**GREEN RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**POLS 200-BUS 201 Group Presentation Scoring (Guidelines)**

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In a case methods course, you will be presenting your cases in groups, typically using Power Point format.

**PRESENTING OR “BRIEFING” THE LOGIC OF A CASE is explained in Chapter 1, p 17 of the Processing the Law textbook. We have also discussed this in class. Please review that section of the book for details.**

A substantial percentage of each student’s overall class grade can be derived from Group “case method” presentations, which includes the final presentation. To better explain the meaning of the possible score achievable for each presentation, the following guidelines will be used.

You will note that there are 10 categories for evaluation, most of which correspond to the Intellectual Standards discussed in the Miniature Guide for Critical Thinking. These are Clarity, Accuracy, Precision, Relevance, Depth, Breadth, Logic, and Significance. Also, there is a standard for Organization/Efficiency. Each of these is worth up to 5 points. The tenth category is for “general interest”, which addresses whether the presentation was able to maintain your interest, and stimulate questions (sometimes referred to as the “head bob” index). This category will be worth 5 points. Thus, there are a maximum total of 50 points for each presentation.

The following guidelines will serve to assist you in determining more precisely how each presentation will be scored. You should note that points are added from 0-5 for four of the standards (I will call these “inductive standards”), and deducting points from 5-0 for the others (“deductive standards”). Note: These designations have little to do with Inductive or Deductive Reasoning which you may be familiar with. I have grouped these together for your convenience.

**“Inductive” Standards**:

1. Clarity: This is the ability to make information meaningful by providing examples, illustrations, analogies, or metaphors. Something that can help make complicated or abstract data more concrete. Examples that come from everyday life will be most intuitive and best understood by the audience. 1 point will be given (up to 5) for each clarification strategy you effectively use in your presentation. Various strategies will be discussed in class or via handout.

2. Depth: These are strategies that add detail to a group’s from sources outside the textbook. For example, is further explanation given outside of what is in the book? Has the group found further material to help explain the case? For instance, they may have found the full text of the case on the Internet, or some other relevant article about the case, or even a related case to compare with. Has this material been integrated into the presentation? 1 point is given for each significant added strategy used to add depth.

3. Breadth: This standard relates to the part of thinking called “point of view”. Alternate points of view give better overall understanding of the complexity of a case or issues. For example, points of view can be not only be from the views of the parties to a controversy, but also from secondary views, such as moral, economic, cultural, environmental, political, social, etc. 1 point (up to 5) is given for each relevant point of view, or bias, in the presentation.

4. Significance: This standard relates to the implications or consequences of the holding (conclusion) in a particular case. Implications are the potential effects that logically follow from a certain line of thinking. Consequences have already happened in similar cases. 1 point is given for each logical implication or stated consequence flowing from conclusions stated in the presented case. These should be labeled correctly.

**“Deductive” Standards**:

5. Accuracy: Accuracy is the ability to correctly state the facts that are provided in each case. Were the parties properly identified? Who are the Plaintiff and Defendant, or Appellant and Respondent? Was the court hearing the case correctly identified? What was the correct procedural history leading to the current case? Was it a state or Federal Court? Was it an intermediate appellate court, or a supreme court? Were the rules or law properly identified and stated? Was the reasoning of the court accurate? Was the conclusion reached by the court correctly stated, etc. For Accuracy, a team starts with an assumption of 5 points, but 1 point may be deducted for each significant inaccuracy stated by the group, or one of its members. If you are not sure whether an inaccuracy exists, listen to the discussion or any correction the instructor might make during or after the presentation.

6. Precision: This has to do with finer details. Has the group identified an area where more specificity might be required? Have they given the further data needed? For example, if you are discussing a concept composed of several elements or parts, stating those parts would add precision to your presentation. Again, we assume a score of 5, and deduct 1 point if there is good reason to believe some important element, fact or data was overlooked.

