**Portland State University**

**School of Business Administration**

**BA 301: Research and Analysis of Business Problems**

**Term: Spring 2011**

Group Activity Instructions

As described in the syllabus, this is a student-centered, process oriented class. Most classes will consist of a short lecture and one or two group activities. Although you can certainly take the easy way out and just quickly race through the activities, your group grades will be better if you take a bit more time and follow some of the suggestions in the remainder of this document.

The group effort is meant to reinforce the content of the lectures and readings. It always helps to discuss things as a group. Issues very clear to one person may be fuzzy to another. Work together and decide what you want to accomplish for the term and what each group member’s expectations are at the beginning of the term.

Suggestions for the group activity

1.) When the group first gets together in class:

* Review key lessons from the previous class session.
* Review highlights of the assigned readings.
* Discuss and compare weekly project assignments.
* Discuss questions relating to the class, projects, etc.
* Assign a scribe for this particular class and activity. This task should cycle through all members of the group during the quarter.

2.) As requested

* Evaluate the work of group members or other classmates.
* Participate in a class-wide discussion of weekly assignments completed or requirements for future assignments.

3.) Scheduled in-class activities

* Work through the activity as directed. The instructions for all of the activities are located on my web site. It would be wise to download this and print it out early in the term. You will need it during each class. If there are additional instructions, I will provide them in class.
* Record responses to each written requirement or activity question (this can be very messy). You will be graded based on whether I find the actual notes taken by the scribe during the activity in your final report.
* Keep your notes and results in an organized notebook or folder.
* Assign group members to control and update these materials.

4.) End of class

* Assess and record attendance for each member using the attendance form.
* As a group, think about, analyze and discuss the activity and class content for that day. Use the following questions to guide you thinking, or others that you think might help you critically reflect on the day’s topics:
  + What are they most important lessons to be learned from this week’s readings, activities, and projects?
  + Would these lessons be useful in school, work or other endeavors? If so, why? If not, why not?

5.) After class (to be completed by the scribe for that session)

* Review the notes taken during the group activity analysis, add any other personal comment or analysis, type it up and include it in the group “notebook” when you get together the next week.
* **Note:** do not modify or type up your actual notes from the activity. You don’t need busywork any more than I need to read it. Your handwritten notes are good enough.

Group member participation & peer review

Attendance will be recorded at each class session. The records kept by the group will be used to help determine the participation portion of each member’s grade in the class. In addition, in the last week of the class you will have the opportunity to fill out group evaluation sheets on group performance.

Groups can be a pain in the neck. They can also be a great learning experience. I’m sure you’ve experienced both. Make sure that you spend time early in the term talking about expectations and roles. It’s better to get that stuff out early. If you’re having problems in the group, deal with them openly and directly. Come talk to me if you can’t resolve them. Don’t let group problems fester by waiting until it’s too late in the term to solve them. It’s a group grade – live by the group, die by the group. The good thing about BA301 is that there is plenty of time in class for group work. So, you shouldn’t have many problems with meeting times and conflicting schedules.

The group report

You will turn in your group materials at the end of the term. I don’t care what format you use – it’s up to you. If you want some suggestions, come ask me. Think about the fact that I have to review 35 to 40 of them in the last week of the term. Make sure the materials are neat and well organized. I should easily be able to see that you did all of the activities, and that both handwritten scribe notes and after-activity group write-ups are included. If you wish, I’ll look at what you have midway through the class – just for a midcourse grade check. And, I **WILL** read through all of the notebooks at the end of the term.