

Faculty-to-Faculty Ideas for Implementing Teamwork in On-line Courses

From Theresa Dorel tgarfield@alamo.edu

I have my on line students self select into a group for a group project, self assess their project and have the class assess their projects. This is pretty easy to set up in Blackboard.

From Barbara F. Kelley bkelly6@alamo.edu

I am working toward my Ed.D. in Higher Education and Adult Learning at Walden University's Online program. The way Walden incorporates teamwork and collaborative learning in our online courses is by: 1) dividing us into groups alphabetically, (if there are 20 students, then the first 4 students alphabetically are in Group A, the second 4 students alphabetically are in Group B, etc.); 2) having each group, or each student in the group, choose a topic, create a PowerPoint, and sharing it with the other members of the group, (for example, my PowerPoint title for last semester's topic was "Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome in College: Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory: A better way to treat autistic individuals." Another student in my group also chose Bandura's Social Cognitive method, but applied it to the 8th graders she teaches in her middle school in Houston. A third student chose a method she uses in her 5th grade elementary school in Fort Collins, Colorado. 3) We sent these PowerPoints to each other, awaited feedback on our project, and in return, gave feedback to the other members of the group. 4) When we received or gave feedback, we typed up this information into our final report, using an abstract, introduction, body, and conclusion about what we learned in the project's group work. This counted as 30% of our final grade.

We are also required to hold Module discussion groups, posting our response to the lead topic by the end of week 1 and responses to at least 2 other members of our class by the end of week 2, as well as responding to anyone who responds to our responses.

From Laura A. Lawrence llawrence10@alamo.edu

In my online SPCH 1321 (Business & Professional Communication), students work together in groups of 4-5 to put together a business meeting with a Power Point presentation. They have to choose a topic, their roles as presenters, the roles of the audience members, and the goal (purpose) of the presentation. For example, a group of "nurses" and health care workers put together a 10-minute presentation for hospital employees on the importance of good hand washing techniques to stop the spread of the H1N1 flu virus. Their classmates play the roles of the audience members, and then they switch (presenters become audience and vice versa).

Pat Stone has a copy of Laura's syllabus. If you want a copy, just e-mail her at pstone11@alamo.edu
Feel free to contact Laura if you want more information too.

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From Joseph Coppola jcoppola2@alamo.edu

I have my in class students conduct a team presentation that I will be transitioning when I start teaching online courses. Here is the criteria I use below. Also, I have attached two examples from student assignments from the current year.

For online students able to work together to complete the project outside of class together, here is a good example-simply click play when the link is up:

<http://pacms.alamo.edu/mediasite/Viewer/?peid=21b7149db2514e4991e4a2bab2c51f79>

For online students who are not able to meet, they can still do voiceovers, conduct research, and talk over the phone to complete this project but still work together using technology like Windows Movie Maker. Here is an example of that. Please click on the link below, then click on Substance Abuse and College Students in the middle of the page.

<http://pacsharepoint/SiteDirectory/Speech/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Please adjust the sound accordingly.

Small Group Project

Group Members:

200 total points max:

Your team of 3-6 people will prepare a small group project on a topic that is relevant to the class. Your group will have between 20 to 25 minutes to address the class. You must show up or participate with a group in order to pass this assignment. Please see your professor for any questions you may have.

You will be assessed on the following criteria:

Creativity- was the topic unique in bringing an old issue a new flavor or in discussing a new concept? Did the presenters provide complementary sensory aids? Did the speakers provide wonder or entertainment for the audience beyond just information?

Informative- did the project provide some beneficial information to the class that can be deemed noteworthy? Did the presenters provide adequate background information? Did the speakers provide five supporting materials to include no more than one internet source?

Organization- was the project carefully put together by having some logical order to it? Was there a clear introduction, body, and conclusion? Was the group introduced properly? Were transitions present? Did the presenters work in unison?

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Delivery- was the project delivered with a message in a clear and concise manner? Did the speakers have excellent nonverbal communication? Did the speakers exhibit excellent conversational style with regard to enthusiasm, vocal expressiveness, emphasis, spontaneity, and fluency in their voice?

