

Overcoming Challenges Team Project Guide

The **purpose** of this course is to help you apply research and theory from social psychology and related disciplines to improve your learning on your own and in teams. The purpose of this project is twofold:

- (1) to develop the knowledge, procedural skills, and critical and creative thinking skills to be able to find and use social psychological research to inform challenges you face in your daily life as a learner. This aim aligns with course goals 1, 2, and 4 (see syllabus).
- (2) to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be able to approach group and team projects in such a way that promotes positive interactions and outcomes. Group and teamwork is a fact of life – both in university and in the working world that awaits you after graduation. Developing these skills can help you make the most of these experiences. This aim aligns with course goals 2 and 5 (see syllabus).

Learning Objectives Specific to this Assignment

In addition to aligning with the broad course goals in the syllabus, by the end of this assignment, you will be able to demonstrate the following skills and attitudes:

- Identify a problem in your/other students' everyday lives that can be usefully informed by psychological research.
- Collaborate with peers to produce a series of projects that build on each other.
- Investigate a problem from multiple perspectives.
- Find, evaluate and integrate multiple sources of evidence, including psychological research and lay sources of information.
- Apply and use psychological research to help yourself and others learn better.
- Creatively communicate findings about psychology in a way that your peers find compelling.
- Feel excited to communicate your findings about psychology to peers (ok, this might be a stretch... humour me!).
- Honestly evaluate the quality and quantity of your own and others' work.
- Demonstrate leadership skills (through taking turns being the leader/coordinator).

Thinking Ahead

As you work through this guide – and this project as a whole – take some time to consider how you could use aspects of it to help you succeed in future team projects (e.g., future courses, in the workplace). To help with this, I have added boxes like the one to the right that highlight some of the features you can apply in the future.

Thinking Ahead

As you see these boxes, take a moment to consider what you can apply to help make future team projects a success.

Thinking Ahead

Breaking down a large project into smaller components can make it more manageable, make it easier to divide up the tasks, and can help ensure all aspects are completed on time.

Overview of Components

**Component 1:
Foundations**

How will you work as a team?
What's your team's biggest learning challenge?

**Component 2:
Annotated Bibliography**

What can you find out about your learning challenge?

- to understand it
- to deal with it

**Component 3:
Creative Advertisement**

Given what you learned in Component 2, advise other students about this learning challenge.

Evaluation Breakdown

This project is worth 45% of your course grade. **25% of that is based on your individual performance within the team, and the remaining 20% of that is a team grade.** In order to make the project manageable, it has been broken down into three main components. Here is the breakdown of the graded components of this assignment:

Component	Lab Date (in class)	Product(s) Due in or During Lab	Weighting (Total 45%)
Team Foundations	Thursday January 23	Team Agreements Topic choice Plan for Component 2	2% (team)
Individual Annotated Bibliography	Due at the start of lab, Thursday February 13		20% (individual)
Abstract and Synthesis of Group's Findings	Thursday February 13 (lab spent on abstract, which is due at end of lab)	Annotated Bibliography <i>(Formative Teammate Evaluation online after this Lab)</i>	9% (team)
Creative Advertisement	Thursday March 6 (preparation)	Plan for Creative Advertisement of Findings	
Presentation of Creative Advertisement	Tuesday April 1 or Thursday April 3	Creative Advertisement	9% (team: 5% TA evaluation, 4% peer evaluation)
Teammate Evaluation	(online, due April 8)	Summative Teammate Evaluation of each others' contributions	5% (individual , as rated by teammates)

A Note on Labs

Labs are mandatory. Missing a lab without a valid excuse including documentation will result in a deduction of 5% of your course grade. *The reason for this* is that you are a team member. Abandoning your other teammates is inappropriate teammate behaviour.

Additional Resource: *Team Learning Manual*

In addition to your instructor and Teaching Assistants, the Faculty of Arts has sponsored the development of a *Team Learning Manual* through their *Hands on Minds on Linked in* fund. The aim of this manual is to support you and your team as you develop team and collaborative learning skills. It is available on Connect in the "Assignments" folder, and includes a variety of tips for working well and managing conflict as a team in order to produce excellent outcomes. Check it out!

Team Selection

My goal when creating teams is to distribute the wealth of knowledge, skills, and abilities so that each team has a variety of perspectives and attributes to draw on for success (see "Team Formation," n.d., Sibley & Parmlee, 2008). Therefore, you will be asked the following questions on a survey on Connect. I will then distribute these qualities and characteristics across the groups of 5-6 people.

