The Secret to Group Work?

Enabling Communication and Collaboration!
About Us

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Session Goals

After attending this session, you will be able to:

• **Describe at least three reasons why instructors use group work in their courses;**

• **Identify at least three things instructors can do to make group learning experiences better for students;**

• **Explain how Webex Teams could be used as a tool to enable communication and collaboration among students.**
Setting the Stage
Why do we like using group work for assignments?
Why We Like Group Work

• Fosters **collaboration**, a key employability skill
• Generates **deeper, more diverse work**
• Promotes **active learning**, focusing on application
• Lessens struggling alone, creating a **community** of learners
Why do *students* generally not like group work?
What Our Students Say About Group Work

• “There is always someone who doesn’t do their share (free riding)”

• “Expectations are not clearly laid out”

• “Meeting and communicating is difficult with different schedules”
Most Critical Elements of Improved Group Work Elements

Average Rating

- Communications: 4.6
- Select Groups: 3.7
- Clearer Guidelines: 3.4
- Meeting Online: 3.3
- Penalize Free Riding: 3.2
- Document Sharing: 2.9
How would you rate your learning management system’s ability to support group work?
Our Learning Management System Thoughts

• Administrative benefits (e.g., prepared content, collecting assignments, recording grades) Brown, Dehoney, and Millichap (2015)

• Instructor-centered UpsideLearning, n.d.; Leaman, 2015

• Passive, asynchronous, isolated

• Key: LMS as prerequisite to learning
Our Story: The UW-W Webex Pilot
What Were We Looking For?

- To increase student engagement and motivation
  - To increase communication between:
    - Instructors and students
    - Students
  - To make collaboration easier by:
    - Better supporting sharing and connecting around learning
    - Leveraging mobile devices
    - Using technologies with familiar functionality (e.g., easy video calling, text messaging) in easy manners (e.g., not having to exchange phone numbers).
Exploring Emerging Technology

- Instructor Support Survey
- Webex Teams Selected (March 2017)

Data-Driven Tool Selection

- Use in Courses (Fall 2017-Spring 2018)
- Data Collection with Instructors & Students

Instructor Recruitment

- Campus-Wide Call (April 2017)
- Sessions with Vendor
- Sessions with LTC

Implementation & Evaluation

Instructional Development
About Webex Teams

Cisco Webex Teams

Make teamwork your best work.

Whether on the go, at a desk, or together in a meeting room, Webex Teams helps speed up projects, build better relationships, and solve business challenges. It’s got all the team collaboration tools you need to keep work moving forward and connects with the other tools you use to simplify life.

Try Teams free  Download Teams
Benefits of Webex Online

• Personalized Learning Units

• Engaging in Course Material

• Promoting Community
Personalized Learning Units

- (A)synchronous communication with class, groups, individuals
- Increased accessibility
- Monitor student communication
What research question are you guys using for the homework? I just can't think of anything. I think I'm trying too hard.

I'm probably going to do something about voting and voter parties.

You probably are, J. But it's all good. You should pick a topic - gender, guns, international relations, courts, primary elections, media, etc. - and select articles all related to it. They should all be related to a central theme. Choose a part of politics you really like!
Benefits of Webex Online

• Personalized Learning Units

• Engaging in Course Material

• Promoting Community
Ongoing dialogues chart individual, group paths

- Each student has an easily-referenced history of all correspondence (with peers and with me)
- Promotes effective group discussion, even in remote or asynchronous settings
- No discussion board stigma
- Information more easily shared
Here's an interesting case study in measurement.

https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/americas-20-drunkest-cities/2/

Is the method used here the best way to measure a state's drunkenness?

I think it is good that the data shows drinking in excess and not just alcohol related deaths.

I would say the method used here is not the best way to measure because of social desirability bias. The study is conducted using self-reported drinking rates. Some people could try to appear as though they do not drink heavily, but in reality they do drink heavily.
I would find it difficult to measure a person's drinking habits without indeed asking them. This may be most accurate way to measure how individuals identify when drinking, and judging by the numbers, it seems to have results showing a fairly significant percentage of those willing to admit they drink excessively. Otherwise I would agree with you Cody.

