

# 21 NAVIGATING YOUR COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

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## OVERVIEW

From school to the workplace, managing team projects isn't always easy, but this chapter aims to prepare students for success.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, we guide students through different tools for working with others, maintaining project goals, and completing projects where technology is at the forefront. We provide information for students on what to expect from their instructors, as well as how to set boundaries with and get to know their team members. This is accomplished through rapport, understanding of access needs, and methods of communicating. We also introduce students to key organizational documents that will allow them to better structure their group work. To this end, we discuss the purpose and creation of a team contract and project schedule. Finally, we introduce various tools which can be used to compose collaboratively across various forms of media. After reading this essay, students will be elevated from novice to navigator of any group project!

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**T**he notorious *group project*. As the bane of many college students' experience, working with your peers to successfully complete an assignment or project is rarely an easy feat. It would not surprise us if starting a new collaborative project with team members you've never worked with before caused you to feel a little (or a lot!) anxious about what's to come. Maybe you're worried that you'll have to take on the bulk of the work yourself. Or maybe you're concerned that you won't get along with your team members. These concerns are all perfectly normal, and

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some of your team members may share similar worries. However, collaborating with your peers can be a rewarding experience!

While it may seem like your instructor is assigning a group project just to torture you, there are actually many great reasons for these types of projects. You are probably aware that there's an emphasis on collaboration in the workplace (Bruffee 647; Ede and Lunsford 60; Wolfe 5), and employers are looking for individuals who know how to work in a team. Beyond preparing you for the workforce, these projects have a lot of educational benefits as well. Scholars have found that when you work with a team there are more opportunities to learn and increase your understanding of concepts and materials (Bruffee 644; Wolfe 5), which in turn can promote better writing (Bruffee). Collaborative projects can also lead to developing a community with the people you work with, which can grow into friendships and partnerships for other classes (Brumberger 197; Hunzer 68).

Working with a team, however, doesn't always come naturally. (If you're one of the students who felt anxious at the prospect of working in a team, we're sure you already know this.) Luckily, there are some practical steps that you and your team can take to help ensure that you're all on the same page when it comes to completing your project. There are also some great technologies and tools out there to help you collaborate with your peers. In this essay, we're going to tell you about some strategies and tools you can use to have a positive experience working in a team. We've broken this up into three sections: (1) communication strategies and tools, (2) accountability and organizational strategies, and (3) technologies for collaborating. We will delve into the value of these section topics, discuss what tools are at your disposal, and how to use them to your (and your team's) advantage.

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

It probably comes as no surprise that great collaboration takes strong communication skills. Team members must be willing to communicate with one another to share ideas, acknowledge when they need assistance, and provide support to everyone involved. Reaching a level of comfort when communicating as a team requires rapport—or close, interpersonal bonds that aid in understanding each other's feelings and communicating clearly. Rapport can encourage accountability and provide you with the opportunity to enjoy the collaboration process by creating working relationships with your teammates (Murphy and Valdéz). Rapport doesn't mean that you have to be friends with your team members. While it may seem like a great idea to form groups with your friends, it can complicate the collabo-

rative process and damage friendships if the project doesn't go as planned (Cecil 34-8). Instead, think of rapport as becoming colleagues with your team members—you need to have respect and appreciation for each other in a professional sense. So, remember, even if you are not or do not become great friends with your team members, you can still end up with a successful project as long as you share mutual respect.

### **RAPPORT BUILDING**

How do you build rapport with your team? The answer is pretty straight forward but often overlooked: spend time getting to know your teammates. Ideally, your instructor will coordinate teams well before you start a major collaborative project. This creates an opportunity for you to test the waters with each other, chat informally, and build rapport before the hard work begins. Even if this isn't the case, there's no time like the present to begin getting acquainted! As a starting point, ask each other basic getting-to-know-you questions to get a feel of your similarities and differences.

