

## Intentional Group Formation

**Shared by:** Sloane Burke, Health Sciences

**Materials needed:** Instructor notes on group assignments. Markers for whiteboard.

**Learning challenge addressed/predictable outcome:**

- Provides greater learner outcomes
- Increased retention of course content
- Positive learning experience
- Build classroom community
- Addresses issue of negative group work experiences or learner resistance to group work.

**Best used for:**

- Courses that utilize group projects
- Medium or small courses

**Learning objectives/skills fostered:**

- Encourages reflection, synthesis and retention of material
- Encourages positive peer learning experiences
- Promotes teamwork

**What to do / how to do it:**

1. Assign students to small groups of 3-5 based on their subject matter interest.
2. Ask students what their focus of interest is given the course group project. For example – my curriculum area is public health. I assign my senior seminar students to groups based on their area of academic interest (heart disease, diabetes prevention, stress management, etc.)
3. Use the whiteboard and markers to list the identified and group members under each topic of interest. Note – if one group has too many members – ask students to choose a second content area of interest to ensure group membership is as equitable as possible.
4. See other group work documents listed on this website on “group evaluations”, “constructive peer review”, and other resources to encourage a positive group experience and outcomes.

**Tips for implementing:**

- Consider posting team designations and members on your course Moodle site.
- Encourage each group to self-name a creative group name!