

# Facilitating Collaborative Learning

Center for Teaching Innovation



# Today's Session

- 90 minutes
- Interactive and collaborative
  - Question breaks throughout: To unmute and speak, raise Zoom hand. To type, use Chat.
- Focus: Long term collaborative experiences
  - Less on short term day-to-day collaboration

# Learning Outcomes

In this workshop, we will:



Discuss the benefits of having students work and learn collaboratively



Identify strategies for forming groups based on your course learning goals



Consider a range of support resources that can improve group learning experiences and save you time

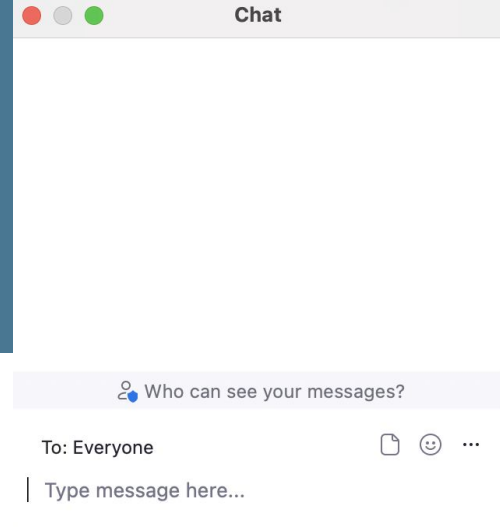
# Collaborative Learning Examples

- **Problem-based learning**
  - Analyze a case study
- **Authentic learning**
  - Develop a business plan or an environmental analysis
- **Skills-based projects**
  - Present an analysis of primary sources/evidence
- **Guided design**
  - Develop a working prototype

# CHAT ACTIVITY

## What are some of the benefits of collaborative learning?

Type your ideas in Chat, but do not press enter.  
We will all add our comments at the same time.



# Benefits of Collaborative Learning

## **Learning Benefits:**

- Better retention
- Better and deeper overall learning (higher order learning)

## **Social Benefits:**

- Increased sense of connection and belonging
- Increased motivation

## **Process Benefits:**

- Communication and teamwork skills
- Modeling for professional environments

# Students' Own Voice

\*From Fall 2020 Student Learning Experience Survey



## MORE GROUP PROJECTS

Students found it valuable to have opportunities to learn collaboratively and interact with peers.



## MORE ENGAGEMENT

Students especially appreciate the opportunities to engage with peers real time.



# Getting Students Engaged

Assist students in the acceptance and willingness to actively engage in the collaborative experience

Help them to realize how it:

- Aids in achieving course objectives
- Is important for career/field
- Connects to their personal goals
- Is a strength to have multiple perspectives





# Getting Students Engaged

## Activity Ideas



- Show past group success stories and anecdotes
  - Showcase examples of what was accomplished together
  - Wisdom Wall Activity
- Journal about a meaningful team experience they've had in the past and why it was successful
  - Write about how they can apply it to this experience.

## Food Science 1101: Final Project



# Questions? Ideas from the group?



# POLL ACTIVITY

**What method have you  
used to form teams?**

In the poll window, select your answer with your cursor.

## Options

- Let students choose their team
- Assign students randomly
- Deliberately create diverse teams
- Other

# How to Form Teams

- Consider the size and number of groups
- Consider what resources you have available, and what students will need, to support their groups
- Consider characteristics of your students
  - What background experiences do they bring?
  - On what factors do you want heterogeneity? On what factors do you want homogeneity?

# How to Form Teams

- Variables to consider:
  - Major/discipline
  - Interest and skills
  - Gender
  - Availability
  - Others?

# Team Example



Professor Jon Schuldt

Communication

COMM 2760:  
“Persuasion and Social  
Influence”

## Semester Long Project

- Students design and conduct field research project on communication and social influence
- Form groups by interest in research topics
- Interim products include reports on group process
- Some class time allowed for team meetings

# Team Example



Professor Nozomi  
Nishimura

Biomedical Engineering

BME 4110: “Science and  
Technology Approaches  
to Problems in Human  
Health”

## Semester Long Project

- Students write original research proposal
- Form groups by student background (i.e., must contain engineering/tech and biology/medical)
- Regular reports of group process via online survey
- Close faculty support and input at each stage of project
  - Initial Proposal
  - Interim group presentation to course faculty

# Questions? Ideas from the group?





# Discussion Activity

- Read the given scenario with your group
- Discuss ideas for how you might address this challenge.
  - Breakout rooms 8 minutes
  - Bring ideas back to main session



# Scenario

**Student "1"** comes to you to discuss a problem with her 4-person group. According to her, one of the other students, **Student "2"** made it very difficult to complete the work. He didn't contribute much work, and the work he did contribute was so poor that the other members basically had to redo the work. **Student 1** thinks it is unfair that **Student 2** will get the same grade as the other people in the group.