Thinking Ahead

Identify and build on the strengths that each member brings to the team. Identify challenges in yourself and teammates as opportunities for growth.

- (1) In general, how do you feel about group or teamwork?
 - 1=strongly dislike, 2=dislike, 3=no strong feelings, 4=like, 5=strongly like
- (2) How many Psychology courses have you taken before at the post-secondary level (including courses you're currently taking)?
 - 1=None, 2=Intro Psych (either 100 or 101+102), 3=three to five, 4=six to ten, 5=eleven or more
- (3) How much experience do you have finding quantitative journal articles in psychology using library/web resources?
 - 1=I wouldn't even know where to start, 2=I haven't done it but I have an idea about how to do it, 3=I have found articles in other disciplines before but not psychology, 4=I have found one or two quantitative journal articles before, 5=I have found three or more quantitative journal articles before
- (4) In general, how comfortable are you using technologies (e.g., wiki, blog, multimedia, video)?
 - 1=very uncomfortable, 2=uncomfortable, 3=neither comfortable nor uncomfortable, 4=comfortable, 5, very comfortable
- (5) Do you bring a laptop to class?
 - 1=Never, 2=Sometimes (I can if I need to), 3=Always

Components: Tasks and Criteria for Success

Team Foundations (2%, team)

- Date
 - To be completed during Lab 1 on Thursday January 23 (80 minutes)
 - Worth 2% of your course grade (group graded)
- Tasks (*follow along with the Lab 1 worksheet, pp. 12-14*)
 - Identify a team leader and a team recorder for this lab.
 - The team leader is to keep the group progressing through the required tasks, keeping an eye on time and ensuring all team members have the opportunity to contribute in all stages.
 - The team recorder takes notes and ensures the required responses for each question are produced on the team wiki.
 - Discuss, decide on, and commit to team agreements and goals.
 - Choose a problem or challenge related to learning that matters to you and your teammates (see p.12).
 - During your brainstorm, consider what *things get in the way of your learning*. The following list offers some examples to get your brainstorm started, but you do not need to stick to this list. Choose something that matters to you and your teammates, and is somehow related to the course goals.
 - Examples: goal conflict, computers in the classroom, test taking strategies, coping with failure, taking notes in class, health and wellness in student life, writing group papers, collaborative group projects in general, student/young adult identity development, self-compassion, focusing attention, learning from text-based material, culture or culture change, social media, quality social relationships in young adulthood, effect of physical health on learning, loneliness...
 - Once you have generated at least 4 contenders, rank the problems in terms of which one is the most impactful issue for you and your teammates. Choose the most important one as the focus of your investigation. Note that the issue does not have to affect everyone personally, but must be viewed as important by all.
 - Why did you choose that issue?
 - *Note: A maximum of two teams may develop the same topic. You may be asked to work on your second or third ranked option – or to adapt your preferred option to tackle a more specific aspect of it.*
 - Plan for Component #2: Annotated Bibliography (see p.13)

Thinking Ahead

Starting with team agreements and goals can help to ensure all teammates have a common vision for what is expected of them. This can help avoid some conflicts, and deal with others that inevitably arise.

Thinking Ahead

Save time and increase accountability by breaking down tasks into what individuals can contribute on their own, and what needs to be done collaboratively as a team.

- Read the tasks to be completed before and during the next lab. Create a plan for each teammate to complete by next lab.
- **WHAT TO SUBMIT AT THE END OF LAB BY POSTING ON YOUR TEAM'S WIKI (see pp. 12-14)**
 - Team agreements.
 - The 4 top-ranked learning challenges, plus the challenge your team chose that will be the focus of your team's investigation, and statement about why your team chose this challenge.
 - A copy of your plan for next lab.
- Evaluation of products posted on your team's wiki page (2% team score; note that acceptable, average quality products will earn approximately 6.5/10 in accord with departmental grading guidelines)
 - Team agreements will be evaluated based on their thorough consideration of the complexities of collaborative work. This includes realistic, creative ideas and solutions.
 - Your challenge will be evaluated based on
 - the amount of personal impact it has on at least some of your teammates, as conveyed by your statement about why your team chose this challenge.
 - thoughtfulness in your choice.
 - creativity (i.e., going beyond the given list of examples).
 - Your plan will be evaluated based on the specific break-down of tasks required of each and every teammate, including the use of sub-deadlines and a communication strategy for seeking support and sharing findings. In addition, your plan should identify a new team leader and scribe for the next component.

