**Chapter 9: Decision Making**

**Class Activities**

**Activity 1: APPROACHES TO DECISION-MAKING**

Objective: To help understand the different approaches (consultative, democratic, consensus) to decision-making.

Activity: Form small groups so there are a total of at least three groups in the class. Each group should be assigned one of the above approaches to decision-making. They are then to explain to the class what the approach is, and argue why this perspective is better than the others. This could be structured as a debate.

**Activity 2: GROUP POLARIZATION**

Objective: To demonstrate group polarization:

Activity: Before lecturing on group decision making in Chapter 9, have students declare on a Likert scale how strongly they agree or disagree with some statement or idea. Collect the responses and divide students into like-minded groups for a short, 5-minute discussion. After the group discussion, have students rate their agreement with the proposition again on the same Likert scale.

Discussion: Ask students to speculate about the causes of the effect of polarization. Compare these speculations to those made by psychologists.

[Source: Gray, P. (1993). Engaging students' intellects: The immersion approach to critical thinking in psychological instruction. *Teaching of Psychology, 20*, 68-74.]

**Activity 3: STRUCTURED DECISION-MAKING TECHNIQUES**

Objective: To demonstrate the nominal group technique.

Activity: Divide students into groups of 4-5. Provide them with a problem they have to solve as a group, using the nominal group technique. Problems can be anything; examples include: how to increase parking on campus, how to reduce tuition, how to decrease pollution, how to promote healthier eating habits among students, etc.  
Discussion: How did this technique compare to traditional decision-making? What are benefits and disadvantages?

**Activity 4: TRY THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE**

Objective: To demonstrate the Delphi Technique.

Activity: Pretend that many students on campus use technology (e.g., cell phones, laptops, etc.) in their classes for non-class related activities. This has become disruptive to the learning environment. University administration has asked your group to help deal with this issue. In small groups of 4-5 students, use the Delphi Technique to develop a policy for dealing with students who inappropriately use technology during class time.