

Classroom Management: Handling Student Differences in Group/Team Work Situations

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How we envision our student teams



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Reality?



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My Engineering Teamwork Perspective

- Freshman Design
- Labs – Experimental and Software
- Capstone Experience – Senior Design
- ABET Accreditation Requirements
- Graduate students
 - Research labs



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Challenges in Teamwork Interactions

- No Leader
- Leader is too bossy, demanding, does not listen
- Team “carries” someone
- Team is altogether not functional – conflicting personalities – no work is getting done



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Proactive Potential Practices

- Educate the students
 - We assume students know how to work together
 - We need to teach them
 - Be proactive not reactive
 - Topics:
 - Leadership, respect for others, common goals, breaking work into achievable and obtainable goals, brainstorming, ethics
- Recognize and appreciate teamwork dynamics and diversity within teams



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Proactive Potential Practices

- Don't inflate the size of a group – correctly choose the size – keep all student involved
- What should not dictate size (although it does)
 - Technology (ie, number of computers)
 - Number of labs/projects to grade
- Instructor vs. Student Selected Group
 - Possibly balance strengths



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Proactive Potential Practices

- Assign roles on a team, and switch throughout project/term (if appropriate)
- Must demonstrate and convince the team of the value of working together
- Early contact and evaluation by instructor
 - Set early term milestone that can demonstrate teamwork



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What is team is not working...

- Identify the problem.
 - Talk to the team and individuals
 - Assign a task(s) to get team and/or individual back on track
 - Is it one person on the team? Is it an even split?
 - Office of Disability Resources?
 - Drexel Counseling Center?
 - Change teams. It is your class and your rules.



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Grading Teamwork

- Make teamwork important to the success of the project
- Individual portion of grade
- Teamwork portion of grade
- Student self assessment
- Student and Faculty/TA team assessment
- Notebooks both individual and group



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Thank you!

- What are your thoughts, experiences, and practices?



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