Participation-did all the members of the group have a hand in the project or did select members dominate the group discussion?

Did group meet time requirements? (-40)

From Dr. Audrey Mosley amosley@alamo.edu

In my online SPCH 1321 (Business & Professional Communication), students work together in teams of 3-5 to create a case study based on the concepts and processes studied in the text and instructional module, *“Working in Virtual Teams.”* The case scenario also includes three to five questions targeted to the event or conditions and their inter-relationships. The goal of the case scenario is to portray a real-life complex communication problem in a way that conveys a vicarious experience to the reader. Students are provide an example of a case study to ensure understanding and encourage higher order and creative thinking skills—investigating, analyzing, applying, questioning, composing, evaluating, and decision making.

Team Formation

1. In the first week, students work in an assigned team area to collaborate and develop the case scenario. Each team designates/elects/appoints a team coordinator/leader. The role of the leader is to coordinate the activity and ensure communication, collaboration, and project completion. All members are expected to be active in the development and decision-making process and to be individually accountable for their contributions.
2. In the second week, and in another assigned area, the team leaders post the final case study. Throughout the second week, all students are required to respond to at least two team postings (case scenario questions).

Assessment

1. A rubric is provided for team members to evaluate each other’s work, participation, and contribution to the collaborative product. The team members receive a participation grade (0-15 points). The team leader is awarded an additional 5 extra points (based on team member’s evaluations).
2. The instructor also assigns a grade on the project (case study) that applies to every member of the group (0-75 points).
3. Student responses (0-10 points).

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4. Reflections—students reflect on their learning in working in virtual teams. The reflections also allow the instructor to gather information about the assignment to evaluate the effectiveness of student's experiences in working in teams /collaborative learning.

Advantages

- Learning occurs socially in the collaborative construction of knowledge (collective thinking).
- Allows the instructor to monitor student's understanding of course content.
- Promotes active learning and interactivity.
- Provides a structure conducive to creating dialogue, increasing the feeling of social presence from the instructor and other group members.
- Allows for resources sharing and collaborative writing.
- Allows students to share their understanding of concepts and experience diverse and multiple feedback ahead of that received from the instructor.

Disadvantages

1. Team work in the online environment is time-consuming for both the instructor and students.
2. Some group members became frustrated with the slowness or lack of participation from other members.

Lessons Learned

1. Teams should be formed after the 12th day class reporting period. Some students are late entering the course or drop before the reporting period.
2. It is best for the instructor to assign students to groups. It's difficult, confusing, and irritating for students when they are simply left to their own devices to form groups.
3. Instructors should provide detailed guidelines (content and format) and responsibilities, set reasonable goals and objectives, and provide both a place for the group to work and present their work.
4. Students should be allowed to evaluate his or her own contributions, as well as those of teammates using a well-defined set of criteria (rubric). This provides additional input that can assist the instructor in discerning what each student has contributed to the group effort.
5. Students should be given an opportunity to reflect on their experience in working with a virtual team.
6. Groups should be kept small (3-5) because it becomes more of a challenge logistically for students to coordinate the input and work of more than five people.

Future Plans

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1. Provide the option to create a case study, develop a communication plan, or solve an organizational problem.
2. Allow students to form groups based on shared problems, interests, and experiences.
3. Require students to work collaboratively to provide a name/ logo for the group.
4. At the completion of the project, pull together all discussions that are still fuzzy to some students.
5. Encourage students to post pictures in their groups to further humanize the process.

From Bobby J. Martinez bmartinez143@alamo.edu **(Government at NVC)**

Each module has an assignment requiring self reflection about the assignment as compared to the module's instructions Discussion Grading Rubric.

Then, each student conducts the same analysis for at least three peers.

Next, specific feedback is emailed to ONE of the three students

Finally a summary of the specific feedback is posted to the entire class to read, reflect and apply.

