

What you did ~~last summer~~ this
semester

MB 109 Wrap-Up

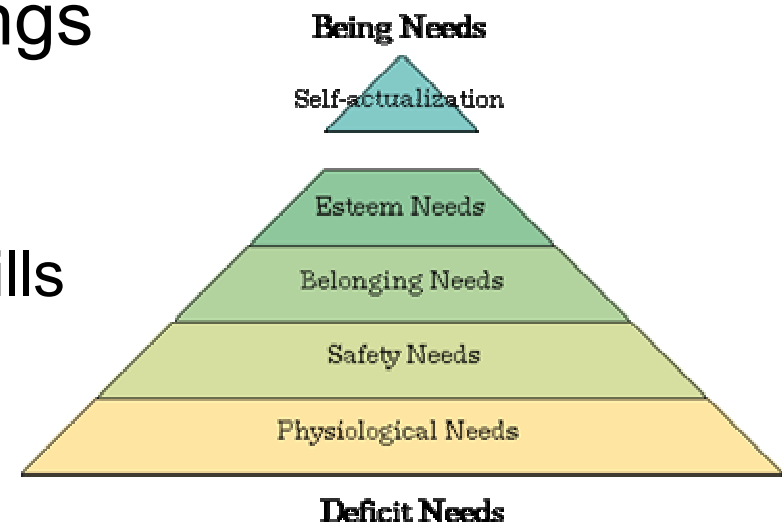
Steve Borgatti, 7 Dec 2004

What I've tried to do in this course

- **Address the overall topic – groups in organizations**
 - How groups form, what's in it for individuals
 - What groups do to their members
 - How groups perform (innovation, efficiency)
 - How groups
- Provide experiences, perspectives & tools useful in your careers
 - You will spend your lives in groups
- Create good citizens

Why individuals form/join groups

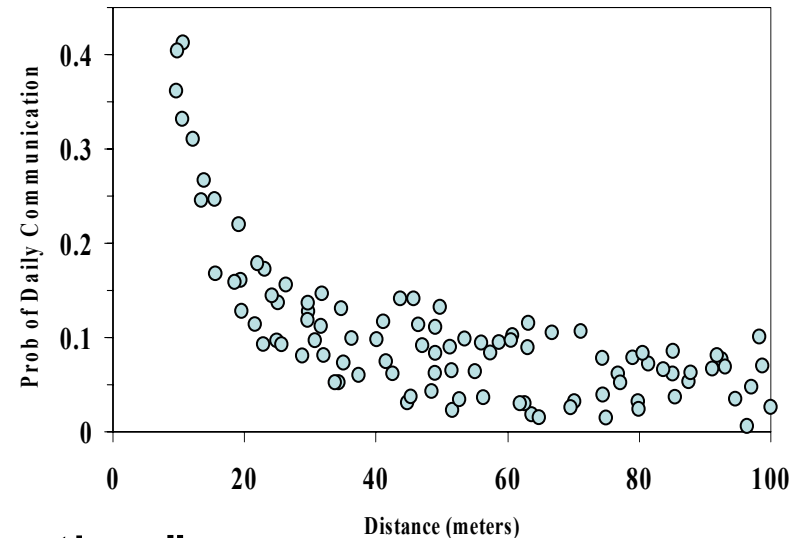
- Needs for esteem, approval, belonging, identity
 - Why do we have these needs?
 - Fundamental human adaptation is the group
 - Those who stuck together were more likely to survive
 - Needs provide mechanism for grouping behavior
 - Primate brains largely social in function?
- Groups can accomplish things individuals cannot
 - More labor
 - Access to complementary skills & resources



