## Is student groupwork achieving the goals we intend? Identifying the risks and benefits of groupwork

Published 8/26/2025 by Joanna Crabtree

Melissa Warner, PhD, principal investigator and faculty member in the School of Management & Human Resources, led a research-based inquiry aimed at enhancing student group work to foster greater engagement and learning among both neurotypical and neurodiverse students in a college business school setting.

## Project findings:

- Collaborating in diverse groups broadens students' perspectives, deepens intercultural and neurodiversity understanding, and enhances global awareness.
- Group work supports the development of communication and problem-solving skills, especially among international and early-semester students by encouraging peer interaction and collaboration.
- To improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of group work in the classroom, consider the following strategies:
  - Integrate short, targeted training for students on how to work effectively in groups
  - Build group skills through practice in a smaller assignment in the classroom before large, summative assignments
  - Prioritize hands-on Faculty support over formal groupwork tools like peer evaluations
  - Be strategic with group work requirements; groupwork is overdone and overused
  - Keep groups small in size (2-3 is ideal for maximizing benefits and minimizing challenges)

For more information, including student recommendations for group work, download Melissa's Faculty Toolkit for Student Group Work. The toolkit is a direct outcome of her SoTL research and designed to help Seneca faculty enhance the effectiveness of student group work.

tags: sotl-research-project, toolkit-for-student-group-work