Group or Team Projects
By James A. Lindley

Group projects allow the assessment of students' interpersonal communications skills and their ability to function as a team member. The assessment of group projects presents essentially all of the same considerations as the assessment of individual works plus the additional need to evaluate individual efforts. As each individual can learn from other team members, the group product should be expected to be better than that produced by a single individual. If teams are to be efficient, specific roles must be defined and the assessment process needs to determine how well each individual performed his/her specific role.

Determination of the competence of each individual as a team player needs to start with observing the group meeting. Observation should be unobtrusive. Evidence of each individual's performance can be solicited from the team members by using an evaluation form. Each team member can be asked to evaluate all team members on the following traits:

1. Cooperation - Ability to work within the team. Willingness to perform tasks.
2. Punctuality - On time for team meetings.
3. Reliability/Dependability - Perform tasks within established times.
4. Evaluative - Offer constructive criticism and helpful evaluation of work.
5. Creativity - Provide meaningful insight to project team.
6. Overall effort - Measure of overall contribution to project.

Projects which involve oral reporting provide additional opportunity for assessment. During oral presentations other class members and faculty can be requested to evaluate the performance and contribution of each team member. The following are some questions that may be used:

1. Did each individual contribute equally?
2. Did the presentation flow smoothly from one individual to the next?
3. Did each individual give a professional, polished presentation?
4. Was each individual able to answer questions?

Assessment of group learning by use of written reports would be essentially the same as for individual reports. Using the written report to assess individual learning may be more difficult. A good written report will have individual efforts integrated so that the individual effort is indistinguishable. However individuals are normally assigned specific task in the development of the report and once these are known some assessment may be made of the individual contributions.

Group projects will provide an invaluable tool for assessing teamwork abilities. The ability to contribute to a group effort and function as a team member is widely demanded by employers, thus it is important to assess these traits.

Sample Evaluation of Team Presentation

Project title:

For the following questions, rate each individual: (Score each category using a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being highest.)

NAME:				
Presentation: Rate polish and professionalism of presentation.				
Ability to answer questions: Rate adequacy of answers.				
Contribution: Give a percentage estimate of each member's contribution.				

Rate the following for the whole team:

	Points	Comments
Introduction: Rate clarity of project purpose and need.		
Organization: Rate logical flow of presentation.		
Concept: Rate project plan's design and choice. Rate suitability for intended use.		
Content: Rate clarity of discussion and depth of information.		

What was the most interesting or useful information in the report?

What was the major weakness in the report - where could it be improved?

Additional comments (use back of sheet if needed):

Evaluated by:

Sample Team Evaluation Sheet

Project title:

Date:

Your name:

(Score each team member including yourself)

	Name:	Name:	Name:	Name:
Responsibility: Indicate the specific part of preparing the report that each individual was responsible for.				
Cooperation: (10 points) Able to work within team. Willingly performed tasks.				
Punctuality (5 points) On time for team meetings.				
Reliability/Dependability: (10 points) Performed tasks within established times.				
Evaluative: (10 points) Offer constructive criticism and helpful evaluation of work.				
Creativity: (10 points) Provide meaningful insight to project team.				
Overall Effort: (15 points) Measure of overall contribution to project.				
	Total:	Total:	Total:	Total:

Comments:

What was the best part of the report?

What was the weakest aspect of the report?

What did you personally find the most useful in doing this assignment?

For a copy-ready version of a Peer Evaluation of Team Form, which supplements the previous forms, please see the Appendix on the Contents page.