Voluntary Association

- Propinquity

- Communication declines rapidly with physical distance

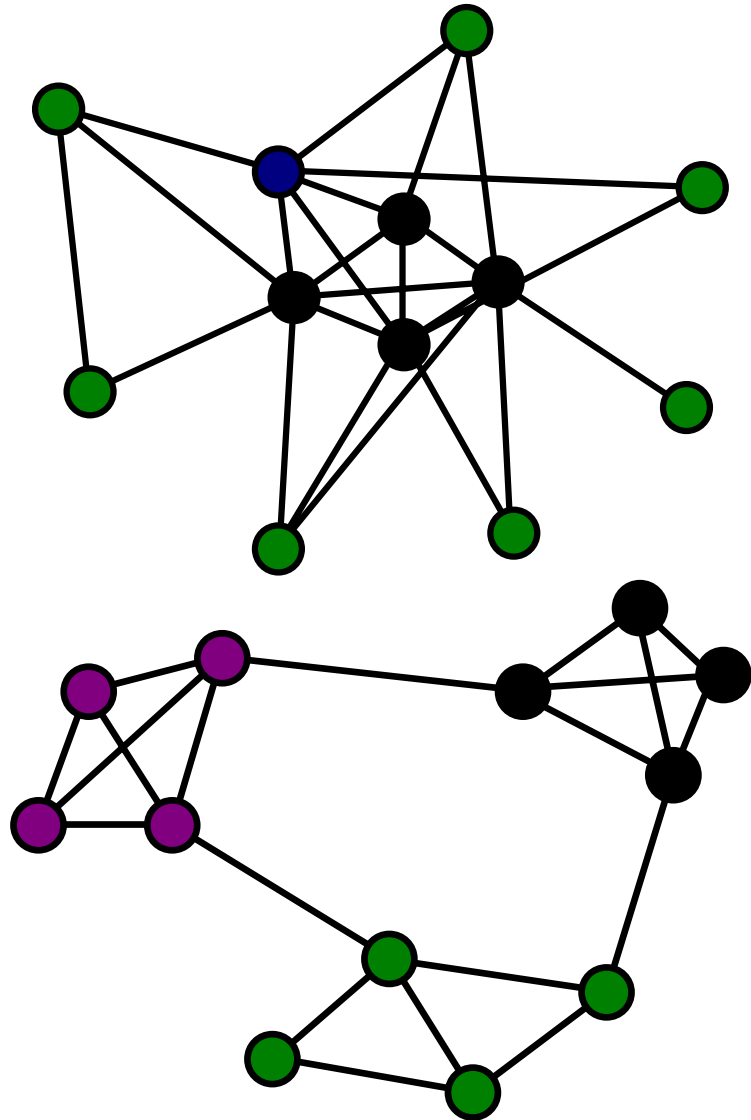


- Homophily

- “birds of a feather flock together”
- Especially sociologically significant attributes
 - Race, gender, class, education, religion
- Choice vs opportunity
- Homophily → organizational recruiting & retention

