

Examples of Cooperative Learning Aspects from the FEH Robot Project

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1. Positive interdependence

- Problem too large and complex to be accomplished by one person within allowed time
- "It takes a village" approach from instructional team
- Each person brings a slightly different set of skills; not all skills needed to solve the problem exist in one person
- Portions of the course grade are team grades for assignments associated with the project

2. Individual accountability

- Individual brainstorming assignment
- Individual midterm assessing understanding of robot-associated lab experiences
- Students evaluate their own work and work of other team members – counts in final grade
- Teams required to make a work breakdown structure, assigning individuals as primary or lead on various tasks
- Come to team meetings with previously assigned tasks complete
- Work together long enough to establish expectation that when someone says the task will be done, it will be done – "signing up"

3. Group processing

- Checking each other's work, looking for best solution within constraints
- Students evaluate their own work and work of other team members twice during the term
- Review and discuss results of peer evaluations as a team

4. Small group social skills

- Required to communicate with each other to accomplish project, making sure pieces all fit together
- Provided opportunity to work all the way through forming-storming-norming-performing stages of a team
- Required to hold regular team meetings with agendas and minutes
- Instructional staff models appropriate behavior in their interactions
- Instructional staff models appropriate behavior in weekly meetings with each team
- Peer evaluation form includes questions for students to rate themselves, as well as their team mates, on appropriate team behaviors

5. Face-to-face promotive interaction

- Classroom setup encourages group conversation.
- Regular team meetings in person
- Group assignments are not simply the assembly of individual pieces of final product
- Teams required to define decision-making processes