Peer Evaluations of Your Group Members

Why peer evaluations?

Your group will have to decide how to organize itself. If you are amazingly lucky, your tasks will split naturally into an equal-size task per person, with obvious clean boundaries between them; the people in the group will have equal skill levels; and everyone will get along so well that you'll want to form a startup company right after exams. More likely you will have to divide labour in some less trivial way, have some people assist others in emergencies, co-ordinate mismatching schedules, and so on.

We expect that all members of your group will receive the same grade for all project deliverables. Because not everything in life works out evenly, we will allow for some accounting of this lumpiness.

Our experience has shown that there are sometimes problems with a student not participating very much or even at all in their team, expecting the rest of the team to do most or even all the work. In an effort to discourage this sort of laziness, we have instituted a way that a student's evaluation by their peers can affect their entire mark for the project: At the discretion of your supervisor, a student's mark for any project deliverable may be multiplied the percentage that his or her average peer evaluation is of the total possible. Thus, for the final deliverable, if your evaluation is 1 out of a total possible of 5, you may find your mark (out of the 100 for the final deliverable) multiplied by 1/5. Moreover, in the extreme case of student's not participating at all with his or her team in a part of the project, the professor may decide to give a 0 (zero) mark to that student for that part of the project. The moral of the story is: participate, participate, participate!!!

Therefore, we want each individual to prepare a confidential evaluation of your group members (including yourself). You will have N such evaluations within one table. You will submit the evaluation as part of your final report via onQ.

What should the evaluation look like?

Prepare a paragraph or two on the contributions of each group member. Try to be as objective as you can. Did they attend all of your meetings if you had them? Were they on time for the meetings? Was their work done on schedule, as promised, and with due diligence? Did they take on a leadership and/or organizational role? Were they easy to work with? Did their work require extra checking by the rest of the group? Did they stay late when extra effort was required?
Evaluate yourself as well. Be as honest as you can.

As part of your evaluation, assign each member a numerical grade. **You will be given 5 marks per person in your group to distribute as you see fit. That is, a group of three will have 15 marks to distribute among the group members.** Assign integer marks; no fractions.

**How should you distribute the grades?**

Here are some rough guidelines on how you might want to distribute the marks:

- A mark of 1-2 indicates someone who is an unmitigated disaster. You rue the day they were born, and hope you never end up with someone like this on your team when you work in industry.
- A mark of 3 indicates someone you really wouldn't want to work with again. There are serious shortcomings to their abilities and/or attitude. They are the sort of person you will probably run into in industry, but will try to avoid as much as you can.
- A mark of 4 means that a group member did reasonable work, but lacking in some area. Their work was OK, but not great, or they weren't serious enough, or ... They are the sort of person with whom you could work without too much trouble, although you wish they were a bit more diligent/easier/committed to deal with/what have you.
- A mark of 5 indicates a group member did a really fine job on everything that was asked of him/her. They showed up on time to meetings, did their work on time and well, and chipped in as needed. They are the sort of person you would hope to work with in industry.
- You can highlight if you have a member who leaps tall buildings in a single bound, walks on water, and solves NP-complete problems in linear time. You hope your company has at least one person like this, and that they know you by name so that there is a chance you might one day get to work on a project with them.

**To re-iterate: the maximum number of marks you award must total to no more than N*5, where N is the number of people in your group. You may award fewer if you wish.**

We will not simply take an average of the submissions to determine your mark. Instead, your supervisor will use common sense based on reading all the evaluations. Thus, if one evaluation seems out of line with the others, it will not unduly influence your grade (so don't just give yourself 5 marks and think we won't notice!)

**Notes**

- If you are having serious problems within your group, don't just wait for evaluation time. Meet with your group and try to address the problems. If that doesn't work, approach your supervisor.
- *Your paragraph(s) of explanation are important. If you do not turn in reasonable justifications of your grades, your own performance evaluation will be affected.*
- The evaluations are due as part of your final report.
- The evaluations will be kept confidential; only your supervisor and the course coordinator will read them.
- Don't sweat too much about these evaluations. Try to be a good group member and you'll do fine. And remember that in industry, evaluations will be part of your working life.

**An example evaluation**

Here are some example evaluations for an imaginary programming assignment for an imaginary course (not similar to 499).

*Candorsnaffity* Hixelbröd was an annoying teammate. He was late for meetings, and had not looked at the task or done any kind of preparation in advance. At project meetings with our supervisor, Candorsnaffity offered to do the whole project himself, which the rest of us found very insulting --- maybe he's the best programmer, but the rest of us are still good enough to be successful students. Finally he agreed that he'd do the sush-ionization module by Sunday afternoon, but he didn't finish it until almost midnight, and the rest of us couldn't combine his work with ours until Monday evening, which meant we had to stay up late to get it done by Tuesday. I'd give him 2 points, except that on Monday evening (after he finally got there), he found all the bugs that the rest of us were missing and got the product working with twenty minutes work. He's probably a great hacker when he's alone: honestly, he's the best programmer of the four of us, and we're all annoyed that he was so little help. So he gets 3 points.

*Prosnitau* Sgrachita de la Mnirhoihoi was good, helpful and co-operative. She arranged the first meeting and had worked out a module structure and a division of labour before we met, which we adopted after a bit of bickering. She had her parts of the program done on time, and they only had one small bug. And she stayed late to make sure that the integration went smoothly, when we all know she hadn't slept the night before. She gets 5 points.

*V'snl'chn'tkn!k* of the Fortress of Doom (that's me) was an effective worker in this assignment. I had sketched algorithms in advance for two parts, which Wub and I implemented. My code was ready on time, and worked except for one boundary case. Also, I helped Wub with his part of the assignment. I award myself 5 points.

**Acknowledgements**

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