

Teaching & Learning with Groups

Course Outline

Course Description

Teaching and Learning with Groups: Keys to Success presents proven methods for teaching students through group projects. Based on research and years of practice, this model helps teachers avoid the pitfalls and capitalize on the many benefits of cooperative learning. The skills and procedures taught in this course and practiced in applied assignments will enable educators to motivate students to develop important life skills for working in teams while learning subject matter more completely.

Objectives

- Discuss potential benefits and pitfalls of cooperative learning
- Assess the impact of teachers' beliefs about how students learn on how teachers teach
- Design improved pre-instructional strategies
- Incorporate pre-instructional strategies into an improved group lesson
- Modify lessons to include new strategies
- Report on and evaluate the lesson taught last week
- Implement the five essential elements into a group lesson
- Compare and contrast formal and informal learning groups
- Assess when it is best to utilize formal and informal learning groups
- Analyze the pros and cons of competitive and individualistic learning
- Assess the impact of teaching and learning styles and their importance in group work
- Describe the instructional skills required for successful group work
- Compare and contrast group work and cooperative learning
- Explain the conflict resolution process
- Assess the steps in problem solving
- Develop strategies to ensure group success
- Experience a cooperative Learning activity
- Determine how to assign students to groups
- Determine the most efficient arrangement of a room for group learning
- Determine the assignment of roles in a group
- Examine the changing assessment practices in our schools
- Discuss new assessment formats
- Determine various methods to evaluate academic efforts
- Examine various assessment strategies for group learning
- Design a cooperative group lesson plan in their content area
- Implement the designed projects for a group of students or family

Curriculum Design & Time Requirements

Teaching and Learning With Groups is a 3 credit graduate level or forty-five hour professional development course taught on weekends or over five full days. The following methodologies will be used during the course: lectures, readings, group and individual discussions and applied practice assignments and papers.

Course Materials

The required textbook for this course is *Circles of Learning: Cooperation in the Classroom*, 6th ed. David W. Johnson, Roger T. Johnson, & Edythe Johnson Holubec, Interaction Book Co., 2009. A variety of readings will be referenced throughout the course. Other supplemental readings will be provided.

Session Outline

Session 1: Overview of Issues About Group Learning

Contents:

1. Recall Past Experiences With Group Learning
2. Identify Concerns About Assigning Group Projects
3. Brainstorm Issues Needing to be Addressed Before Assigning Group Work
4. Identify Types of Cooperative Learning Groups
5. Examine School Wide Issues Related to Group Work
6. Understand Faculty Dynamics Which Support Group Action

Session 2: Cooperative, Competitive & Individualistic Approaches

Contents:

1. Compare and Contrast 3 Approaches to Learning
2. Identify Strengths and Weakness of Each Approach
3. Identify Outcomes Best Achieved by Each Method
4. Examine Research Findings Regarding Social Inter-Dependence
5. Master 5 Essential Components of Successful Group Projects
6. Discover 6 Teacher Benefits of Group Projects

Session 3: Benefits and Needs for Team Skills

Contents:

1. Examine The Needs of Employers For Team Players
2. Identify Interpersonal and Group Skills Needed by Students and Citizens
3. Examine Benefits of Group Work to Students and Teachers
4. Understand Effective Learning Research Regarding Different Forms of Teaching and Learning
5. Understand Research on Achievement and Competitiveness
6. Survey Psychological and Educational Roots of Cooperative Learning and Social Interdependence
7. Survey History of Practical Implementation of Cooperative Learning
8. Identify 7 Positive Outcomes of Cooperation

Session 4: Maximizing Individual Differences in Groups

Contents:

1. Understand Challenges and Benefits of Different Personality Strengths in Groups
2. Apply Learning Styles Research to Group Process and Lesson Design
3. Teach Students to Appreciate and Utilize Member Differences Families

Session 5: Skills Needed by Students for Group Work

Contents:

