

## Student Peer Assessment:

### Student Perceptions to Reflect on Why and How?

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## Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- list several benefits of using student peer assessment from the perspective of learners and instructors;
- briefly describe some of the potential pitfalls of using student peer assessment and how to avoid them; and
- decide on next steps for incorporating student peer assessment in their own teaching.

## What is student peer assessment?

**“The quantitative or qualitative evaluation of a learner’s performance, by another learner of the same status”**

(Patchan & Schunn, 2015, p.592)

## Benefits of using peers

Giving/receiving feedback:

- is a skill valued by employers (Jacques, 2000)
- improves learning (Falchikov, 2001; Harmer, Purchase, Luston-Reilly & Denny, 2014)
- develops appreciation for what counts as high-quality work in a discipline/ subject area (Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006)
- increases learning through teaching (Liu & Carless, 2006)
- is more immediate (Gibbs, 1999)
- tends to be of greater volume (Gibbs, 1999; Nicol, Thomson, & Breslin, 2013)
- may sensitize student to different reader’s perspectives (Nicol, Thomson, & Breslin, 2013)

## Considerations

- Classroom climate/culture
- Classroom configuration
- Success criteria to provide
  - Exemplars
  - Rubrics
  - Instructor modelling
  - Student generated criteria
- Instructor monitoring of feedback/assessment

## On what can peer assessment be conducted?

Students can provide feedback/assessment on:

- Drafts or plans/outlines of work (formative)
- Written work or presentations designed to round out instructor/TA feedback (formative or summative)
  - Provided "in addition to"
- Instructor/TA feedback
  - Provide interpretation or ideas for incorporation (formative)

## Potential challenges

- In groups of 2-3:
  - Discuss challenges with implementing student peer assessment.



## Challenges of peer assessment

- Student resistance to peer assessment (Brown et al., 1997)
  - Time consuming
  - Dislike judging peers
- May inhibit cooperation (Boud et al., 1999)
  - Students become grade competitive
- Low motivation for the process if not incorporated into grades in some way (Pond et al., 1995)

### Some solutions

- Use modest weighting of peer grades (Liu & Carless, 2006)
- Use multiple reviewers to reduce bias (Liu & Carless, 2006)
- Award marks for quality of peer assessment (Bloxham & West, 2004)
- Teach students how to provide feedback
  - Ladder of feedback (Perkins, 2003)

### Student perspectives data

Context:

- Courses in family sociology
  - Largely female, early 20's, 3rd/4th year standing
- Relationship Development S2016
  - [redacted] review of video
  - Team member evaluation
- Relationship Development W2016/17
  - [redacted] review of paper draft
  - Team member evaluation
- Aging W2016/17
  - [redacted] review of video
  - [redacted] review of debates
  - Team member evaluation

Why:

- Original intent was to share projects
- Skills development
- Foster peer collaboration

### Selected findings

	Relationship Development S2016 N=54* Summative		Relationship Development W2016-17 N=74 Formative		Aging W2016-17 N=33 Formative and Summative	
	Mean**	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Learned new information not covered in class	3.81	0.90	3.09	1.15	F:3.61 S:3.48	1.06 0.97
Gained insight into what makes a quality assignment	3.92	0.96	3.34	0.93	F:3.92 S:3.80	0.75 0.77
Developed ability to critically assess other's work	3.70	0.91	3.73	0.90	F:3.73 S:3.82	0.73 0.73
Read feedback given to me by peers	3.80	1.10	4.49	0.64	F:4.61 S:4.34	1.03 0.93
Will use feedback provided to improve future work	3.56	1.18	3.27	1.12	F:3.00 S:4.06	1.15 1.50
Value peer assessment as a learning activity	3.37	0.98	3.08	1.03	3.42	1.09
Felt comfortable providing feedback	3.98	1.00	4.14	0.76	S:4.00 F:3.88	0.83 0.96
Had adequate training on how to provide feedback	3.46	1.02	3.33	0.97	F:3.30 S:3.12	1.08 0.96
Peer feedback took too much time	3.70	1.00	3.00	1.14	F:2.45 S:1.94	1.12 0.88
Critical assessment is a skill needed in my future career	4.21	0.91	3.84	1.05	4.18	0.88
Team work is a skill needed in my future career	4.38	0.71	4.43	0.81	4.48	0.76

\* Class size: RD S2016 = 64; RD W2016-17 = 85; Aging W2016-17 = 39

\*\* 5-point scale; SD = 1; SA = 5

### Student comments

*"It was an exciting way to learn more about the lecture topics in depth in different creative forms."*

*"I will get many more perspectives, and it could be useful to get feedback from others who actually did the assignment."*

*"Reviews of group members can be useful because they prevent slacking off or procrastination."*

## Reflection

Three actions I will take to apply what I've learned in this presentation to my teaching are:

*Adapted from: Fenwick, T.J. & Parsons, J. (2000). The art of evaluation: A handbook for educators and trainers. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.*

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