

Implementing Successful Collaborative Learning: Structure and Strategies

Collaborative learning: Students work together in teams for an extended period to complete a graded task/project.

STRUCTURE	STRATEGY
1. Prepare for Group Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Align collaborative learning with student learning outcomes. ○ Articulate a clear discipline-specific rationale for the use of group work. ○ Carefully consider group formation and size; a team of 3 – 5 students is more manageable. ○ Generate checklists for monitoring group process and product.
2. Facilitate Group Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus process on the expectations associated with positive interdependence. ○ Teach students good group work skills and process. ○ Help students establish group norms and develop a group contract. ○ Assign roles. Provide the checklist for group process.
3. Clarify Group Task/Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus task on the expectations associated with individual and group accountability. ○ Design a complex and multifaceted task that requires group effort. ○ Explain the group task and expected product; provide written instructions and rubric. ○ Help groups identify individual expectations and contributions.
4. Monitor Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schedule in-class team meetings to observe process. ○ Walk around and answer any questions as needed. ○ Schedule regular check-ins to guide process and provide feedback. ○ Set timelines for interim report of group process. Preemptively address free-riding issues.
5. Monitor Task/Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Break the task into steps. Require each member to keep track of contributions. ○ Set timelines for submission of each step. ○ Review task. Provide formative assessment/feedback. ○ Review interim self and peer evaluations. Intervene to support equal contribution to group task.
6. Schedule Presentation of Task/Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide instructions for group presentations. ○ Allow group members to choose their presentation format. Encourage the use of multimedia. ○ Ask the audience to post questions and feedback to Zoom chat. ○ Debrief the group project for the entire class. Revisit objectives. Summarize main points.
7. Include Reflection on Process and Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have each student submit a critical reflection that encompasses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What went well in group work and what could be improved. ▪ Quality of group contributions to task (self and peers). ▪ How group work impacted their learning.



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Oregon State University
Center for Teaching
and Learning