## **Peer Evaluations**

## **Why use peer evaluations?**

Giving students the opportunity to reflect on their teammates’ work and evaluate it with/against their own contributions can personalize the learning process, serve as a source of peer-to-peer motivation, help students identify and address issues and help clarify team member roles. Peer evaluations can also provide team leaders with important indicators of team health and individual student performance.

## **How to use peer evaluations**

There are many ways to use peer evaluations. When designing a process, team leaders should consider:

* **Team size and structure:** Ideally, students will evaluate all team members that they work closely with on a regular basis. If the team is divided into subgroups, team leaders should consider whether students should only evaluate those in their smaller group so they can provide substantive, informed and useful feedback to their teammates.
* **Anonymity:** Team leaders can decide whether they want students to share their peer evaluations with their teammates or whether they’d rather have students submit evaluations anonymously. Opening up this process can foster positive communication, but it may also exacerbate conflict and/or inhibit students from being candid.
* **Timing:** Evaluation timing depends on the goals of the exercise. For team leaders who are using these evaluations to assess student learning and team health, it may be better to position them around project milestones or at a mid-point in the semester (or project). This timing allows team leaders to course correct if students voice similar concerns; it also allows time for students to take feedback seriously and adjust behavior or project plans accordingly. Evaluations that are part of student grades may be better positioned at the semester’s end (although students may still benefit from mid-point assessments to allow for course correction).
* **Grading:** Team leaders should be sure to communicate to students how their evaluations will be used and whether they will be integrated into their final grades. Peer evaluations can help team leaders determine an overall “teamwork” grade for each student on their team or they can be used as a factor in an individual grade for a key deliverable. Team leaders may also want to grade the quality of peer feedback provided by the student reviewer. For example: Is qualitative feedback clear and specific? Is it constructive and helpful? Does it offer concrete examples and routes forward for both the student being evaluated and the evaluator?
* **Skills/Learning objectives:** The contributions being evaluated can be modified by team leaders to assess specific learning objectives. They can also be broken down into categories to pinpoint specific skills or teamwork components (e.g., discrete questions related to cooperative learning, critical thinking, interpersonal skills). Team leaders can also integrate questions related to the content or research process to see if students feel that they and their peers are engaging deeply with subject matter or understanding complex research processes.
* **Tools:** Team leaders can administer their own peer evaluations using the sample template below or choose to use an online peer evaluation tool to help manage the organization and assessment process. Duke Learning Innovation has two recommended tools for peer evaluations: [TEAMMATES](http://teammatesv4.appspot.com/) (online peer evaluation system) and [CATME](https://info.catme.org/) (online team creation and peer evaluation system).

## **SAMPLE Peer Evaluation Form**

**Name of evaluator:**

**Name of teammate being evaluated:**

**Evaluation period (date range):**

***Quantitative Assessment***(Check one box for each item; point allocations are shown in parenthesis and can be customized)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Please indicate to what extent the teammate whom you are evaluating demonstrates the following:**  | Never (0 points) | Occasionally(1 point) | Often(2 points) | Always(3 points) | N/A |
| Attends and is prepared for team meetings |  |  |  |  |  |
| Actively engages in group discussions  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Listens well to the ideas of others |  |  |  |  |  |
| Shares useful information and background knowledge with the group |  |  |  |  |  |
| Performs assigned tasks effectively and on time |  |  |  |  |  |
| Asks meaningful and/or probing questions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Identifies limits of personal knowledge and knows when to ask for help |  |  |  |  |  |
| Readily accepts constructive feedback from others |  |  |  |  |  |
| Effectively delivers constructive feedback to others |  |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrates flexibility and can adapt to new or unexpected situations |  |  |  |  |  |
| Willing to take intellectual risks and confront the unknown |  |  |  |  |  |
| Shows respect for the opinions of others and fosters open conversation |  |  |  |  |  |
| Helps to manage and resolve conflict among team members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Promotes team cohesiveness and effectiveness |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Additional content/skill questions here…* |  |  |  |  |  |

***Qualitative Assessment***

*Please answer each question in complete sentences, using specific details when possible. Feedback should be constructive, respectful and focused on helping one another improve.*

1. What major strength(s) does this person bring to the team? Provide at least one concrete example of how this strength has contributed to the team’s progress and/or accomplishments to date.
2. Describe an area in which this person could improve. How would this improvement contribute to a better functioning team and the achievement of team goals? What are some concrete, positive steps this person could take to work towards improvement in this area? Are there ways you (the evaluator) can help facilitate this improvement?
3. Is there anything else that you would like to share about this person’s contributions to the team?