

Service Learning Teams with PeerAssessment.Com 3.0

The heart of service-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 team experiences can deepen student content learning, heighten engagement, and develop soft skills such as teamwork, communication, leadership, organization. But attaining these goals requires some preparation. I see three necessary conditions for successful student team experiences...

- *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 peer feedback is to help one another improve their collaboration skills. With formative feedback along the way, you can wait until later in the project to grade those skills.
4. **Constructive Feedback** – Learning to give constructive feedback is a key work skill. Emphasize giving feedback to one another that is: Respectful (caring), Specific (with examples), Impactful (how their behavior impacts you, team, client, project), Constructive (what changes are needed).
5. **Group tool use** – Students know google docs, but not necessarily how best to collaborate with it. Briefly demonstrate how to share, version, use comment, and organize with subfolders. Also, including Blackboard Groups can add other useful team collaboration tools.

For more information about PeerAssessment.Com

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

Service Learning Questions in PeerAssessment.Com

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

PeerAssessment.Com has numerous question sets available for your use. Simply select the set you wish to use, and custom edit questions as you wish. The question sets fall into three general categories:

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.

The question sets below were designed to be consistent with Service Learning goals and assessments, for voluntary use with Service Learning classes.

(P-201) SL - Peer Assessment Work Quality

Please assess this student's behaviors on your service learning team. Use the full 1 to 5 scale:

...1 or 2 describes a person who never or almost never demonstrates the behaviors

...3 if they sometimes demonstrate the behaviors

...4 or 5 if they consistently demonstrate the behaviors

- Effectively contributes to the team's work—quality of work, important contributions, helps teammates, meets commitments
- Positively interacts with teammates—effectively communicates, encourages and respects others, listens, shares information, participates fully
- Keeps the team on track—Helps to plan work and monitor progress, gives helpful feedback to teammates, alerts team when issues arise
- Expects Quality—motivates team to do quality work, cares about providing quality help to client, pays attention to client needs and standards
- Has relevant knowledge and skills—demonstrates knowledge and skills to perform work, able to perform needed tasks, acquires new knowledge or skills as needed

(P-202) SL - Student Professionalism

Please assess this student's performance on the following characteristics of their professionalism engaging with the client and the team. Use the full 1 to 5 scale: 1 = Never demonstrates, 5 = Always demonstrates this characteristic.

- Dependability
- Initiative
- Cooperation
- Professional Attitude/Behavior

(P-203) SL - Student Participation

Please answer the following questions about this student's involvement on the Service Learning project.

- What are one or two major tasks they have taken on with this project? Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of those contributions.
- Please comment on specific areas they can improve their professionalism, and areas they are doing very well. Please make your comments constructive, helpful, and specific.