I like that the study shows 3 different measurements of drunkenness, however I don't feel that self reported drinking rates are very accurate. For me, the death rates in alcohol related car crashes paints a clearer picture.

I agree I like that the study has 3 different measurements but who knows how accurate the self reported drinking rates are. The death rates in alcohol related car crashes is a better measurement, however it doesn't take into account the accidents that involve alcohol but have no fatalities.
Benefits of Webex Online

• Personalized Learning Units

• Engaging in Course Material

• Promoting Community
• Students grow comfortable working together remotely
  • Promotes inquiries, questions

• Community promotes individual engagement
  • When friends do it...
Can best dressed go first?

Dude, I’ve got Jesus pants with sandals and a button-up shirt. Please make this a fashion challenge.

But how...do we measure...fashion?
Bougie Like That
PS 301 - Political Science Research Methods (Fall 2018)

2/19/2018, 8:45 AM
Ill be there at 9:30

12/19/2018, 10:47 AM
Where in the library are we meeting?

12/19/2018, 10:47 AM
By the cafe

12/19/2018, 10:47 AM
Ok

12/19/2018, 11:48 AM
Ok I’ll be there.

Actually I’ll be able to be there by 12:15, but what time is the final? 2:30?

2:30

Im heading to the library rn

Research Roxxx.zip

93 KB
So I'm going on a field trip tomorrow but we're not getting back until around 6. Can one of you take notes for the second debate if I'm late?
Student feedback positive

- IRB-approved assessment survey in 12/17 – 5/19
- Students evaluated Webex in terms of collaboration, classroom environment/experience, and academic utility
Collaboration

Webex Made It Easier To Communicate With My Peers

Webex Made It Easier To Communicate With My Prof.
Community

Webex Made Group Work More Effective

Webex Made It Easier To Develop Peer Relationships
Performance

Webex Helped Me Learn Course Material

Webex Will Have A Positive Effect On My Final Grade
Some qualitative feedback from online students

I think Webex is helpful. I could log on everyday and see your comments on assignments and/or what was due that day. I think it's a great tool for interaction among students and I do think it should be used more by other professors.

The Webex was helpful and made communication easier and quicker it seemed. I also enjoyed that the students could communicate via webex. A few students utilized that option and it was nice to read their thoughts; this is something that D2L doesn't really allow. Teachers could use it as a discussion board even in regular classes. If a student has a question they can put it out on the Webex and then other students can also help answer the question.

It is very easy to navigate and I liked that it wasn't so formal. Sometimes communicating with a professor can be intimidating, even if all you have to do is ask a simple question.
Let's bring in some students!

Christina, Max, and Brian are standing by in Whitewater to answer your questions!
Challenges and Limitations

• Access issues
  – Smart devices ubiquitous but not universal

• Student preferences
  – Some don’t want “work” on their phones

• Expectations
  – Help with routine of checking web browser
  – If you respond at 2 a.m. once...
Guidelines and Best Practices

• Transition slowly with low stakes, but use it early and often

• Encourage students to personalize space

• Identify cultural norms in consultation with students

• Set boundaries

• Clearly separate LMS activity and Webex (or similar) activity
Let’s Continue the Conversation!

Step 1: Download Webex Teams

- On mobile devices (Google Play, Apple Store)
- On laptop
  (https://www.webex.com/downloads.html)

Step 2: Sign the Paper

Webex Teams

Taken from https://publicdomainvectors.org
Questions?

Yeah, I have a lot of questions.
Evaluate Sessions and Win!

- Download and open OLC Conferences mobile app
- Navigate to specific session to evaluate
- Select “Evaluate Session” on session details screen (located under session type and track)
- Complete session evaluation*

*Each session evaluation completed (limited to one per session) = one contest entry

**Five (5) $25 gift cards** will be awarded

Must submit evals using the OLC Conferences mobile app or website
References


How Would You Rate Your Overall Experience Working In Groups In Previous Courses?

Percentage of Students

- Very negative
- Neither Positive Nor Negative
- Very positive
How To Improve Group Work: Better Communication Among Members
Join us on Teams!