Once you know your teammates better, you'll also want to talk about cultural norms and access needs. Ideas of acceptable or unacceptable behaviors differ for people based on parts of the country, different parts of the world, particular gender identities, and involvement in different communities. What you might find rude could be perfectly polite to someone else. For example, you might think that showing up late to a meeting is entirely okay, while someone else could find your tardiness incredibly rude. Understanding these cultural norms ahead of time can help you avoid unnecessary tension. To jump start this discussion, consider:

- What are your assumptions about professional behavior in an educational setting?
- What are your preferences when it comes to communication? For example, do you have particular times that you do or do not want to be reached at, methods of communication (phone call, text, email, etc.), and/or any particular style you prefer (blunt, direct, gentle, diplomatic, etc.)?
- What, to you, does successful collaboration look like? Does it involve everyone getting a chance to share their ideas, having equal input on the project, and/or contributing the same amount of work?
- Why are these values important to you?

After thinking through your team's cultural values, you'll want to consider everyone's access needs. Having a discussion around access needs can open a lot of doors for everyone. Conversations around access will require you to think through what you need from your teammates in order to fully participate. For example, if you have trouble speaking up, you might need your teammates to directly ask you to respond when they introduce a new idea or want solutions. Or, if you're hard of hearing, you may need your teammates to look directly at you or speak loudly when talking. As you continue working on your project, you may find that your access needs change or you find a new way of working which you feel would be more beneficial to yourself and the group. This is to be expected! While you may be uncomfortable speaking up at the beginning of a project, you may later find that you are much more comfortable voicing your opinion. Therefore, we think that it's valuable to speak up about your changing access needs and to check in with your team about theirs. Having this open line of communication will help everyone contribute to the project. To begin a conversation around access needs, you might want to consider:

- Have you ever been a part of a group project that felt particularly inclusive to you as a learner and individual? What specifically about the group made it feel accessible or inclusive to you?
- How do you learn best? Are there ways that your group members can support your learning?
- Do you have any accommodations already in place that might be helpful for your teammates to be aware of?
- What should your team members know about you in order for you to be successful?

Furthermore, as part of your rapport building process, you'll want to challenge any preconceived notions that you have about your teammates based on their gender, race, disability status, sexuality, religion, age, and class. For example, if one of your teammates is considerably older or younger than you, what are your assumptions about them? Then, consider how your assumptions will shape your rapport with this team member and ultimately your collaborative project. Assumptions based on someone's identity markers could hurt your opportunities to learn from one another and work together successfully.

Now that we've addressed the foundations of strong communication skills, we want to turn your attention to some tools to keep you in communication with your team. To help your team determine what tool you might want to use, we've put together a list of some common and easy to

use technologies. However, these technologies are just starting points for you to consider, and there may be new and better technology available to you that could work just as well or better. We encourage you to experiment and find out what works best for you and your team.

### **ASYNCHRONOUS CHAT**

When working in a group, everyone likely has their own schedule and time set aside to work on the project; thus, coming up with multiple meeting times to fit everyone's schedule isn't the most realistic approach. Asynchronous chat tools are a great way to overcome this barrier and send information to the group so your teammates can access it on their own time. There are many different services which allow for the "group chat" model, all which have their own characteristics to meet your needs. For example, in an age where Android-users bring green text to group chats, GroupMe is a free texting app for groups regardless of phone operating system. Also, with desktop access for varied communication access points and ease of file sharing, GroupMe comes in handy as both a chat area and sharing of documents. In addition to GroupMe, WhatsApp and Google Hangouts are more common texting tools which may be more accessible to teammates who are international or are better acquainted with such tools, though the mechanics work very similarly, providing more opportunities for video and voice communications.

Discord is one of many resources for asynchronous communication. This is a platform in which you can create a "server" and organize different channels which have their own topics. Though more work goes into setting up a server than simply starting a group chat, it is a valuable tool for more complex projects and larger groups who must collaborate across a greater number of tasks. In addition to providing individual text channels, Discord offers opportunities for more social aspects to further build rapport and to create areas for sending memes, coordinating social meet-ups, and other non-school related functions without clouding up the important task communications. While there are limits to the sizes of files which you can share, Discord in tandem with Google Drive is a powerful and useful combo!

### **VIDEO CONFERENCING**

There are a variety of different programs out there which enable you to video conference with your team. When meeting in person is difficult, but face-to-face connection is something the group prefers, tools such as

Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams present a virtual stand-in for direct contact. Video conferencing can also be used as an informal way to get to know your group members and further build rapport. These tools should be used in place of asynchronous chat when making major decisions and brainstorming. When selecting a video conferencing program, considering what platform your group members are most familiar with and what capabilities the programs have is important to ensure comfort and accessibility. You'll also want to take into account any licensing agreements your school may have with these programs, in case additional features are available to you for free. To find out more, you could ask your teacher or the information technology office at your school.

