

Is student groupwork achieving the goals we intend?

Identifying the risks and benefits of groupwork

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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