

BCOR 4003

Managing Project Teams

Forming Teams

If you're interested in being a team leader, please contact me **ASAP**. I anticipate there will be 8-9 teams, so the first nine individuals to contact me will be assigned that role. In the unlikely case that nine people don't contact me by Thursday, January 22, I will randomly select the remaining leaders.

Team leaders have responsibility for recruiting and selecting team members. Teams should consist of 5-6 people (including the team leader). Team leaders should begin immediately to choose team members; this process must be finalized by Thursday, February 5.

Personal statements, email addresses, and team assignments will be kept updated at <http://leeds-faculty.colorado.edu/rosse/Courses/4030/Bios/TeamInfo.htm>

Steps:

- 1) All students must submit a short (1 page) personal statement by **Tuesday January 20**. Include whatever information you think will help team leaders decide who would be good members of their team (e.g., relevant background, interests, experience, goals for the course, work schedule). This must be submitted in a Word or PDF file by email to Joseph.Rosse@colorado.edu. **The files MUST be named as [yourlastname].doc (or .pdf)** (e.g. *Smith.doc*). I will then make these available for team leaders to review on the course web site.
- 2) If you want to be a Team leader, you should submit a slightly different personal statement; its purpose is to recruit members to your team. You might describe your past experience as team leader (or member), your management style, your goals for the project, or anything else that you think will be relevant for attracting students to your group.
- 3) Team leaders can use whatever methods they wish for selecting team members. (Be creative!) Think of the personal statements as job application letters—what should you look for as you screen them? You might want to create a “short list” of 10 or so likely candidates and then contact them (their email addresses are listed) so you can learn more about them and how well they fit with how you want to run your team. These interviews may be conducted by the team leader or as a “team interview” by those who have already been selected.
- 4) Students may also “apply” directly to team leaders, perhaps based on the leaders' personal statements. Take control of your fate and apply to the team leader whose style and goals best matches you!
- 5) Team leaders should inform me who has joined their team by sending me an email that also copies the person who is being added to the team (so they know). Let me know as soon as possible so I can keep the web site updated. **Teams must be finalized by Tuesday February 5**; at that date I will assign people randomly to teams.

Responsibilities and Rewards of Team Leaders

The role of Team Leaders is not to do all the work of the team. Rather, the Team Leader is responsible for managing the work of the team: ensuring that deadlines are set (and met), delegating assignments to team members, and generally making sure that everything is proceeding well.

In this class I am using a performance-based reward system for Team Leaders. If the team outperforms the class average on the team deliverables, the team leader will receive a bonus. For example, let's say the average of all the team project reports is 41 (out of 50), but that your group received a 45. The team leader would have the difference ($45 - 41 = 4$) added to his or her team project score (i.e., he or she would receive a 49). (This only applies if the team leader receives at least an average peer evaluation score.)

Managing Problems

As described in the Project Description, there are many reasons for having you work on the project as a team. While teams have advantages, problems can occasionally arise. My goal is that you work through these problems as a team, because that is exactly what you'll need to do in most work settings. One key consideration is to confront problems early, rather than waiting until they've spiraled out of control. Team leaders need to monitor these issues, although the solutions are often based in the whole team, not just the leader. I am also available to help you work through issues.

One way to avoid problems (and to resolve them constructively if they arise) is to develop your own performance standards. Each team is responsible for developing a set of standards, which generally will involve such things as attendance at meetings, meaningful contribution to team assignments, working together effectively, and so forth.

Assignment: Each team must develop and turn in a set of performance standards by **Thursday February 5**. The specific content of these is up to you (with overview by me); whatever you decide will be used as the basis for your peer evaluations. See the links on the syllabus for a copy of the forms to be used.

Very rarely, there may be justification for removing a member from a team. This option should be used only in extreme cases, and the individual should have been counseled in advance of deficiencies in his/her behavior and given an opportunity to improve. (Given the relatively short time span of the semester, however, the usual guidelines for repeated warnings may be waived.) Team leaders should keep records (informal notes to yourself) of a team member's behavior and how it was handled. I should be copied on more formal warnings to the team member. If you conclude that the individual is not responding appropriately, I must be consulted before proceeding to remove the member from the team. Terminations must occur no later than two weeks prior to the due date for the project (i.e., by April 9). Individuals who are removed from a team are responsible for writing their own project report. In most cases, it is expected that the team will share the information they have gathered, but that the individual will write up his or her own report from that information. The due date for the individual (and perhaps for the team) report can be negotiated with me, based on the circumstances.

Also very rarely, it is possible that an individual may choose to resign from a team. Once again, this should not be taken lightly, and should be used only in extreme examples of incompatibility between the individual and the other team members. If you believe there is a problem between you and your team, you should address this early on and in a constructive manner. If the

problem cannot be resolved, you may consult with me about resigning from the team. Normally, resignations must occur at least two weeks prior to the project due date. It is expected that the team and the individual will share information that has been collected prior to the resignation. The due date for the individual (and perhaps for the team) report can be negotiated with me, based on the circumstances.