

How will in-class group work be assessed/graded?

Conducting group work well is essential for your science and engineering development. In your future work, you will likely work on a team of people that uses the different strengths of those people to complete complex tasks. In *Projects and Practices in Physics (P³)*, you will learn physics by working in small groups and your instructors will assess you on three different categories:

- How well does your group ensure all members develop an understanding of the physics (Group Understanding)?
- How well does your group manage itself in terms of the discussion and use of ideas (Group Focus)?
- How well do you develop your own understanding of the physics (Individual Understanding)?

Each category above will be scored out of 4 points.

Group Understanding consists of 3 sub-categories (Peer Tutoring, Learning Issues, and Critical Inquiry) that will be scored individually. These 3 scores will be averaged together using weight factors that play to your strengths. In Group Understanding, your highest subcategory score will comprise 1/2 of your Group Understanding score, the next highest will comprise 1/3, and the lowest will comprise 1/6. This allows you to focus your attention on improving your performance on a single subcategory without sacrificing performance in the other two subcategories.

You will be provided with written feedback before the start of your next project based on your performance on the previous weeks' project that will focus on one type of participation that you excelled at and one area we would like you to work on in the next project and suggest how you might go about doing that.

At the end of the semester you will be allowed to drop your two lowest project week scores.

Each of the assessment categories is described below along with the expectations that will earn you a 4 in each category.

Category 1: Group Understanding

Peer Tutoring

Consistent check-ins

- Making sure that everybody understands the physics and project.
- Ask other group members about their understanding of the physics and project.

Planning/discussing relationships

- Make sure group members understand how the concepts discussed relate to each other and the project.
- When moving from one part of a problem to another make sure everyone understands how and why you are making this transition.

Probing understanding/explaining gaps

- When it is obvious that another group member does not understand something, ask questions to understand the gap in their understanding and then try to explain your understanding to plug this gap.

Learning issues

Ready to participate

- Prepare your learning issue and conduct research in-between classes so that you are prepared to participate in each project session.

Targeted discussion

- Learning issue should be prepared so that you present and then have a focused discussion about the relevant and important features of your particular learning issue.

Authoring Ideas

- You should be able to explain the learning issue in your own words and not just repeat a definition.
- You should try to communicate the learning issue using real world examples.

Critical Inquiry

Engaging in constructive argumentation

- Discuss with your group or group members when you disagree with them but always provide the reasoning behind why you are disagreeing, and, when possible, alternative ideas.

Negotiating multiple interpretations

- Help negotiate disagreements within your group by identifying commonalities and differences in interpretations of the same idea/concept and help develop a resolution that addresses all concerns.

Category 2: Group Focus

Encourage discussion among group

- Encourage each group member to share their ideas and reasoning.

Check everyone's understanding

- It is your responsibility to make sure everyone has the same understanding and is in the same place in the problem.

Hear ideas and facilitate evaluation

- Make sure that no idea is dismissed immediately and that you foster a group dynamic that values everyone's ideas.

Focus on the big picture

- Make sure your group does not focus on too many minute ideas or goes off on too many tangents
- Make sure the group is focused on understanding the physics as much as solving the problem

Category 3: Individual Understanding

Evaluate your understanding

- In P³ you have to be responsible for your own understanding.

“Do I understand this?”

- Look for possible mistakes in the model world, plan, and validation process and will offer evidence and defend their position to the group when they attempt to discuss such mistakes.
- Make sure you test your understanding by testing it against that of your group and the tutors.

“How does my thinking relate with the groups?”

- Ask your group questions that are aimed at improving your understanding and ascertaining how your understanding relates to the understanding of the group.