Cornell
Engineering
Communications Program

Example Team Charter Assignment (worth X pts)
For Asynchronous Remote Teams

This is a team assignment.

GOALS AND PURPOSE

- Enacting the tenets of good teamwork practices for f2f or remote distributed teams.
- Identifying and articulating systems and processes for successful teams.
- Writing a baseline technical/business/managerial document.
- Using a charter/workflow document to articulate practice, with the intent of revising and updating the document for the project's purpose. Everyone should understand that this is a "living" document that is open to change, as long as everyone agrees to the changes.

TASK SET

Create a Google Drive folder for the team.

- Just one person from the team needs to create the team's Google Drive folder.
- The Google Drive naming convention is this: f20_classnumber.section_[teamname] .
- That person needs to invite—and give full permissions to-- all of the other team members AND the instructor. For the instructor, use this address: [instructor email] .

Inside the Google Drive, a team member should begin a document.
Use this file naming convention: [teamname]_charter

Begin the Team Charter document (see below). Contributions are automatically kept in the version history in Google Docs and will be reviewed by the instructor for participation.

Once completed, export the Google Doc into a PDF.

- Upload it as a PDF to the "Team Charter" assignment portal in Canvas.
- The file will upload for all team members at the same time.
- Grading will be a review of the Team Charter document and the Google Doc version history. There will be a team baseline grade; individual grades may go up or down due to the evidence of participation provided via the Google Doc.

Cornell Engineering
Communications Program

Format the Team Charter Document. Use memo heading format.

From: [team name]
To: [instructor]
Re: Team Charter
Date: [x]
NOTE: If you are unfamiliar with how to format memo headings, do an online search for "memo format."

Member Information
Create a section in the document for each person to have a short section. Therein

- list all team members (using their preferred name) and their preferred email address.

- document what time zone they are in.

- write a short bio, no longer than four sentences, that indicates their major, interests, and specialized talents that may come to bear in this course.

Team Functionality
The team must outline its process flow in precise detail.

- Describe how the team will communicate, asynchronously. Emails? Slack? Discord? Other? If needed, this communication channel should be able to be downloaded and archived.
    - NOTE: Create this method and invite in the instructor if it's a tool like Slack or Discord. For the instructor, use this address: [instructor email] .
- The team needs to discuss how asynchronous discussions will happen, including the use of threads, hashtags, or other organizing features to aid team flow.
- Outline the expectations for how often those communication channels will be checked for updates and information.
- Articulate <u>how</u> the team wants to meet. Document how and when "live" meetings can happen. For example: "We will meet live every Monday at 7pmEST via Zoom. Sharon will create all of the Zoom meeting invitations and send them out. Everyone is expected to attend each one."
- Commit to a method of tasking assignments and being able to track progress. Articulate it fully. Some teams like to keep a common Google Calendar and use the Task feature. Some teams like to use Trello. Some teams use a continuously updated Google Doc or Sheet. It should be easy for all members and the instructor to know (at a glance!) who was in charge of what and how far along that task has come.

Accountability Practices

Answer these questions in some good detail.

- What will happen if a team member misses an internal team deadline?
- What will happen if a team member misses a course due date?
- How will the team will bestow honor and praise for any member that goes above and beyond the call of duty?

NOTE: For the above items, _specific details are essential_. Here's a weak example, followed by a strong example.

Weak: "If any team member misses more than two meetings in a row, we will contact the instructor."

> _This is a weak practice because it doesn't outline process or desired outcomes. Instructors already have in grading practices. Instead, articulate exactly what should happen, as in the "Stronger" example below._

Stronger: "If any team member misses more than two meetings in a row, the project leader will send an email to the instructor stating that the team member should have 10 points removed from the next assignment. With that notice, the project leader will include links to the team meeting minutes that document the missed meetings and screenshots of our Slack conversations where we tried to establish contact. "

Notice that the stronger version provides details for what the situation is, who they will contact, what triggers that contact/reporting, what will be included as "evidence," and so forth.

Schedule

The team needs to develop an initial schedule, knowing that it will be updates and mature over time. This initial calendar-making is to set the tone and pace of work. This early schedule will be supplemented by the more detailed Action Plan to come.

- Create a calendar, list, or table of the known due dates for this course.
- Each member should also include all known tests and crunch times for other courses or obligations.
- Backfill internal team due dates for all due dates for this course.
- The schedule can exist as a Gantt chart, table, a Google Sheet, a Trello board, or as a link to an active Google Calendar. Whatever method is used, it must be shared with the instructor.

Statement of Commitment Intent

In the team itself, discuss, but do not write down, the desired grade from each team member. This allows everyone to understand commitment levels.

Commented [TMN9]: This section is important for students to construct, because it forces them to do something than "tattle" to the instructor when something goes awry.

Again, this is about predictable processes, accountability, and outcomes for behaviors.

In this example, the instructor has allowed for grading impacts to be part of the team process, on top of any grading considerations the instructor has already articulated in the team assignments or syllabus. That is, teams can decide to impose grading impacts for poor team member participation; they must be fully documents and agreed upon by the instructor. Such process/rules allows students agency and also allows for a "window" into team functionality for the instructors.

Teams may, of course, choose to "cover" for students with lackluster participation; that is their choice.