

Active Learning Teams with PeerAssessment.Com 3.0

The heart of active-learning is the active and unpredictable collaboration between students and community partners, combined with regular guided reflection. This interaction co-creates both student learning and community capabilities. Forming students into service-learning teams can enhance both the scope of learning as well as the community impact.

Successful active-learning team experiences can deepen student content learning, heighten engagement, and develop soft skills such as teamwork, communication, leadership, organization. However, if you've taught with student groups, you know that students vary in their collaboration skills and motivations. But you can create some key conditions for student teams to increase their success:

- *Team members have **Individual Accountability***
- *Instructors monitor evolving **Team Dynamics** to intervene when necessary*
- *Students receive **periodic Peer Feedback** to reflect on and improve their collaboration skills*

PeerAssessment.Com (PA) helps you efficiently create these conditions for face to face and online teams. Designed by a Boise State professor with 30 years teaching experience, we focused on quick to start and easy to use. It takes under 5 minutes to set up a peer assessment, then PeerAssessment.Com handles the rest--launching, reminding, distributing personalized feedback, and grading!

Suggestions for Increasing Student Team Success

1. **Periodic feedback** – Timely, formative feedback—during the project—is critical to learning. Conduct formative peer assessments every 2-3 weeks or with key deliverables, routing feedback to students.
2. **Team reviews** – PA supports both peer and team levels of assessment. The team assessment lets each student separately voice their impressions of how the team is working. Follow this up with a 15 minute team discussion in class for teams to focus this input into a consensual decision on specific team process changes to improve their progress going forward.
3. **Emphasize improvement** – Emphasize the goal of the peer assessments is improving student collaboration skills. With iterative, formative feedback across the project, postpone grading collaboration skills until later assessments to maintain focus on improvement.
4. **Constructive Feedback** – Learning to give constructive feedback is a key work skill. Emphasize to students that they give feedback to one another that is: Respectful (caring), Specific (with examples), Impactful (how their behavior impacts you, team, client, project), and Constructive (what changes are needed). Give examples of useful and not useful peer feedback.
5. **Group tool use** – Students know google docs, but not necessarily how best to collaborate with it. Briefly demonstrate how to share, version, comment, and organize with subfolders. Also, including Blackboard Group tools can add other useful team collaboration capabilities.

For more information about PeerAssessment.Com

- See our website at <https://peerassessment.com>
- Contact Rob Anson robanson@peerassessment.com
- Read our article in [Journal of Education for Business](#)

Active Learning Questions in PeerAssessment.Com

(View all questions at <https://peerassessment.com/question-library/>)

PeerAssessment.Com has dozens of question sets available for you to grab and go. Simply select the sets you wish to use, and custom edit questions as needed. If you would like a specific set, send them to me and I will post them for you. There are three general types of question:

1. **Peer** — asked for each team member. Responses are compiled anonymously for student report.
2. **Team** — asked once for entire team. Responses are compiled anonymously for student report.
3. **Other** — asked once for the assessment. Responses go only to the instructor.

Below are some sample Peer question sets in PeerAssessment.Com

“TEAM MEMBER FEEDBACK”

Please give specific, constructive feedback to each person on your team, including yourself. For each individual, discuss both their strengths and their weaknesses, or areas where they could improve.

Open Ended

- Please comment on specific areas he/she can improve and areas they are doing very well. Please make your comments constructive, helpful, and specific.

“TEAM MEMBER OVERALL PARTICIPATION”

Using the following 9 point scale, please assign an overall rating of this team member's participation.

Scale: 1-9 **1= No show...**No participation at all. **5= Marginal...**Sometimes failed to show up or complete assignments, rarely prepared. **9= Excellent...**Consistently carried more than his/her fair share of the workload.

- Please rate this team member's overall participation, effort and contribution, not his/her academic ability.

“ASSIGN POINTS: PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION”

For each person on the team, including yourself, assess a numerical score on each of the two areas below.

Scale: Numeric

- Participation: (Allocate from 1 to 100 points) This team member was always there helping to move the team forward in terms of playing an active role, helping others, followed through on action items, etc.
- Contribution: (Allocate from 1 to 100 points) This team member added value to the team deliverables in terms of providing leadership and/or contributing significantly to the creation and quality of team work products.

“TEAM MEMBER PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES”

Please consider the extent to which this team member Never, Sometimes, or Always does the following...

Scale: 1-5 Never...Sometimes...Always

- Attends team meetings?
- Communicates and responds promptly with teammates?
- Voluntarily takes on his/her share of work assignments?
- Makes a serious effort to fulfill his/her responsibilities on assignments?
- Meets agreed deadlines to complete his/her assigned work?
- Expresses ideas and opinions clearly?
- Listens and respectfully considers teammates' ideas and opinions?
- Helps other team members when they need it?
- Steps up to help the team plan, coordinate and track its work to meet team goals?