7. Relevance: Has the group identified how their case was connected, or related to, the chapter the case is in? How is it related to the class as a whole? How is it related to other life situations? Deduct 1 point for not showing the connection between the case and a chapter, rule or principle addressed in the text or class.

8. Logic: The logic of the presentation allows the audience to follow the logical progression of the case analysis. The “logic” of any subject area includes all 8 of the elements of thought. That is, purpose, question or issue, concept (rule of law), information (facts), assumptions, interpretation and inferences, points of view, and implications or consequences. The lack of one or more of these elements directly impairs the logic of the presentation. Deduct 1 point (up to 5) for element of thought omitted, or incorrectly stated.

9. Organization/Efficiency: This is the ability to create a presentation that “flows” in such a way that avoids redundancy, or over-utilization of print that tends to create a drag on the presentation. Plan for your presentation to be around 10-15 minutes. Allow some time for editing of your presentation before it is given in order to better stay within this suggested timeline. If you believe your case warrants more time, please see the instructor.

10. General Interest Standard: ( 5 points)

The last criteria for group assessment is general interest. This standard which will assess how well the presentation captured class interest and thinking. As we have stated, good thinking produces good questions. A group’s ability to elicit and respond to good questions from the audience can be correlated with general interest. I will presume that your presentation will be of general interest and deduct points to the extent that it is not. This may be evidenced by the inability to stimulate audience attention and questions, and/or the inability to adequately address questions posed by the class or the instructor.

**\*\*NOTE: SEE also Ideas for Meeting Standards in Case presentations on my website here:**

http://www.instruction.greenriver.edu/fprimiani/Case%20Presentations/pdfs/idea

\_for\_meeting\_standards\_case\_presentations.pdf

**This also appears in Appendix 2 of the Processing the Law Textbook. You would be wise to print or review this guide as you prepare your presentations.**

**Centripetal Forces; Red Flags in Group Dynamics**

As a cautionary note, there is a natural tension which exists when people work in groups. There are forces that tend to bring the group together in cooperation, and counteracting forces that are more responsive to individual egocentric needs or desires. These latter forces can become disruptive, and compromise a group’s effectiveness. It is finding a balance between these opposing forces that is central to a successful group outcome. Some have termed this balance “coopetition”.

It becomes incumbent upon the group participants to be vigilant regarding preliminary signs of what I call “centripetal” tendencies. Looking for subtle signs of behavior which may be suggestive of both the affective (emotional), and cognitive (thinking) precursors which can result in non productive patterns. The following guide is intended to assist each group in the early detection of detracting group behaviors, in order to resolve them in a timely manner.

To some extent, what I am asking groups to do may be somewhat at odds with western cultural bias toward autonomy and independence. Nonetheless, there are times in work or in life, where even these highly valued traits require some modification or compromise. Otherwise, we may find it difficult to get along with others, and get things done.

**Red Flag Signs of impending trouble include, but may not be limited to, the following:**

1. Avoidance and/or withdrawal behavior- doing ones “own thing” by being unresponsive to group challenges and demands.

2. Blocking behaviors- counterproductive or distractive behaviors during group meetings. This can be verbal or non verbal behaviors.

3. Defensiveness- when challenged regarding their level of contribution, an aggrieved party may feel they have too many other obligations and excuses which prevent them from pulling their share of the group work.. This sort of “Obstacle-itis” interferes with group contributions.

4. Anger- feeling frustrated at not being able to go at their own pace, they may feel stifled by the group experience. This sometimes leads to the following.

5. Attacking behavior-verbal or non verbal behavior which is perceived to be hostile or derogatory by other group members.

One of the remedies for avoiding some of these problems is to continue to focus on the objective standards required for the group. The focus should be on the standards of performance. That is, whether each student’s contribution is accurate, relevant, clear, logical, significant, etc…

Although it may be difficult a times, continue to work through the resistance that these group activities sometimes create. Only through resistance do we have an opportunity to become stronger. Most importantly, seek guidance and advice early on if these behaviors should begin to emerge. Good luck in this challenge and opportunity.

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