TEAM PROJECTS

Assignment Guide for Instructors

This toolkit is intended to give you and the students the guidance and tools need to plan, manage and assess the effectiveness of teams. It can be used in conjunction with any of the other toolkits. Depending on the type of project, you may need to adapt the information below.

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

Connect the purpose of the team project with your course level and program level learning outcomes. Some student learning outcomes specific to developing and demonstrating the skills of effective team membership include:

1. Complete individual responsibilities in a timely manner.
2. Actively contribute to group discussions, problem resolution, and decision making.
3. Demonstrate effective verbal and written communication skills, including listening and speaking respectfully, expressing opinions and disagreement in a non-judgemental manner, providing constructive feedback to other team members.

# LESSON OUTLINE

As with any project, it is important to give students enough time to learn techniques, practice new skills, and receive feedback on the content before finalizing their presentation. This general outline can be adapted to your own class and content.

# Planning the Project

* Design a task that includes the elements of a successful team project. See the first two instructor resources in the Toolkit for guidance.
* Break the task into smaller pieces.
  + Determine due dates for progress reports, team self-assessments, and project elements that build upon each other, i.e. topic proposal, literature review, design, drafts.
* Identify format of final project. Where possible give multiple options. See Project Product resources
* Lay out specific expectations for the final project in writing. See this example from a [marketing communications class](https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/media/Rubric.PNG?width-500&height=500).
* Create an appropriate grading rubric for the project. Each of the multimedia Toolkits includes examples of rubrics appropriate to the media.

**Groups**

* What group size is appropriate for the complexity of the project? Ideal size is three or four members for complex projects. For short term, simpler projects, two may be more appropriate.
* How will groups be formed – will you assign them, and if so, will they be homogeneous or heterogeneous. Or will you let them form their own groups? If so, how/where will this occur?
  + The group self-select tool in Cougar Courses can help here. You can set up groups, or allow students to create their own groups based on availability.
* Review the documents about roles and select or create appropriate roles. See the sample team roles in the Setting Up Teams resources.

**Assessment**

* Will students all get the same grade, or individual grades, or two grades, one for the whole project and one for their individual contributions?
* Decide how you will assess individual accountability. Options could be individual quizzes, a report summarizing what they contributed, learned about teamwork, problems encountered, ways to resolve, their peer evaluations, etc.

# Beginning of the Project

* Introduce project early in the semester, so students have plenty of time to organize and manage their time.
* [Get student buy in](http://facultyguidetoteamwork.umn.edu/how-do-i-introduce-project-order-get-student-buy). Discuss project purpose and goals, and your reasons for assigning it as a team project. Help them see the value of collaboration.
* Explain how teams will be created, and your expectations for frequency and quality of collaboration.
* Students complete and submit the team roles and contract documents, if using.
  + Introduce the tools you expect them to use to collaborate. See the Team Collaboration and Communication tools.
* Allow students to introduce and orient themselves. This could be done in the classroom, or through a forum.
  + Provide specific prompts for the students to respond to – what are their interests, strengths, previous experiences with team projects, etc.
  + Have students draw up their team contract. See the examples in Setting Up Teams resources.
* Go over project check in points and explicitly discuss the assessment criteria.
* Discuss expectations about team and your role in supporting the team.

During the Project

Facilitate and be involved in group activities.

Closely monitor group forums, chats or wikis to identify student involvement at beginning, contact students not participating early in the group process

* Model and support the development of collaborative skills
  + Devote time to teamwork skills and discussing issues that may come up. This Eberly Center page lists [strategies and examples](https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/instructionalstrategies/groupprojects/design.html).
* In a face-to-face or hybrid class, set aside class time for group meetings.
* Collect ongoing data on student progress. This can include project reports, brief team conferences or mid-point peer assessments.
  + Provide feedback to students in a timeframe that allows them to incorporate it before too far into the next steps.

# End of Project

* Collect student self and peer assessments or reflections.

**Need additional Support with this project or toolkit? Contact us at** [**IDS@csusm.edu**](mailto:IDS@csusm.edu)



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