1. The 12 Inch Voice
2. Listening and Accepting Differing Opinions and Ideas
3. Negotiating Project Approaches and Tasks
4. Keeping Focused and On-Task
5. Constructive Confrontation and Conflict Resolution
6. Learning 9 Needed Group Roles
7. Roles of the Teacher as Facilitator and Supervisor

Session 6: Insuring Fair Participation & Grading of Group Projects

Contents:

1. Identify 9 Forces Hindering Group Performance
2. Ways to Structure Positive Interdependence
3. Ways to Divide Group Work Roles Equally
4. Grading Methods Which Tie Reward to Effort and Performance
5. Survey Many Types of Assessments Including Performance-Based, Authentic, Total Quality Learning, Peer Assessment, Self-Rating
6. Teaching Students How to Handle Problems Which Arise
7. Group Processing Skills for Students and Teachers
8. Group Celebrations as a Culminating Activity

Session 7: Many Structures, Many Outcomes

Contents:

1. Ways Groups Can be Used to Achieve Learning Outcomes
2. Deciding Group Size, Student Assignments, Room Arrangement and Group Roles
3. Structuring Tasks, Outcomes, and Creating Common Goals
4. Specifying Individual and Group Behaviors
5. Identify Different Types of Cooperative Lessons

Session 8: Teacher Competencies To Facilitate Group Learning

Contents:

1. From "Sage On The Stage" to "Guide On The Side"
2. Teacher Skills and Behaviors: Teaching vs. Facilitating
3. Monitoring and Intervening
4. 8 Guidelines for Teacher Monitoring
5. Providing Task Assistance and Social Skills
6. Processing and Providing Closure
7. "If You're Working Too Hard You're Not Letting The Students Learn It!" - Facilitating - Learning by Doing
8. Ways to Make Cooperative Group Work Motivating
9. Reasons Cooperative Learning is Worth the Effort

Session 9: Options, Functions & Types of Groups in All Subjects

Contents:

1. Learn Informal and Formal Group Structures
2. Examine 5 Long-Term Benefits of Group Work
3. Integrating Types of Cooperative Learning in a Lesson or Unit

4. 3 Essential Group Roles
5. 4 Levels of Cooperative Skills
6. 5 Steps in Teaching Cooperative Skills
7. Examine Cooperative Learning Lessons for Various Subject Areas
8. Learn Guidelines for Creating Lessons and Projects
9. Ways of Sharing Products and Outcomes

Session 10: Planning, Implementation & Obtaining Support

Contents:

1. Designing Lessons and Projects for Implementation
2. Methods for Obtaining Professional Support and Assistance
3. Selling the Program to Parents and Administrators
4. 3 Key Activities of a Teaching Team
5. 3 Steps for Creating a Cooperative School
6. 7 Characteristics of a Cooperative School
7. 5 Steps for Refining Cooperative Learning
8. 5 Leadership Actions for School Improvement
9. Start Small and Build on Successes

Grading

Assignment	Points	Grading Scale
Group & Classroom Participation	30	100 – 93 A
Reading Assignments	20	92 – 85 B
Final Integration Project	30	84 – 77 C
Final Exam	20	
Total Points	100	

Student Requirements

Attend all class sessions for the requisite number of hours (45) and actively participate

1. in all class activities.
Complete all reading assignments. Keep a journal, reflecting upon the major ideas in the assigned readings and the application of those ideas in your school and classroom.
2. This journal should have a minimum of five entries of one-half page in length.
Complete the Final Integration Project. Review research and literature on group-centered learning and identify several major findings or themes. Based on these key research themes, design a unit of study for your students. This unit should consist of five group-centered lessons, each containing a list of objectives and a description of
3. activities and content.
4. Pass the final Exam.

Student Academic Integrity

Participants guarantee that all academic class work is original. Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism (to take ideas, writings, etc. from another and offer them as one's own), is a violation of student academic behavior standards as outlined by our partnering colleges and universities and is subject to academic disciplinary action.