

Group work advice

Group work is not easy and requires an investment of your time and energy to form an effective working collaboration. It will become easier as you gain experience working closely with others in this course, and in subsequent courses.

Our expectations are that you will make a good faith effort to become an effective collaboration, that all group members will share the workload equally, and that all group members will learn all of the skills we require in this course, including the hands-on, scientific writing, and quantitative skills.

How you can become an effective, collaborative group:

1. Exchange contact information immediately so that you can contact each other efficiently.
2. Identify times in your busy schedules that can work for regular meeting times when group work is needed.
3. Take personal responsibility for completing work assigned to you by the group on time. If you get stuck for time, or don't know how to complete the work needed, contact the group for advice or help. When needed, go to see your lab instructor for assistance.
4. Always come prepared for lab - READ the lab in advance; study the protocols so you know what you're up to. If possible, meet together before lab to go over protocols and make a work plan.
5. Avoid always having the same assigned role in the conduct of lab work - each member must learn all aspects of the lab work, so mix it up, help each other, and capitalize on strengths to learn and overcome deficiencies.
6. When group work is needed, meet and work as planned; schedule these meetings in advance and make sure you attend, and come prepared with your assigned work completed so that the group can complete its work most efficiently.
7. Although splitting up the writing of PI labs may be unavoidable because of busy schedules, make sure that sufficient group time is set aside to make the individual pieces work together in one voice. As individuals, and as a group, you are responsible for the whole piece, not just a part. Plan the writing in advance by outlining the whole paper before you split up. All members are responsible for understanding all aspects of the finished paper.
8. Go over returned work together and develop a plan to revise/correct it. Make sure everyone understands the deficiencies and why points were lost, and how to correct them. A group strategy for responding to peer reviews is posted on the Resources Website under Scientific Communication.
9. Group dynamics: When difficulties arise within the group, you should meet and discuss them and attempt to find an agreeable solution on your own. If you cannot, you should meet with your instructor to discuss the problems and find some resolution. The instructor retains the right to assign different grades to each group member when there is unequal participation.
10. Group Self-Evaluations: Following completion of each PI lab the group will perform a self-evaluation of the contributions made by each member. Your instructors will use this information to modify grades if there is clearly an unequal effort within the group. A copy of the evaluation instrument will be posted to Lyceum and the Bio 242 website as soon as it is finalized.