### **PROJECT TRACKING AND ORGANIZATION**

Organizing and tracking the work each member needs to accomplish for the project can get tedious and tiring. Thankfully, there are many online tools that allow for organization of collaborative projects! These resources—such as Trello, Todoist, or Padlet—allow for the creation of different boards and tasks which help track the progress of the project. Trello is built to organize collaborative projects by creating boards to show you what needs to be completed, what's being worked on, who's assigned to each task, and when everything is due. Todoist offers a less complex interface where you can easily input your tasks, assign them to collaborators, and check them off when they're completed. In both programs, multiple users can access and edit the boards to create to-do lists and track the progress of the project. You can input all the tasks created for your project schedule, set reminders for when they are due, and track how much you have left to work on. Padlet functions as a virtual post-it board, building spaces to post content, interact, comment, and create a personalized workspace. While some features for each of these programs are blocked by paywalls, the key features (which can help your team stay organized) are free. Overall, organizing collaborative projects by presenting goals, progress, roles, and due dates provides an effective way to stay accountable, on track, and efficient when working with others.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES**

Since you're working with other people, communicating expectations and developing organizational strategies is crucial. These strategies are fundamental to the success of your project; without them, there's a risk of having

a turbulent or unsuccessful project. For these reasons, we're introducing you to two important documents: the team contract and project schedule. To develop these documents, we drew heavily from *Team Writing*, a book by Joanna Wolfe—an expert on writing strategies for collaborative projects—with modifications based on our experience. These strategies can also be paired with or augmented by those that Lance Cummings, Rin Jackson, and Moriah Yancey share in “Technologies Of Trust: Creating Networks Of Goodwill For Collaboration.”

### TEAM CONTRACT

The team contract is an organizational document designed to establish your group's goals and expectations for the project. This document helps you to communicate with your team about expectations for successfully completing the assignment, brainstorm possible conflicts and how your team will resolve them, and start thinking about the individual strengths each of you bring to the group. While this might seem like unnecessary, additional work, the team contract can help you solve problems before they even start by setting expectations in a neutral environment. The team contract consists of four sections: (1) team goals, (2) division of labor, (3) commitments, and (4) conflict resolution. And, to help you visualize what this document might look like for your team, we've included a sample team contract at the end of this chapter for you to reference, using fictional students and situations (see Appendix 1).

### TEAM GOALS

This first section focuses on what you'd like to learn or gain from this project and how your group defines quality work, which can help steer your team towards a rewarding and successful project. When defining what constitutes a successful project, it's really important to move beyond a statement such as “getting an A” and toward breaking down the criteria you will need to accomplish to achieve that A. In the example we've provided, the team has a goal of “Educating ourselves and others about how social media reputation affects school admittance and landing a job by referencing reliable and peer reviewed sources.” As you can see, this goal is much more detailed than “getting an A” and can be broken down into concrete steps that the team can implement while completing their project.

To get you started on this section, here are some questions your team can ask yourselves:

- What does quality work look like for this project?
- What do you hope to accomplish as a team?
- What do you hope to learn or gain from this experience?

## DIVISION OF LABOR

For this section, you should determine how you want to structure your team's work. There are lots of different ways to divide the labor amongst team members. For example, each individual member could decide to take on a particular role (e.g., project lead, writer, editor, citation manager, head researcher, or designer), everyone could collectively work on all aspects of the assignment, or some combination of the two. Different methods of labor division may be better suited for different types of assignments, so consider which option might work best for your team and the project at hand. In the example, Juan, Olivia, and Lex assign themselves both individual roles (e.g., Juan is project lead) and overlapping roles (e.g., Juan and Lex are the primary writers).

To get you started on this section, here are some questions your team can ask yourselves:

- What skills and strengths do you have as individuals?
- What are some areas that you'd like to improve upon over the course of this project?
- Based on your previous answers, how would you like to divide the work up?

