STUDENT GROUP WORK

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OPPORTUNITIES

• students
• teams
• communication
• teamwork
• assessment
• technology
• feisty students
• creating and managing teams
• quality communication
• facilitating good teamwork
• fair and balanced assessment
• useable and useful technology
FACETS OF GROUP WORK

- students
- groups
- teaching assistants
- communication
- technology
- project choice
- assessment
STUDENTS

• generational issues
  • the Facebook and YouTube generation
• national characters
  • cooperative
  • competitive
• individual biases
  • the loner
  • sharp students with little patience
GROUPS

• creating groups
  • let students pick teams
  • random assignment
  • choose teams, or facilitating letting students choose teams, based upon background/measured skills
  • speed dating, personality profiling, and pheromones

• evolving groups
  • what to do when students drop out
  • resolving intra-group conflict
TEACHING ASSISTANTS

• the role of teaching assistants
  • leader/manager
  • facilitator
  • advisor
  • assessor

• group-TA relations
  • randomly assign a specific TA per team
  • let students choose a particular TA
COMMUNICATION

• synchronous teamwork
  • face-to-face interactions
  • instant messaging, audio/vidchat
  • screen sharing, document sharing

• asynchronous teamwork
  • email, blogs, virtual learning environments
  • collaborative development environments
  • shared spaces and blackboards
TECHNOLOGY

• facilitating communication and assessment
  • archived communication and artifacts
  • record all activities of project over time
• facilitating asynchronous teamwork
  • distributed/concurrent version control
  • sharing distributed filesystems
  • shared permanent studios (via charettes)
PROJECT CHOICE

• topical fun facilitates learning
  • social networking, gaming, “web 2.0”

• choice models
  • one fixed project per class
  • choose one of a small set of projects
  • guided project self-definition

• project reuse challenges
  • inter-year plagiarism
ASSESSMENT

• artifacts for assessment
  • reports, presentations, systems, demos
• group vs. individual assessment
  • instructor, TA, and peer evaluation
• continuous vs. final assessment
  • evaluation load, principle of least surprise
• ensuring fairness
  • multiple independent evaluations
FOR MORE INFORMATION

• virtual learning environments: Moodle
• collaborative development environments: Trac
• blogging: Wordpress or Blogger
• social networking: Facebook
• email: Google Groups
• sharing documents: Google Docs
• screen sharing: Adobe Connect, Windows Desktop Sharing, iChat, Skype, Yuuguu, or VNC
• realtime sharing: Google Wave or its successor
• audio/vidchat: Skype or iChat
• version control: Subversion or Dropbox