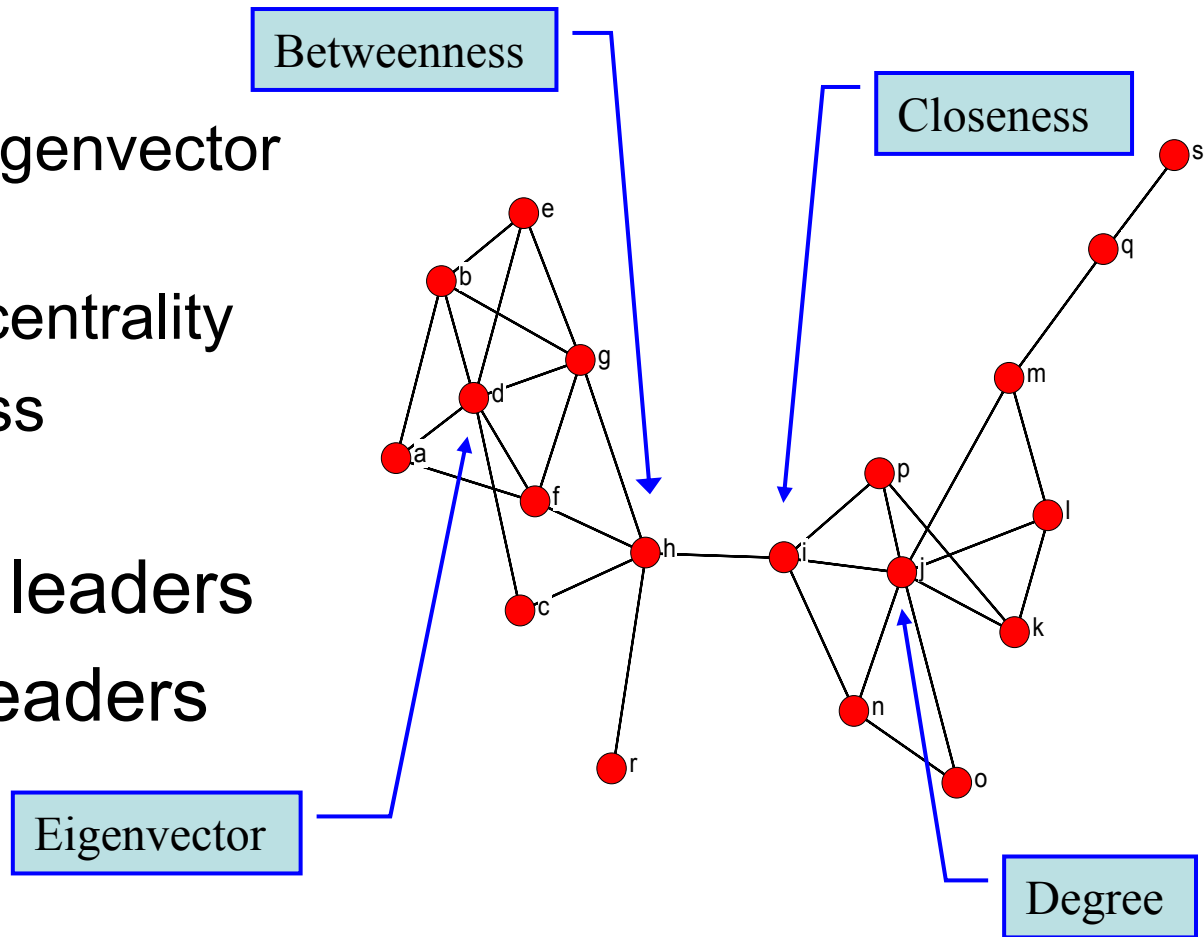
Inside Groups

- Individuals connected by multiple social relations
 - It's a network!
- Groups may contain subgroups, have varied structures
 - Clique structures
 - Core/periphery structures



Positions & Roles in Groups

- Centrality
 - Degree & eigenvector centrality
 - Closeness centrality
 - Betweenness centrality
- Instrumental leaders
- Expressive leaders
- Mascots