## COMMITMENTS

This section will help you and your team be on the same page when it comes to your individual commitment to the project and other important responsibilities that you might have outside of school. You might work at a part-time job (like Olivia), play on one of your school's athletic teams (like Lex), be a part of an on-campus organization (like Juan), have parental responsibilities, or care for a sick family member. All of these responsibilities can impact the amount of time you can devote to your project and when you can meet with your team. When you start assigning tasks for each member and deciding when you'll meet outside of class to work on your project, acknowledging and planning for these commitments can help you all have a smoother collaboration experience.



To get you started on this section, here are some questions your team can ask yourselves:

- How much is everyone willing to contribute to the group? If someone does not want to contribute the same amount, how will that be reflected in the evaluation (if there is one for this project)?
- What are some of the factors that might affect your performance or availability? How can the team assist you with navigating these responsibilities and your commitment to the group project?
- What do you need from your teammates in order to contribute successfully to the project (e.g., due date reminders, clear expectations, and notes)?

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

This final section might be the most important of the team contract—it will help you decide how possible group conflicts may be resolved in the group, even before they happen. If you have concerns regarding your teammates' contributions, deadline adherence, decision making, or other group issues, then this is the place to address it. Sometimes, when conflict happens, students are nervous or unsure of how to confront their team member about the issue. However, when you plan ahead and anticipate how your team will respond, you can feel more prepared to talk to your team members, since they already know what your team has decided to do. This section might also help prevent conflict, since it brings to attention how everyone's actions can impact the team and what the consequences are.

To get you started on this section, here are two questions your team can ask yourselves:

- What are some conflicts you've encountered in previous groups? How did you resolve them? Did you think this was a fair resolution?
- What are some potential issues (e.g., missed deadline, unacceptable work, and lack of communication) that you are worried might arise during this project? How do you hope that your group will handle them?

### PROJECT SCHEDULE

After you've finished creating your team contract and had the opportunity to brainstorm what you want to do for your project, the next step

is creating a project schedule (see Appendix 2). The project schedule is a document that lists and assigns tasks necessary for completing the project. In other words, it breaks down all the work that needs to be completed into actionable steps or tasks and evenly distributes this work across team members. By completing this document, you will be able to meet deadlines, complete all the necessary work for your project, and ensure that everyone has a fair and even amount of work.

When deciding how to distribute the work, you don't have to assign everyone to the task in which they are strongest. For example, even if Juan considers himself to be an expert writer, that doesn't mean he should take on the bulk of the writing work. Another team member, like Olivia, might be keen on developing her writing abilities. Allowing her to take on some writing tasks during this assignment can help her develop her writing abilities by learning from her peers—which is one of the goals of collaborative assignments. Therefore, take the time to determine what each of you would like to do by considering everyone's strengths and interests.

To ensure the distribution of work is even across team members, you'll want to assign each task a complexity value. When you assign complexity values to tasks, you are recognizing that each task takes a different amount of time and skill. For example, if you and your team need to create an annotated bibliography (like Juan, Olivia, and Lex), you might determine that finding sources and reading the sources are two different tasks that take varying amounts of time to do well. It's also important to account for recurring work which each team member may do that is not accounted for on a project schedule. For example, Olivia says that she will be a note taker for the group by keeping and distributing notes to the team after each meeting. As such, it may be important to assign Olivia fewer complexity points to account for this additional work that is not tracked on the project schedule.

As you begin working on your project schedule, here are some questions you'll want to consider:

- What are all the steps that your team will need to take in order to complete the assignment? How much work is each of these tasks?
- What part of the assignment are you particularly excited for? How would you like to contribute to that component?
- Are there recurring tasks that are not being accounted for in the project schedule (e.g., scheduling meetings, taking group notes, and reminding the team about deadlines)? How complex are each of these recurring tasks?

With an established team contract and project schedule, you and your team are ready to move onto the real deal: producing your project! In the next section, we've provided some examples of technologies you can use to find the best fit for your team and assignment at hand.

## **TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT DIGITAL MULTIMODAL PROJECTS**

In a world where online work is ever more prevalent and meeting up with team members to work on every detail is unrealistic, options to compose projects long-distance are made easier and more accessible through online means. While multimodal projects are still very relevant, the days of gluing pictures, graphic printouts, and other content to a tri-fold board are becoming less frequent—online and digital productions are vastly more common in academic use. Multimodal refers to multiple modes or methods of communication in a message. This term may be a new addition to your vocabulary, but it is a concept you're already familiar with. Multimodal media ranges from fliers with relevant photos and text to videos or audio components for a project; essentially something that is more than just text-based. (If you're interested in learning more about multimodal composing, we recommend checking out Melanie Gagich's "An Introduction to and Strategies for Multimodal Composing.") This section will discuss tools for creating digital multimodal media, presentation-based, or text-based products.