QUESTION # 2: Minimum of 150 words.

a. Discuss your "honest" evaluation of your own "assigned" response to **Module # 5, Posting # 1, Question # 1**, based on the grading criteria outlined in the **Discussion Grading Rubric** and the actual assignment instructions. **Specifically, describe the details of your responsiveness to the grading criteria and actual instructions?**

b Next, review, and discuss your **critical analysis** of at least * three (3) identified student postings for ANY identified **Module # 5 Posting # 1, Question # 1**- preferably for a posting for a question different than the one you addressed. (**NOTE:** *This will be verified by the instructor). **Identify** in THIS response the names of the **THREE (3)** students (and respective assigned questions) that you reviewed. Then, **based on** specific application **of the Discussion Grading Rubric** critically comment on **their work**. Discuss how does each student's work **compare** to your own **identified assignment?** **Overall, what did you learn from reading and critically analyzing the response of your peers?**

c. Then, directly email (do not email ALL or the instructor) your critical, analytical, constructive and respectful feedback directly to **ONE (1)** *identified, **of the THREE (3)** aforementioned student postings for this assignment. Do not copy the instructor. **Note:** In your email to them refer in the subject heading your own last name, their last name and the essay. **Identify** the student you emailed.

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d. Then, briefly, **summarize** (do not copy) your critical, analytical, respectful, and constructive feedback to the ONE *identified student. whose work you critically commented on based on specific application of the **Discussion Grading Rubric** and their respective assignment. **Identify** in this response if your comments duplicates the feedback already provided by your class to the same student. -

As stated in the syllabus: ... “Do not post (email) personal matters... (avoid) getting the class off topic by engaging in casual off-topic conversations... “(e.g. whining and /or complaining about assignments, grades etc)... “As you post, (email) simply stating that you agree/disagree with a fellow classmate **IS NOT** sufficient; you must explain your cited researched position as to why you agree/disagree with a posting based on application of text material, related state and/or local government public policy current events and other related cited research.

At the end of the semester the student do a reflection essay summarizing their learning associated with the collaborative group work.... ASK leaning Outcomes etc...see excerpts and the attachment

SUMMER 2010 EMAIL Assignment# 2

For Email Assignment # 2 a minimum of 500 words for Questions A. - C.

A. Knowledge:

Discuss what you experienced or what were you were exposed to this semester (e.g. text readings, doing peer reviews, reviewing peer “sample quality” work, legislative video library assignment, reflecting on three + module discussions, a specific class assignment, offering feedback to others, the pre-semester non-technical orientation, **(June 2010)** or reading current events with a critical analytical focus etc.) in this internet class that helped you best **understand state and local government?** Discuss convincingly what **KNOWLEDGE** you learned or what should you have done to better understand, value, and apply the **NVC ASK Learning Outcomes** (see Course syllabus or NVC website) for **life-long learning?**

We learn more by looking for the answer to a question and not finding it than we do from learning the answer itself. ~Lloyd Alexander

B. Skills:

Discuss what you experienced or what were you exposed to this semester (class expectations, instructor emailed feedback, academic progress checklist, instructor Announcement reminders, class collaborative learning experiences, expectation of applying thesis statements, expectation of writing critical, analytical, quality, cited with research college-level work, expectation of communicating with respect, ‘seeking to understand before seeking to be understood’, expectation of meeting deadlines and following directions, providing peer module feedback, that helped you understand **life skills** for college success in the short-term and long term professional success?

Discuss, the demeanor of your conduct in communications with your instructor and your peers?

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Discuss what you learned, based on comparing and contrasting your work, with “sample quality student work,” the Discussion Grading Rubric, **and** the professor’s feedback with respect to: grammar, following directions, research expectations, doing quality work in advance of deadline and critical thinking etc. Discuss convincingly what **SKILLS you** learned or what should you have done to better understand, value, and apply the **NVC ASK Learning Outcomes** (see Course syllabus or NVC website) for **life-long learning**?

