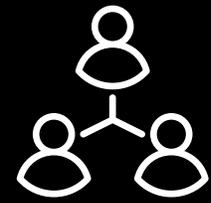


Setting Students Up for Successful Group Work



1.

Teach the value of group work

- Groups build communication, conflict resolution, and delegation skills.
- Team projects provide experiential learning for the professional world.
- Collaboration skills are marketable.

2.

Assign groups intentionally

- The most effective groups have 4-5 members.
- Assign students to groups; don't just randomize or let students choose.
- Successful groups have members with a strong commitment to the content and outcomes.

3.

Create interdependence

- Consider assigning roles to group members.
- Complex projects encourage students to lean on one another.
- Fostering trust between members transforms individuals into a team.

4.

Set clear expectations

- Provide examples of a successful final product.
- Consider interim deadlines or milestones - starting at the beginning of the semester.
- Present a task that can be turned into a shared common goal.

5.

Clarify individual responsibility

- Add accountability by creating individually graded portions of a project or implementing peer evaluations.
- Create contract grading where each student signs an outline of their tasks and deadlines.
- Provide opportunities for students to give each other feedback.



Additional tips:

- Embrace the process as more important than the product.
- Let students express their preferred group culture.
- Make sure the project is something that is best done in groups.

References

- Michaelsen, L. K., Knight, A. B., & Fink, L. D. (Eds.). (2023). *Team-based learning: A transformative use of small groups in college teaching*. Taylor & Francis.
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