

**Course Proposal Fall 2027: Hanging Out With Friends 600**

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ENG200: The Writer

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Department of Interpersonal Studies

Course Title: Hanging Out With Friends 600

Instructor: Mr. Konnor Fortini

Prerequisites: HOW100 (Introduction to Mutual Liking), HOW200 (Intermediate Socialization and Overthinking), HOW300 (Advanced Small Talk), and preferably HOW500 (Applied Friendship Maintenance and Emotional Labor).

Meeting Times: Irregular and emotionally convenient.

### **Grading Breakdown**

25% Portfolio 1

25% Major 1: The Group Hang & Reflection

20% Capstone Project

20% Culminating Portfolio

10% Attendance (Physical and Emotional)

### **Course Description**

Hanging Out With Friends 600 (HOW600) is the most advanced course in the department: it applies the saltiness of emotion, the sourness of disappointment, and the potent sugar rush of affection brewed into one bittersweet concoction. Fieldwork will be crucial to this course and requires constant availability. To get permission to take this course, students must demonstrate a consistent willingness to care, even when it feels one-sided; they must show that they've stayed up late waiting for someone to text back, not out of obligation but out of hope. Above all, students must have experienced what it's like to want to be around people so much

that it aches a little, that quiet, unbearable tenderness of wanting to belong. Students SHOULD NOT take this course if they are unwilling to risk caring more than they'll get back.

## **Course Assignments**

### **Week 1: Create the Perfect Group**

Students will be tasked with strategically creating a group to spend their time with. Most, if not all, students try to get all their friends into one huge group, which never works out well, as accusations of “switching up” or “prioritizing” plague those clusters and keep them from reaching their magnificent potential. By the second day, students will have developed group-scoping skills and have begun to understand what an “exemplary” group is.

Exemplary, by this class’s definition, is the group that will bestow the most attention on the student. It feels selfish at first; however, through this approach, they will learn to rationalize, knowing they love these people with all their heart and just want to see that love returned. By the end of this week, students will submit a portfolio containing everything there is to know about everyone in this group.

### **Week 2: Data Analysis and Scheduling**

Subsequent to finding an accompanying group, it is time for students to *call everyone*, building their data analysis skills to determine the best times, meeting locations, and other details. This is their responsibility. This week’s assignments include submitting a transcript of at least 15 phone calls, each with annotations of thoughts after each sentence. For example, after someone says, “I’m busy,” include the conclusion that they hate you in the margin. In the span of

this week, students must have their groups ready for the rest of the term, along with a bunch of schedule conflicts *they* must sort out.

### **Week 3: Strategic Planning and Emotional Regulation**

Planning is the “dip before the rise” and will be the most difficult, yet rewarding part of this course. This week, students will build the skill of planning while maintaining an outwardly calm demeanor, even as their brain calculates a dozen conflicting schedules. Week three also marks the beginning of Unit 1: Expectation Management, learning how to suppress the thought “*why am I the only one who does the planning*” through controlled delusion and deep breathing.<sup>1</sup>

### **Week 4: The Group Hang**

Beginning the first part of a two-part major assignment, this week emphasizes active fieldwork. Students will conduct an in-person hangout, assessing conversation flow and attention distribution while they are ecstatic to see friends again after what felt like an eternity apart (in reality, it was only a couple of days at most). They will be graded on their ability to make sure there is no silence ever. For every moment of silence not during a bathroom break, five percentage points will be deducted. Silence indicates a lack of mastery of what was learned in *Week 1: Creating the Perfect Group*.

### **Week 5: Reflection and Microanalysis**

Students will be expected to submit a reflection of at least 10 single-spaced pages in this font, with a font size of 6, as this most accurately represents the internal thoughts that occur after a “hangout.” The reflection cultivates competency in analyzing social micromovements,

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<sup>1</sup> Unit 1 is the only unit, but students don’t need to know that.

including, but not limited to, eye contact frequency, rate of physical contact, and perceived emotional reciprocity.<sup>2</sup>

### **Week 6: Advanced Overthinking and Emotional Decryption**

Students will build an advanced understanding of context, decrypting meaning from the most minor tonal shifts, such as a sigh, a pause, or a slightly delayed laugh. Each interaction must be replayed at least thirty times before bed. Extra credit will be awarded for late-night voice memos to friends about whether they seemed “off” or “tired.”

### **Week 7: Maintain Momentum**

This week focuses on maintaining a consistent schedule of interaction. Since the students crave constant affection, even a brief distance can trigger spiraling worry. Some may find this strange, while others may find it endearing; therefore, part of the work this week will be understanding which relationships value the latter. Students will begin writing rough drafts of the first part of the culminating portfolio: an essay answering the question “Why do your friends like you?”

### **Week 8: Host Your Own Gathering**

Students have the opportunity to contribute something concrete to the field of Interpersonal Studies. The capstone project begins as the second part of the final. Students will plan, host, and emotionally survive their own social event. While seemingly easy enough,

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<sup>2</sup> **Note:** The reflection must be of negative thoughts only.

students will be evaluated not on attendance, but on how genuinely fulfilled they feel afterward: a metric no one has ever successfully measured.

### **Week 9: Conflict Management and the Art of Pretending You're Fine**

By Week 9, students will encounter interpersonal turbulence. It could be a missed hangout, a forgotten text, or the most devastating thing of all—the discovery that their friends hung out without them. This week focuses on how to suppress the existential dread that follows. Students may experience symptoms, including refreshing Find My and watching a dot move without them. To combat these reactions, they will learn advanced coping techniques such as replying “No Worries,” while subtly dying inside. In-class assessments will take place, where students will be evaluated on their ability to use these skills and pretend they're fine, followed by written reflections graded on tone and passive-aggressive restraint. Participation is mandatory; emotional vulnerability is not encouraged. This will be the second-to-last submission in their culminating portfolio.

### **Week 10: Recovery**

As the term comes to an end, it is time to engage in some recovery. Students will take part in exercises designed to help them rediscover their own self-worth. Assignments include a guided meditation titled “They Probably Still Like You” and a simple nap, as that's the only way to quiet the exhausting thoughts. These assignments cannot hurt a student's grade; instead, they only serve to help students. Students who demonstrate even a minor increase in self-compassion will be allotted up to 5 extra percentage points.

**Week 11: Final Evaluation and Portfolio Submission**

The final assessment, the last part of their culminating portfolio, will take place during an unplanned late-night walk, during which students question whether their friends truly understand them, and perhaps whether they understand themselves. Students are encouraged to submit “teardrop entries” as part of their term portfolio to build their growth documentation skills.

**Course Conclusion**

By the end of Hanging Out With Friends 600, students should have learned that friendship, like any advanced discipline, demands more than understanding; it requires endurance. Most will not pass, but all will feel something. Those who fail may retake the course next term, provided they can stop treating friendship like a final exam.