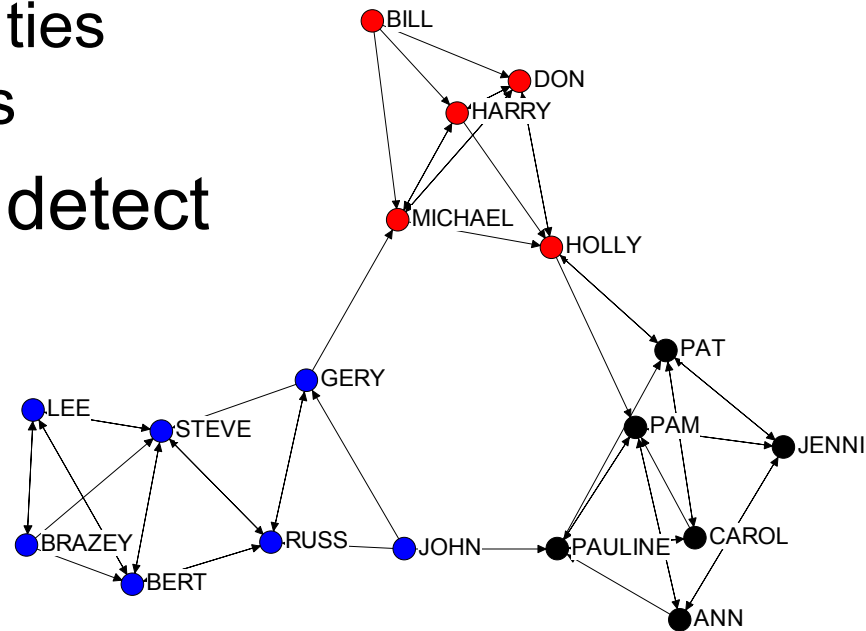


Group Development

- Tuckman sequential stage theory
 - Forming, storming, norming, performing, adjourning
- Bales phase theory
 - Groups oscillate focus between task issues and socio-emotional issues
 - Successful group achieves congruence
- Gersick punctuated equilibrium model
 - Long inertial periods (incremental changes) punctuated by rapid transition points (fundamental changes) triggered by problem