"Have the dogged determination to follow through to achieve your goal; regardless of circumstances or whatever other people say, think, or do." -- Paul Meyer

C. Attitudes- for Academic Success-Life-Long Learning:

Look up for understanding (cite in essay) the concept of “**internal locus of control.**”

Then, discuss specifically, what could you have done (reflect on your honest responses to Question A. & B.) as “opportunities for improvement” to enhance your **ATTITUDE** related to **academic success** – not only affecting your grade-in the short-term- but much more importantly impacting your long-term **life-long learning**.

Consider: What life skills did you demonstrate or need to improve with respect to consistently submit timely and quality work, which adheres to instructions, and the instructor’s feedback and reminders?

Discuss how you did or did not self monitor your academic progress throughout the semester to include not only calculating earned grades but rather also following the instructor’s discussion grading feedback? **Discuss** how often did you seek instructor feedback or guidance well before the Drop Date? Why or why not?

Discuss your honest strategies and efforts to address the professor’s Discussion Grading? How much time did you spend reviewing the instructor’s feedback and emailed “Sample Quality Student” work?

Discuss how you contributed or not to the class’ “collaborative learning” as an “energizer,” **or** “energy depleter / whiner”... complaining about work, grades, exams etc.?

Discuss, which of these attributes is sought out by employers as adding “value” to an organization?

In summary, discuss convincingly what did **you** learn or what should you have done to better understand, value, and apply the **NVC ASK Learning Outcomes** (see Course syllabus or NVC website) for **life-long learning - recall, and synthesize learning from A, B. and C.?**

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From Dr. Barbara Millis-Resources and Ideas for On-line Teamwork

Here are some resources:

<http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/rmillis3.html>

<http://www.tltgroup.org/BHW/HowTo/Interactivities/ManagingMotivating.htm>

<http://clp.cqu.edu.au/index.htm>

Varied examples of online collaboration:

- Online role-playing (e.g., in international negotiation) - [ICONS Project](#)
- [Examples of collaboration and interaction with materials](#) - from a TLT Group web site on the changing nature of university/college education
- ["Can Distance Enhance Quality?"](#) Ehrmann and Collins
- Using online interaction, tutorials and quizzes to a) help students "do the reading" before coming to a face-to-face classrooms, b) provide feedback that helps the faculty member plan what happens in that classroom before the students arrive.

Using Feedback to Improve Online Discussion, Collaboration

- [Flashlight tools](#) - items for surveys that faculty and support units can use to spot barriers that inhibit even a few students from full participation
- [Evaluating and planning physical and virtual learning spaces](#) - a list of activities that can be key to interaction (and to learning generally) along with examples of physical and virtual facilities that make those activities easier - A TLT Group Resource Site

Primers on collaboration and techniques of facilitation. Educational research indicates that the principles that relate collaborative activity to learning outcomes apply whether the learning happens on-campus or off-. The importance of those technologies (the campus is a technology, just as a course management system is) lies in the kinds of learning activities (such as collaboration) that they make easier and richer. So here are some materials about the importance of collaborative learning, and how to facilitate it -- the ideas apply to both physical and virtual learning spaces.

- ["Enhancing Learning -- and More -- Through Cooperative Learning," Barbara Millis](#)
- ["Facilitation,"](#) Andrew Feenberg (facilitating online interaction by a pioneer in the field)
- ["Equation of Simple Harmonic Motion,"](#) a story about informal collaborative learning

Task to help faculty develop their thinking about collaboration and technology

- List the collaborative activities that would be best for your course (whether or not you use them now.) (e.g., discussion that involves pointing to images? coaching while someone is using tools or a specialized environment to do course work? role plays? working on projects over a period of weeks?)

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- Assume that you had the most appropriate classroom and the best software and communications now available in any educational institution in the world. Which of those collaborative activities would be best done through asynchronous communication? Which ones would be best done through synchronous communication? Which would be best done face-to-face?
- Modify your assumptions about technology - you are limited only to classrooms and technology now available through your own institution. Does that change your judgment?

<Retrieved Oct 25, 2010 from <http://www.tltgroup.org/Collaboration/collabexploreguide.htm>>Warmly