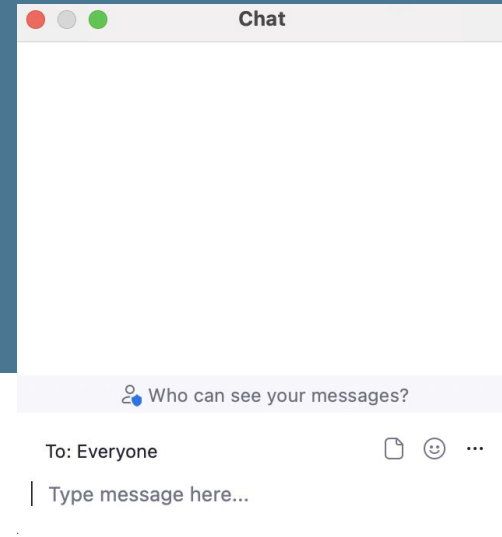
**Prompt:** Discuss ideas for how you might address this challenge.

8 minutes. Bring ideas back to main session.

# CHAT ACTIVITY

## What are some other challenges of collaborative learning?

Type your ideas in Chat, but do not press enter.  
We will all add our comments at the same time.



# Teaching Students to Manage Themselves

## Building structure with Team Contracts

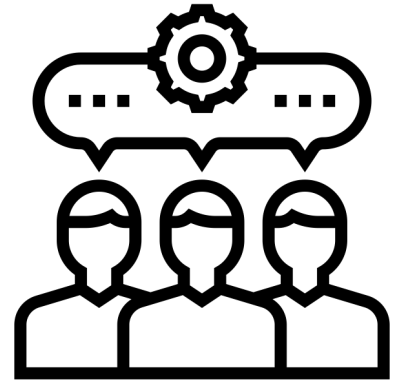


Professor of Practice, Erica Dawson, Graduate School of Management

# Team Contracts: Communication

Have students make group decisions about:

- Goals
- Meeting times and location
- How time will be spent together
- Preferred method of communicating
- Tools that will be used
- Timeline to meet deadlines
- Work styles
- Ways they will hold each other accountable



Created by Eucalyp  
from Noun Project

# Assigning roles and responsibilities

**Facilitator** - moderate discussion, keep on task, distribute work

**Recorder** - take notes summarizing discussions and decisions

**Reporter** - serves as the team spokesperson, summarizing activities

**Researcher** - coordinates any research assignments

**Critic** - raises constructive objections or counter-arguments



# Team Example

Professor Tasha Lewis

Fiber Science and  
Apparel Design

FSAD 2310: “Fashion  
Product Management”

## Semester Long Project

- Students develop new fashion collection
- Student roles assigned that mirror roles in the industry
- Clear expectations on syllabus (role responsibilities specified)
- Groups must submit agendas and minutes of each meeting to Instructor
- Some class time allowed for group meetings

# Managing conflict

- Consider whether you want to have an “opt-out” policy
- Check in early to identify emerging problems
- Assign self and peer assessments
- Encourage groups with issues to refer back to their agreement or contract



# Questions? Ideas from the group?



# Discussion Activity

- Read the given scenario with your group
- Discuss ideas for how you might address this challenge.
  - Breakout rooms 8 minutes
  - Bring ideas back to main session



# Scenario

**Student A** comes to you to discuss a problem with her 5-person group. According to the student, one of the other students, **Student B**, made it very difficult to complete the work. **Student B** appointed himself the head of the group, assigned other people roles, and was unwilling to listen to ideas from other people in the group. Everyone grew frustrated, and now **Student B** is angry that people weren't doing things the way he wanted. **Student A** doesn't know what to do.

**Prompt:** Discuss ideas for how you might address this challenge.

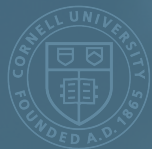
# Bringing it all Together

The student experience:

- What will they learn? How does the group project enrich their learning?
- How will you support their learning? What can you do to help them collaborate effectively?



# Questions



# THANK YOU

Center for Teaching Innovation

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