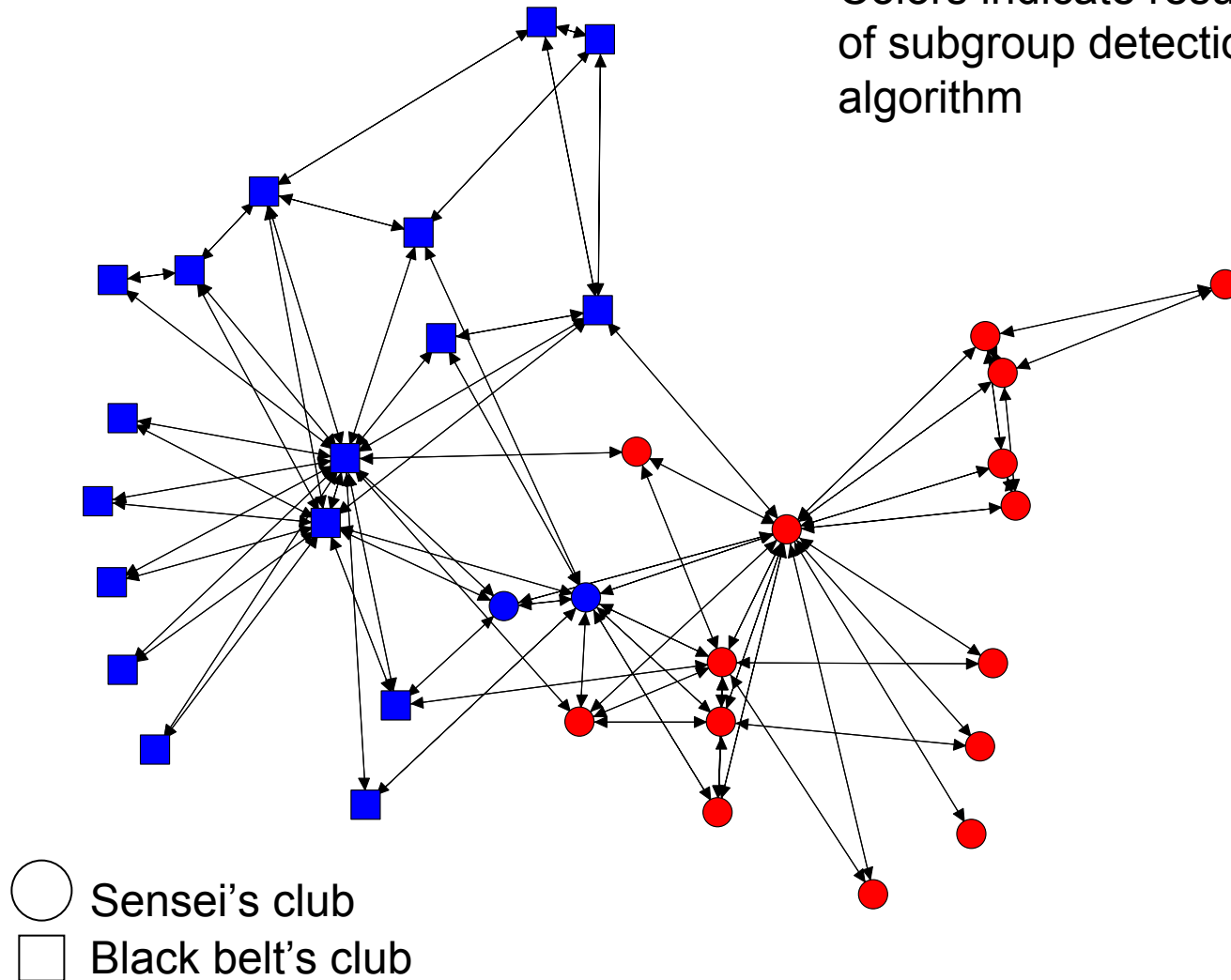
Emergent Groups

- Begin with dyadic interactions
- Forces of homophily and cognitive dissonance create transitivity in strong ties
- Groups defined as dense areas within network
 - Members have more close ties to each other than to others
- Computer algorithms can detect groups, even before group identity is established
 - Predict schisms



Zachary Karate Club Data

Colors indicate results of subgroup detection algorithm



Conformity & Authority

- Asch experiments
 - Individuals easily swayed to go along with group to avoid being only dissenter
 - Just one ally strongly reduces compliance
 - Advantages of conformity
 - Groups reject deviants to preserve groupness
 - Groups have wisdom
- Milgram experiments
 - People disposed to obey authority

Group Culture

- Through communication and influence processes, groups develop own ways of seeing, valuing, and doing things
 - Perceptions, schemas, frames, symbols,
 - Preferences, values, morals, norms
 - Behaviors, customs, practices, rituals
- Because of in-group preferences, tend to view practices & views of other groups as inferior
- Sources
 - Group embedding: nation, organization, dept, group

Group Norms

- Groups create powerful norms that constrain behavior of members
 - Hawthorne bank wiring room
 - Norms include no rate-busting, no chiseling, no squealing
- Group cohesion prevents change
 - Threat of expulsion

Communities of Practice

- Groups with three characteristics
 - Mutual engagement
 - Joint purpose
 - Shared repertoire
- Learning through
 - Participant observation / apprenticeship
 - Narratives
 - Social construction
- Core/periphery network structures
 - Core members know more

Transactive Memory Systems

- Knowledge distributed across different heads
 - Interaction required to access knowledge
- Successful utilization of stored knowledge:
 - Know who knows what (and how much)
 - Have access to needed person
 - Have enough common knowledge
 - Have security in accessing person
- Practical benefits of network analysis

Creativity

- For individuals, potential for creativity is increased by bridging different groups
 - Information benefits of structural holes
- Challenge for groups: a collection of creative individuals will not be cohesive, and as they become cohesive, they lose creativity
 - Groupthink

Promoting Group Innovation

- Incremental innovation
 - Strong affective relations among heterogeneous people (with complementary skills) who are well connected outside
 - Everyone has access to everyone's knowledge
 - Turnover helpful
- Radical innovation
 - “skunk works” – small pods of nearly isolated groups