## **MULTIMODAL MEDIA PRODUCTION**

For collaboration with a heavy multimodal component, sending the same file back-and-forth isn't the most convenient. To help with this struggle, different multimodal media technologies exist for multiple users to work on one product, from fliers to video production. If you're working on a static design, like a logo, flier, or social media post, Canva has a free platform for multiple users to access in content collaboration and design. With many premade templates to choose from, this technology helps alleviate a lot of pressure that can come from building a project from scratch. Similar to Canva, other tools such as Pixelied and VistaCreate have useful default templates instead of starting with a blank page. These tools allow for more than one person to have access to the project, but typically only one person can actively make edits at a time. Regardless, this is a great way to create crisp and professional materials for classes without needing major graphic design skills. All the tools have countless free-to-use designs and stock

images, but there are paywalls for certain upgrades and access to more images and designs. However, a student email address can also unlock one free year of Canva Pro, which grants users access to content behind the paywall. (Many other online resources, such as GitHub, provide access to extended free trials or immense discounts to many multimodal software or programs when you use your student email address.)

If you're looking to create something more interactive, like a website, we recommend trying out Wix or Weebly. Each of these platforms allow you to create free websites with easy-to-use website building templates. Like many of the resources we introduced, they do have additional content hidden behind paywalls, but the vast majority of the resources are free and available to students. With drag and drop editing features, you don't need to have any coding experience to use them, making them fairly intuitive to learn. If you do get stuck, there are loads of free tutorials available online to help you figure out how to put your plan into practice. Additionally, these sites support collaboration. You can easily add collaborators to contribute to the website and determine how much editing access they have. In very little time, your team will have a professional appearing website.

If you're interested in video production, it's worth checking your school's library or computer labs for free access to programs like those available in the Adobe suite. Support for learning these programs may be available through your campus resources or free tutorials online. When creating static projects, you can use programs like Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. Premiere Pro and After Effects are available for video production and motion graphics. If you and your team have access to Apple devices, you can also use iMovie. If this is an option, there is a Cloud sharing method for easier access to projects in-progress; this way, all team members have access to the most updated version. This method might be a little more clunky, since it's not directly tied into the programs like the other options we've suggested, but the video editing programs that do support team collaboration typically require a monthly fee to access.

Finally, if you and your team want to create a podcast, you might want to check out Audition (part of the Adobe suite), Garageband (for Apple users), Anchor, or Podbean. Audition is a more sophisticated and powerful program with more than just podcast options. But don't be intimidated! Adobe provides a simple tutorial for how to create different project types using Audition and includes a pre-set template and default options for easy beginner production. However, you will be limited to working in a space on campus or where you have access to the program, and there are more steps involved if you want your podcast to be published. Both Podbean

and Anchor have direct upload for podcast distribution such as Spotify and other popular podcast apps, in addition to their own apps for creating your podcast. Podbean offers basic analytics, up to 5 hours total storage, and a limited monthly upload until you hit paywalls for more advanced features; this includes collaboration, as the free and lower tier packages only allow for one admin per account. On the other hand, Anchor allows multiple people to record and participate simultaneously for each episode, and they have a strong mission statement about keeping the art of podcasting free and without barriers or any paywalls to premium access and storage or upload amounts. Take the time to brainstorm with your team if learning a new medium is right for your project!

### **PRESENTATION-BASED PRODUCTION**

Stitching together everyone's PowerPoint slides before the deadline or figuring out what other visual aides to use when presenting in a group is often stressful and difficult. Google Slides dominates the collaborative presentation space, ensuring each member has equal access to the entire project. This is beneficial in confirming that the design and content are consistent, allowing for more professional outcomes and easier group communication. Another common tool is Keynote; this works similarly to the other presentation tools, as they all allow for simultaneous collaboration and sharing with others. However, Keynote is specific to Apple users only, though there are ways to share the file so it is accessible to PC users, or provide file access through iCloud on Windows. Whatever program you choose to use, verify that your file type is accepted and accessible to your teammates as well as to your instructor.

