

A WORKSHOP ON DEALING WITH SOCIALLY DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS IN GROUPWORK

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This workshop stems from the article “An Examination of Socially Destructive Behaviors in Groupwork “ published in the *Journal of Marketing Education* in April 2011. The article examined the negative, socially destructive behaviors that can ensue when students who are actively contributing to group processes cannot distinguish between students, and indeed groups, that are socially loafing and those that are genuinely struggling with the material. The focus was on the interplay between students, and how the normal social processes students use to manage group experiences can become destructive for some class members. We then considered the consequences of these behaviors from the perspectives’ of the struggling students, the groups and the class as a whole.

In this workshop participants will be engaging in a series of activities designed to help them recognize these undesirable behaviors, to minimize their occurrence and to introduce some interventions that we have successfully employed in the classroom.

Rationale

The benefits of project based group work for both students and academics are well known. Students benefit in terms of both learning and employability whilst academics can benefit from efficiencies of delivery and assessment. Employers now expect graduates to be effective team players in multidisciplinary, racially and gender diverse groups. As a consequence group and team based projects are increasingly being accepted as an essential component of higher education.

One of the challenges of the classroom is to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to have positive group work experiences. At their best group projects give students the opportunity to develop their problem solving and critical thinking abilities and it is hoped their social development in facilitating an appreciation of diversity within a dynamic situation. Unfortunately for some students group work has negative connotations. These can result from the negative behaviours of others engaged on the task. Managing this process in the classroom, both intra and inter group, is central to this workshop.