Team Performance

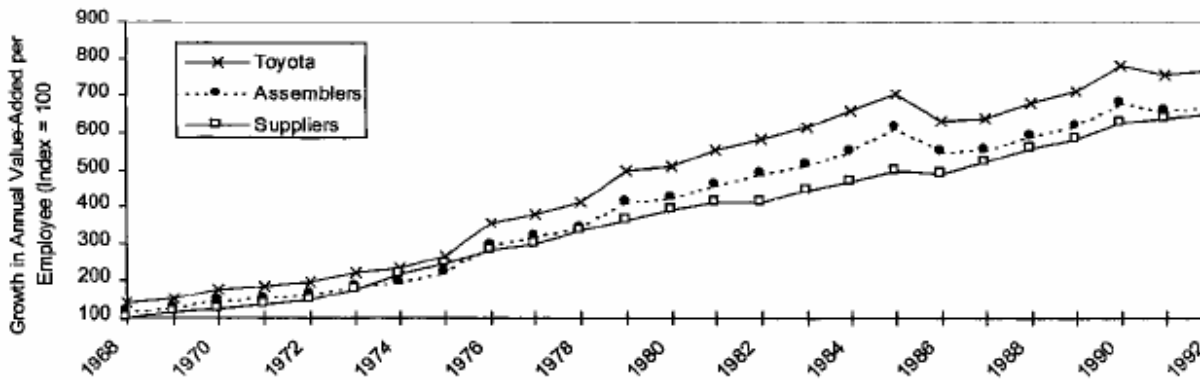
- Bavelas-Leavitt experiments
 - For simple tasks, more centralized structures are faster, more efficient but less fun
 - For complex tasks, less centralized structures are more effective
- Hawthorne experiments
 - Creating a sense of identity helps motivate
 - Closer ties enhances coordination & helping

Toyota Production System (TPS)

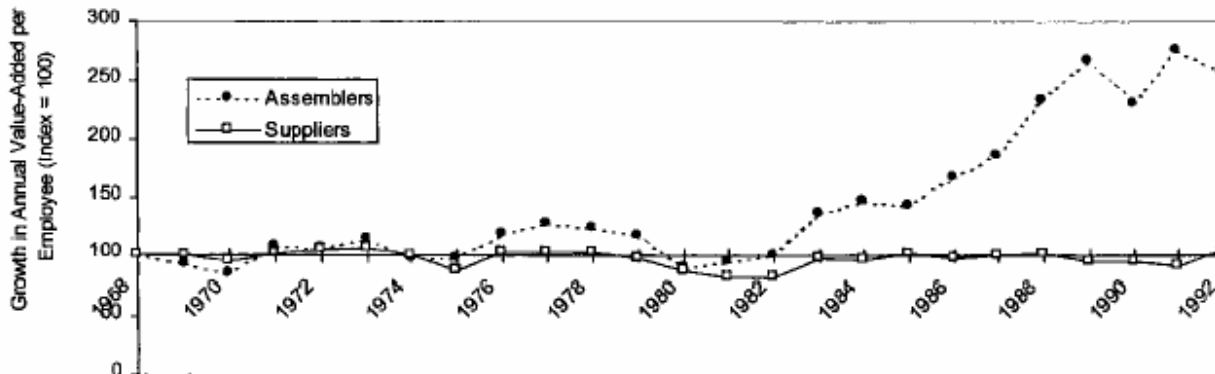
- 200 separate companies that supply Toyota, or supply Toyota's suppliers, ...
- Routinely exchange personnel
- Share intellectual property without contracts
- Assist each other when needed
- Group identity
- Toyota enforces good behavior
- Effectively, Toyota has created a group

