Workshop - Managing Student Teams: Scholarship, Practice, and the Team-Maker/CATME Applications

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Abstract - Do you assign students to teams based on best practices—or the path of least resistance? Do you cope with hitchhikers on student teams—or ignore them? Is managing student teams just too much trouble? Instructors play a key role in their students’ teaming experiences. In this workshop, we review some of the factors that instructors may wish to consider when assigning students to teams and administering peer evaluations. We review the literature and engage the participants in discussions about their own experiences and practices. We conduct interactive, hands-on, practical activities using Team-Maker and CATME—free, web-based software systems. To get the greatest benefit from the workshop, participants should bring their own wireless-network-capable laptop computers.

Index Terms – peer evaluation, student team assignment

FREE LUNCH

This workshop lasts 4 hours with the time divided equally between discussion and practice of team formation and peer evaluation. Participants will use the Team-Maker and CATME systems. A box lunch is provided at halftime. Faculty from all disciplines are encouraged to attend.

AGENDA

Min. Activity
15: Introductions, workshop goals, wireless connections
15: Activity: Problems encountered in assigning teams
20: Activity: Connecting your practices to scholarship
5: Hands-on: Setting up Team-Maker
10: —Break—
15: Hands-on: Practice using Team-Maker
20: Demonstration: Evaluating results using Team-Maker
40: —Box lunch provided—
15: Activity: Problems encountered in peer evaluations
20: Activity: Connecting your practices to scholarship
10: Hands-on: Practice using CATME
10: — Break —
10: Hands-on: Practice using CATME
20: Demonstration: Evaluating results using CATME
15: Discussion, feedback, assessment

THE CATME AND TEAM-MAKER SYSTEMS

Team-Maker automates the assignment of students to teams. Using Team-Maker, the instructor creates a survey to which students respond confidentially, collecting data needed for various team assignment objectives, such as: heterogeneity of ability measures like prior course grades or GPA; ensuring that women and minorities are not outnumbered on teams; and schedule compatibility. Using these data, Team-Maker assigns teams using instructor-defined weighting.

CATME, the Comprehensive Assessment of Team Member Effectiveness, is designed for the creation, administration, and review of student peer evaluations using a behaviorally anchored rating scale. CATME gathers confidential data from students through a web interface and analyzes the data to suggest grade adjustments for equitably distributing a team’s grade among its members. CATME also flags team dynamics suggested by the peer evaluations.

The CATME/Team-Maker system is currently being used by 259 faculty at 80 different institutions managing more than 8900 students (Apr 08). We created the systems to provide an efficient solution to the problems many faculty encounter in managing teams. The instruments are designed to be theoretically sound as well as user-friendly.

By the end of the workshop, participants should be able to list key findings from team-formation and peer-evaluation literature including recommendations for distributing skills and attributes, formative assessment and interventions, and summative assessment. Participants should be able to use Team-Maker to create a survey to gather information from students to form teams, make teams according criteria they select, and use CATME to create surveys for self- and peer-evaluation of team members’ contributions to the team.

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