### **TEXT-BASED PRODUCTION**

Typing sections of an essay into an email and having one team member piece everything together into an entire essay is not the most efficient or convenient way to write a group essay. You'll have no idea what someone else wrote until (and if) they send it. Instead, consider using a text-based collaborative tool so your team can have equal access to writing and editing your document. The most intuitive example of a collaborative text-based tool is Google Docs. While there are other tools, this remains the most accessible and well-known means for text-based production without any paywall or steep learning curve, especially if you've had experience with Microsoft Word. Available for free and accessible on any computer or

mobile device, Google Docs allows multiple people to edit and type into a document simultaneously. You can keep track of what everyone contributes to the document in several different ways, such as through utilizing the “suggesting mode” tool, tracing everyone’s contributions by examining the “version history” of the document, or having each team member pick a text color to type their part. This is also helpful when offering edits and suggestions to other users. The comments feature provides a way to add notes and communicate with your group about a specific section or sentence instead of holding an entire meeting to discuss each point.

## CONCLUSION

Collaborative projects offer you the opportunity to expand your skill set, generate and challenge new ideas, build community, and prep for the workforce. Composing as a team does pose some challenges you wouldn’t encounter while working on a project individually. However, we’ve gone over some important considerations, recommendations, and tools to help you navigate this process. If you and your team commit to these practices, then you’re setting yourselves up for success. Why should you believe us? We drew on these techniques to work together to write this essay (and had a lot of fun while collaborating), so we really believe that these suggestions will work for you too!

## APPENDIX 1: TEAM CONTRACT EXAMPLE

### TEAM GOALS

- Educate ourselves and others about how students' social media reputation affects school admittance and landing a job by referencing reliable and peer reviewed sources.
- Learn new skills working in groups, creating a project scope including team contracts, proposals, and schedules.
- Complete all assignments and work by the given deadline.
- Follow all guidelines for each component of the assignment. For example, using correct font, spacing and following the word/page count wanted for each assignment. Also, gathering at least 10 sources for our annotated bibliography and using 8 of those sources in our actual paper.

### DIVISION OF LABOR

- **Juan:** Juan is going to be the project lead, meaning he is going to be organizing the time schedules and reminding the other groupmates about deadlines. Also, if conflict arises he will take care of the situation by either making a decision himself or talking it out with the rest of the group. Juan will also be co-lead writer because of his interest in developing his writing ability.
- **Olivia:** Olivia will be in charge of the research and note taking aspect of the project. This means she will make sure that the sources that our group finds are both credible and follow the guidelines that are given in the prompt. Also, she will take notes during our group meetings and distribute these notes to the team members.
- **Lex:** Lex will be the other co-lead writer to help Juan with the writing portion of the project so that he can handle other responsibilities as well. Lex will also be the lead editor to make sure that the writing portion of the project has little to no mistakes. They will either discuss the writing with the other groupmates or other resources such as the writing center to make the writing quality as good as it can be.

### COMMITMENTS

- Everyone in the group has their personal commitments and other activities that they are a part of, but Juan, Olivia, and Lex are all willing to put in 100% effort into the project.

- Although Lex is on the tennis team which is a pretty big commitment, they are not worried about managing their time and giving their full effort into the project. They are, however, unable to meet in the mornings because of tennis practice.
- Olivia has a part-time job at the campus bookstore, which will take up some of her time, but she is confident that it will not get in the way of achieving success in this project. She is also worried that her writing skill will affect the group negatively, but plans on stepping her game up and asking for help when needed.
- Juan is worried about other commitments, such as his fraternity, that will affect his participation in the project, but is willing to stay up as late as needed in order to succeed in the project.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

- If a problem occurs, the whole group will sit down and discuss the problem until a compromise is reached. However, if the team experiences conflict that is not resolved with 30 minutes of respectful discussion, we will present both sides to their teacher and ask her to decide.
- The team will establish a deadline schedule that each member will need to abide by. If a team member misses a deadline, the project manager will contact the group member through email and text message to see why the deadline was missed. If there is no good reason for why the deadline was missed, the team member will be penalized with a 5 point deduction on their individual grade. If there was a circumstance where there was an emergency, the project manager will discuss with the rest of the group and come to an agreement on whether or not to deduct points.
- If a group member turns in work that does not follow guidelines, assignment criteria, contains many errors, and the quality of the assignment does not meet the expectations of the group, the project manager will contact that group member and give them a one day extension to fix all problems of the assignment. If the team member is having trouble with the assignment they should ask the teacher or the other groupmates to help in completing the assignment with acceptable quality.