US vs Japanese Automotive Productivity

Japanese Automotive Labor Productivity



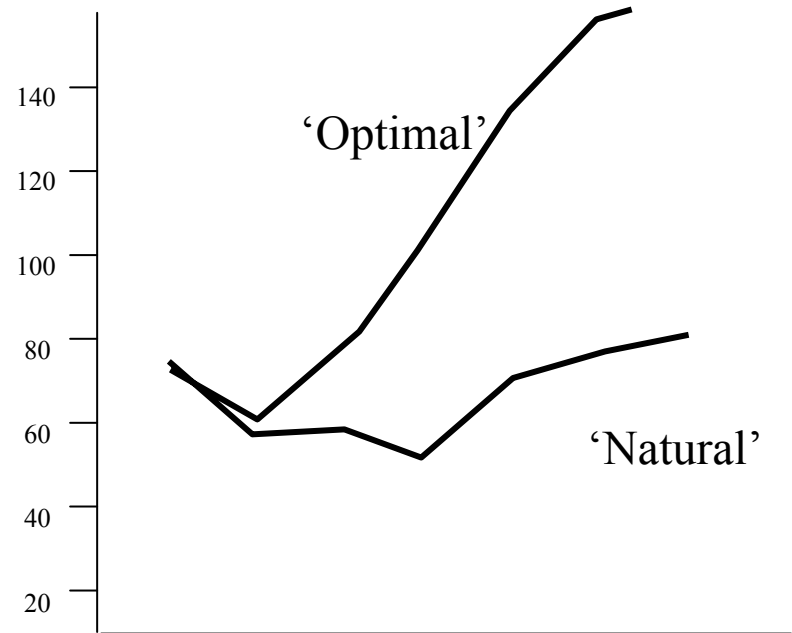
US Automotive Labor Productivity



Source: Adapted from Lieberman, 1994

Inter-Group Relations

- Blue vs Gray
 - Groups quickly develop competitive relations with each other
- Krackardt & Stern organization game
 - Organizations in which people have friends in other departments deal with crises better than organizations in which people only have friends within the group



Group Decision Making

- Individuals exhibit bounded rationality at best
- In groups, basis for decisions can be as much politics as merit
 - Struggles for power, benefits
 - Decisions serve many purposes
- Too much group cohesion can result in groupthink
 - Cognitive conflict improves quality of decisions
 - Affective conflict harms quality of decisions

Leadership & Groups

- Power can be achieved by exploiting divisions in group, pitting members against each other
- Leadership is achieved by making a group out of a collection of individuals
 - Providing common purpose/meaning, a feeling identity and solidarity
- Leadership typically involves empowering & enabling followers
 - Decentralization & distribution of authority
- Successful leadership is due as much to the followers (i.e., the group) as to the leader

Improving Team Processes

- Know each other
 - Preliminary to creating bonds
 - Key to finding mutually advantageous courses of action
- Create integrative vision statement
- Fill key roles
 - Facilitator/coordinators
 - Boundary manager
- Have stated agendas for meetings
- In conflicts, seek expand-the-pie solutions to what appear to be zero-sum situations

In Short ...

- This course covered a lot of ground
- You did a lot of work
 - Serious reading -- scholarly papers
 - Research project
- A lot of it is of practical use in your careers as
 - HR professionals
 - Management consultants
 - Managers & leaders
- It was fun (at least for me)

Behind the scenes: teaching principles

- Students are adults
 - No attendance taken
 - No (well, little) pleading to do your homework
 - No reminders of assignments due
 - No watered-down, high-school level material
 - No paternalistic attitude
- Collaborative versus evaluative
 - Analyze term projects with you, not to grade you
- Keep the atmosphere casual & real
 - Pizza; end early when possible
- Use current events to illustrate class concepts
- Create a group out of the class

Multiple Goals

- Primary goal
 - Learn about groups in organizations
- Secondary goals
 - Instill tools that will benefit future careers
 - Social network analysis consulting
 - Create good citizens

Use this course in job Interviews

- Studied how teams can work better
- Experienced group work
- Conducted open-ended research on real groups, much like a consulting engagement
 - A key skill for HR professionals
- Well-versed in hot new social networks perspective
 - Show them a network diagram and blow them away!

Don't forget me when you're gone!

- I like to hear how my students' careers progress
- I can sometimes help with getting jobs, providing career advice
- I like to hear what you remember about the course and found useful years later in your careers
 - Very useful for adjusting material in courses

The End.
Goodbye.
Go home.
Group hug.

(Actually, we have class on Thurs. But I'm just going to talk about final and help with term projects)