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FACULTY RESOURCES

Creating Online Group Work

The term "group work" can bring up feelings of dread for some students (and even faculty members) who have had negative experiences in the past. However, group work can truly be a positive learning opportunity for all. Students who collaborate can increase their social skills, as well as engage more thoroughly with content while working in groups.

What are some Basic Tips for Planning Group Work?

A group project should be well-planned and then well communicated to students for best results. This is a short YouTube video (2 minutes, and 30 seconds long) that quickly mentions some important group work tips.

If you prefer, visit this Magna, Faculty Focus, website to read a version of the same group work tips.

How Do I Choose an Assignment that Students will Benefit from Completing Collaboratively?

This Carnegie Mellon University site provides some ideas on how to design group projects. (Although it is not specifically labeled for online, the same principles apply.)

This Magna, Faculty Focus article shares, "Four Types of Group Work Activities to Engage Students".

The Illinois Online Network offers these small group formats that provide opportunity for students to work together.

How Do I Give the Group a Space to Work?

You can easily set up wikis, where groups can collaborate on content, in every Blackboard shell. A wiki allows students to contribute and modify materials in one place. Please see this link for details on Blackboard wikis.

If you are looking for outside resources to try out, see this eLearning Industry article, 6 Online Collaboration Tools.

How Do I Assess Group Work Fairly?

This is a pdf, from Carnegie Mellon University, that provides a few assessment examples.

Here are a few group work rubrics, already created on RubiStar, a free rubric creation tool online. You can use these or take the ideas here and create your own.

- Online Collaboration and Research: Current Event Group Project Rubric
- Group Member/Peer Evaluation rubric

Additional Resources

Online Learning Insights, How to Make Group Work Collaborative in Online Courses: Four Strategies

Rochester Institute of Technology, Creating Online Group Activities