**APPENDIX 2: PROJECT SCHEDULE EXAMPLE**

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<b>Complexity</b>
10/2	First group meeting to discuss everyone's role and Team Contract	Juan, Olivia, Lex	
10/7	Brainstorm ideas for the Team Contract and Project Schedule	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/9	Edit Team Contract	Lex	1
10/9	Edit Project Schedule	Juan	1
10/10	Meet at the library at 5:00pm to discuss Proposal	Juan, Olivia, Lex	
10/13	Write initial Proposal	Juan	2
10/13	Make comments on the Proposal	Lex	1
10/13	Edit Proposal	Olivia	1
10/14	Final Team Contract and Project Schedule	Olivia	1
10/14	Final Proposal	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/14	Start working on Annotated Bibliography at the library	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/21	Each find 4 sources	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/21	Work on Annotated Bibliography (in class)	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/24	Write first draft of annotations for sources (4 per team member)	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/27	Edit citations for Annotated Bibliography	Juan	1
10/27	Edit annotations for Annotated Bibliography	Lex	1
10/28	Final Annotated Bibliography is due	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
10/30	Work on overall rough draft (in class)	Olivia, Juan, Lex	

11/3	Meet at the library to finish rough draft (5:00pm)	Olivia, Juan, Lex	
11/4	Rough draft due	Olivia	1
11/11	Edit the rough draft	Juan	1
11/11	Comment on rough draft	Lex	1
11/11	Take note of their adjustments and make changes	Olivia	1
11/13	Final Paper is Due!	Olivia, Juan, Lex	

## WORKS CITED

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## TEACHER RESOURCES FOR NAVIGATING YOUR COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

### OVERVIEW AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

This essay is for students working in collaborative project settings for the first time, but it can also provide a refresher for those well versed in teamwork. For this reason, we recommend having students read this chapter as soon as (or, better yet, before) a collaborative project is assigned. However, your work as an instructor should begin even earlier. At the beginning of the semester, you should set the groundwork for your team project by providing students with ample opportunities to get to know one another and having them practice team skills on low stakes assignments, like in-class work or minor homework assignments. This preparation will allow students to begin building rapport with their team and test the collaborative waters well before they're thrown into the deep end with a high stakes assignment. Scaffolded teamwork will help lead your students to a smooth and successful project.

To this end, this chapter introduces fundamental collaboration skills that will prepare students to tackle a variety of team projects (both textual and multimodal) while providing resources on how to build rapport, communicate, set expectations, and create a product. To help students achieve these goals, we've included important discussion questions for students to consider when working in a team. These questions ask students to reflect on their work styles, areas of expertise and growth, expectations for their teammates, and more. Some of these conversations may be more challenging than others, especially the ones in which we invite students to examine their cultural values and access needs. Some students might find these reflective questions to be intimidating or may have difficulty in advocating for their access needs. As such, we think it's important to set aside time for your students to answer these questions with their teams during class time or as a formal homework assignment.

By the end of this chapter, students should feel more comfortable working in a team, acquire organizational strategies for navigating team projects, be able to draw upon different methods for communicating, and have ideas for different technology they can use to complete their projects.

Below, we offer five questions that you can use to help facilitate a discussion around key concepts in the chapter and group work in general.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever had to work in a team in the past? What do you wish you could have known before you started?
2. What are some of your worries or concerns about working in a team? Did anything in the chapter help you feel more comfortable with the process? What do you still have questions about?
3. What do you believe are some of the most important skills individuals need in order to make a team project successful? What are some expectations you would have of your teammates in a group project?
4. Take some time to think through your strengths as an individual. What abilities do you have which may support your team? Now, consider the skills that you'd really like to develop. What areas would you want to improve on in a collaborative setting?
5. Working with a team requires coordinating tasks on both a team and individual level. This chapter has provided some recommendations on how to coordinate work on a team level. Given these recommendations, how do you plan on managing your own tasks for the project?