SPE 202 – Group Communication
Assignment name: Semester Project Overview

Objective of assignment: To allow students to understand structured problem solving by applying it to a semester long project.

Description: Most groups that get together on a regular or semi-regular basis have to make decisions and solve problems. This is true no matter what the context. This assignment is meant to introduce students to structured problem solving with two purposes in mind:

- To allow students to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach.
- To allow students to gain experience with this type of methodology when it is applied.

The process we will use in this class is modified in some ways since we will not have the opportunity to implement a solution and evaluate its effectiveness.

There are seven steps to this process and each step will result in a portion of a group paper that is part of your final grade. You will also plan a 30 to 45 minute presentation on your topic to the class at the end of the semester.

Here is a summary of the seven steps:

**Step One – Problem Identification**
Groups identify a problem that will serve as the topic for the project. The final product is a one to two page statement of the problem and its importance.

**Step Two – Identify Learning Issues**
Groups will work together to identify the following about their problem:
- What do we as a group know
- What don’t we know
- What do we need to know to move forward?

Groups will produce an annotated bibliography with four original sources per student in the group.

**Step Three – Define the Problem**
Once all that great information is gathered, groups need to solidify the definition of the problem. Groups will produce 1 – 2 pages that present the problem definition and a brief description of the group process that contributed to this definition. The description should address what worked well and what did not.
Step Four – Analyze the Problem
Your group takes the research and problem definition further along here. Work to develop a set of criteria that your group feels should be met in order to solve this problem. Produce a 1 -2 page report detailing the criteria and the rationale.

Step Five – Generate Possible Solutions
Your group will engage in various creative activities to generate possible solutions to the problem at hand. There isn’t anything to write here on this step. Your group will address this information in Step Six’s written report.

Step Six – Select Solution
Your group will choose the best solution or combination of solutions for the problem. The group will produce a report that discusses the solution and why it was chosen over other solutions generated in the previous step.

Step Seven – Develop Implementation Plan
Your group will produce a plan for how this solution would be implemented. Your report in this section will detail the obstacles that might exist and how you plan to overcome them. Plus you will address how we would know that the solution is successful.

FINAL STEP
Place all these pieces together with the necessary revisions. Provide transitions and package together in an APA styled document.