our ideas and we essentially accepted the first idea we heard rather than taking a closer look at everyone's thoughts, limiting creative abrasion. It would also have been beneficial to promote testing and experimenting drawing, even though we weren't particularly good at it. This practice enhances creative agility through quick pursuit, reflection, and adjustment of your work. Ultimately, since we went with our initial decision due to limited alternatives, we lacked the opportunity to attempt to combine contrasting or opposing ideas, which heightens creative abrasion and decision making abilities.

3. The cast of *Baltimore* faces differentiation when Fiona creates a racist drawing and hangs it on Alyssa's door. Fiona claims it is only a joke, painfully unaware of the issues that arise from the content of this drawing. She is insensitive to the reactions of her peers, displaying no capacity or effort to comprehend the reasons for which the content of the drawing is offensive. She addresses the situation by utilizing a competing negotiation style. When confronted by others, she protects herself by standing her ground and asserting her opinions and feelings without consideration for anyone else's. There are also various communication problems. When any of the characters attempt to discuss Fiona's incident with Alyssa, racial tensions, or any other issues they face, they only listen to respond and neglect to listen in order to understand. As they continue to face discussion issues, stereotypes of each of the characters increase (such as Fiona's ignorance), motivation to convene and have a group discussion decreases, and the conflict escalates as tensions gradually rise. Shelby, the RA tasked with facilitating conversations with residents and aiding them in working through their issues, follows an avoiding conflict model for the majority of the play. Through avoiding, she enhanced the communication problems as she left the conflict unresolved to develop into a hostile environment for her residents. Since the residents main resource to aid in conflict management is Shelby, who has opted to use avoidance, receiving assistance is incredibly difficult and creates scarce resources. As the residents are ill equipped to manage this on their own, the competition for Shelby's assistance is heightened and adds to tensions. Eventually, after a discussion with Dean Hernandez, Shelby changes her style of negotiating to collaborating. Using a collaborative conflict management method with her residents, Shelby improves their interpersonal relationships by merging their perspectives. Over the course of the meeting, the residents identify and discuss their issues and offer possible solutions, while also diffusing lingering animosity.

Part 2

I have always considered myself to be a strong leader. I naturally gravitate towards leadership positions, whether or not they are actually authoritative positions. This is due in part to my strong emotional intelligence. I am empathetic with teammates and am able to read others emotions and respond in a way that empowers them. Due to this strength, I took the role of “team cheerleader” and worked diligently to ensure everyone was motivated and felt their work was appreciated through feedback. Additionally, I held the role of “facilitator” as another strength of mine is leading conversation, particularly at meetings. I made sure to specifically ask each member how they thought or felt about certain things and what their opinions were, even if they had not volunteered their viewpoint. This helped to spark conversation and keep all members engaged. I am also incredibly driven. I pursue everything I do whole heartedly. I am very intrinsically motivated to do well and benefit from my activities. In regards to the team project, I was excited to see how we could make it the best presentation and experience possible. My drive can often leave me to being a perfectionist however which is one of my weaknesses. I can get caught up in how exact something is to my liking and it can be difficult for me to let go of authority over a project. I was fortunate enough this year to be on a team with talented and capable individuals, therefore I was comfortable loosening the reigns. To address this in the future, I must remind myself to take a step back and review my projects overall as it can be easy to get caught up in small details. It is also important to ensure I’ve completed all required aspects of the assignment before attempting to go above and beyond. Although I am an accomplished conversationalist, I occasionally can be overbearing, especially when excited about a topic. Knowing this about myself however, I was significantly more conscious of it and would often bite my tongue to allow my teammates to speak. I must continue to be mindful of how much I am speaking in relation to everyone else. By contributing only when I have relevant points, and actively asking other members what their viewpoints are, I will be much less domineering. Also,

informing other team members early on to openly tell me to slow down when I'm going 100 miles per minute, helps eliminate the fear of conflict for any member who feels I am overpowering. One of the reasons I tend to speak so much is that I am generally bursting with ideas. Unfortunately, I can have a difficult time articulating what I'm thinking. This makes communication more difficult and time consuming. Moving forward, it is imperative that I think my thoughts out before saying anything. "Spit-balling" ideas can be extremely beneficial while brainstorming, however contributing ideas that are not specifically relevant and thought out at later stages of a project can be counterproductive and damaging to innovation.

Through our shared experiences in and out of the classroom, as a team we created a collective social identity. Because of this, we operated on identification-based trust. Having this relationship with my teammates made me a more effective leader by sharing authority communally through interdependence and mutual accountability rather than micromanaging my teammates. In creating our team contract, we discussed in depth the values we would hold as a team. As the facilitator, when leading discussion, I would consistently relate our conversation back to our values which was particularly helpful when exploring conflicting ideas and enabled us to make decisions that was in line with our team culture. Additionally, through team bonding events such as a non-academic pizza night, which I organized, and utilization of my emotional intelligence, we developed personal commitments to one another. Since we genuinely cared for each other's growth and success, we performed incredibly well. A specific example is at a team feedback session, our group member Roger explained his concerns regarding the language and culture barrier he faces. Knowing this, I often took time out of meetings to explain anything from the phrase "frog in my throat" to simply going over pronunciations. Roger's presentation was impeccable and commended by myself and the rest of our group. I look forward to taking what I have learned about myself through this course and applying it to future teams.