Readme.First: An Annotated Table of Contents

This book is designed for use as a text for teachers of group discussion. Each of the chapter contributes to the development of a pedagogy, which in turn can be integrated into a teaching syllabus.

The introduction sketches the problems teachers of group discussion performance face and introduces some of the issues involved in developing a pedgogy. It explains the contents of the book and shows how to use it in developing a pedagogy.

In this chapter, Professor Jarboe reviews the common beliefs about group discussion and traces the history of teaching. Questions about whether to teach about small groups or how to participate are raised. It serves as an introduction to the guiding philosophy of a pedagogy.

Professors Wood and Phillips detail the alternative forms for decision making and explain the member behaviors associated with competent performance in each form.

The authors of this chapter offer alternative methods of evaluating individual performance in group discussion. SYMLOG is introduced as a versatile and effective method of assessing quality of member performance.

Using a complex research study as a basis, Professor Witteman explains how discussion instructors can show students how to resolve conflict and encourage cohesion in their groups. He also demonstrates the relative impact of conflict and cohesion on group outcomes.

Phillips and Santoro describe a course generated to accommodate the logistical conditions affecting most instruction in small group performance. They present a description of a computer-based course in group discussion and assess its effects on the students.

The issue of course design is the focus of this chapter. Dr. Santoro addresses several perplexing pedagogical issues and shows how they can be effectively addressed through the use of computer technology and simulations.

Emphasizing contemporary technological models, Professor Beauclair explains how technology can be integrated into dis-

cussion of teaching systems to encourage individual participation and improve the quality of decisions and solutions.

The complicated issue of evaluation of the products of group discussions is the topic of this chapter. Professor Gouran explains several alternative ways of evaluating decisions and relates each to the types of performance required to encourage it.

Professor Goodall introduces the latest ethnomethodological and anthropological methods of observation in an attempt to broaden the base of criticism of small group behavior. He especially emphasizes the importance of understanding contexts as a basis for cogent evaluation.

Traditional pedagogical methods of assessment and critique are examined and modified by Professor Wyatt. She shows how the methods of the social scientist can be applied to the teaching of small group behavior in order to discover data usable in critique.

In this chapter, a professional journalist applies the principles of investigative reporting to the teaching process to help teachers of group discussion isolate influences, factors, and variables, commentary on which could improve the quality of performance behavior.

Professor Phillips unapologetically makes the argument for per-
formance-oriented instruction in small group discussion. He
takes the position that learning about groups does not improve
performance and argues the case for direct instruction on perfor-
mance behavior.