Universal Design for Learning in Higher Ed Series

Group Work:
Challenges – Strategies – Expected Outcomes
Expected Outcomes

• Optimized student learning
• Relationship building
• High functioning groups
• Efficiency
• Minimal instructor intervention
Challenge: Hitchhikers and Hijacklers

- One student monopolizes the group
- One or more students do not contribute
- Students strike out on their own
- Learning is incomplete
Strategies:

• Engagement
  – Keep group size small (2-4 members)
  – Each group member has a role that requires unique contribution
  – Students need to do real work together to achieve learning goal

• Representation
  – Group members are responsible for ensuring all members of the group meet the learning goals.
  – Peers can present information in alternate ways.

• Action/expression
  – The group is accountable for achieving its goals
  – Each member is accountable for contributing his/her share of the work.
  – Group members assess how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships.
Challenge: Assessing Group Work

• Grading
  – Individual or group?

• Providing Feedback
  – Meaningful
  – What each learner needs to affirm and/or extend learning
Strategies:

• Engagement
  – Each group member needs to contribute meaningfully
  – Each group member needs to participate
    • Everyone has own notes
    • Everyone active in learning

• Representation
  – Can be different
  – Needs to afford opportunity to meet learning goals
  – Structure for complete learning

• Action/expression
  – Group practice, individual summative assessment
  – All group members able to explain and demonstrate
Challenge: Group Management

- What is the group composition
- Students feeling disconnected
Strategies:

• Engagement
  – Survey students
  – Students self-select

• Representation
  – Provide examples of group roles, contracts, and agreements
  – Rubric for collaborative group work

• Action/expression
  – Flexibility
  – Group creates a portfolio of artifacts
Questions and Challenges

- Do you have any questions?

- What is a challenge you have? Let’s work through it!
  - Engagement
  - Representation
  - Action/Expression
Thank you

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