Annotated Bibliography (20%, individual) and Abstract (9%, team)

- Dates
 - Individual components should be completed, posted to the team wiki, and printed out on paper to hand in by the start of Lab 2 on Thursday February 13. (Note: your team may decide on an earlier deadline.)
 - Team components (synthesis and abstract) should be completed and posted to the team wiki by the end of Lab 2 on Thursday February 13. You will have all of Lab 2 on which to work on this, but your team may decide to prepare work on it before this lab.
- Tasks
 - *Each* individual teammate should examine your team learning challenge from three perspectives, by completing *all* of the following data-gathering strategies.
 1. What does **research in psychology** say about the topic? Find two journal articles that have been published in peer-reviewed journals in psychology on this topic (i.e., primary sources).
In what ways does this article help you understand your team learning challenge?
What is the take-home message from this article with respect to your team learning challenge?

Thinking Ahead

These are valuable skills for life-long learning: to be able to identify a problem, find information to help understand it, evaluate the quality of that information, and draw conclusions. That's why every individual in this class is being asked to do this step.

2. What is **common advice** you find on this learning problem (e.g., from UBC's Learning Commons, magazines, books or websites on learning)? Find one secondary source of information on your topic. *Is this information consistent or inconsistent with what you found in primary sources? Where does their advice come from (e.g., do they cite peer reviewed, scientific evidence)? Does this information help you understand your team learning challenge? Why or why not?*
 3. How does this learning problem **impact** the lives of others outside your group? Find two fellow UBC students (e.g., a friend), and ask them about their perceptions of your team learning challenge. Is it a problem for them? Why or why not? If it is, in what way is it a problem? What do they do, if anything, to try to address or avoid it? *What do their experiences suggest to you about the nature and impact of your team learning challenge?*
- Once you have gathered your sources, rank order them, 1 through 5, based on how helpful they are for addressing your team's issue. Be sure to consider the potential merits and limitations of every source, drawing on your understanding of research methods from the start of the course.
 - **Note: You do not need to do these tasks in sequential order.** For example, what you learn from secondary sources or interviews might lead to you questions that guide your literature search. You might go back and forth for a thorough investigation.
 - **Note: Each teammate must find different sources** to help ensure full coverage. Continuously posting and referring to other teammates' posts on your team wiki will help you make sure your findings are unique.
 - **WHAT TO SUBMIT**
 - **Overview:** Each individual teammate should hand in a completed annotated bibliography on paper at the start of Lab 2 (graded individually and worth 20% of your course grade).
 - Teams should decide what day and time all annotated bibliographies should be posted on the wiki, to provide enough time to work on the next step.
 - A recommendation: *post your references to your team wiki continuously as you find more information.* This step will enable you to see what others are finding throughout the three weeks, to ensure there are not duplications.
 - **Submit to your team before lab via the wiki, and to bring a hard copy to lab**
 - In your annotated bibliography, each of the 5 references is followed by a brief paragraph summarizing what you found and analyzing its usefulness for your investigation. Each reference annotation should *be about 200 but no more than 300 words*, and should answer the following questions:
 - Where did you find this information/source/person?
 - What was the most important message you learned from it, in terms of how well it informs your team learning challenge? Why is this message so important?
 - Are there any limitations or reasons to be skeptical about using this source? Why or why not? (Use your scientific mind!)
 - **Also to hand in with hard copy of your annotated bibliography:** Write one additional paragraph (~300 words) and add it at the start of your submission. Summarize your overall findings and

draw a conclusion from them about your learning challenge. In the process, compare the relative merits of your sources (are they all equally useful? Why/why not?).

- **Before Lab 2 (teams decide the date and time)**, the team leader for Lab 2 should log into the wiki and sort the annotated bibliographies such that all the interviews are grouped together, all the primary sources are grouped together, and all the secondary sources are grouped together. Number the sources 1 through 30 (or 1 through 25 if your team has 5 members instead of 6). This will help the team synthesize and summarize the information during lab.
 - Number your team's reference list. For example...
 - Primary Sources (journal articles)*
 - 1. Barrus, M. (2014). ...
 - 2. Rawn, C. D. (2013). ...
 - 3. Williamson, D. (2012). ...
 - Secondary Sources (common advice)*
 - 4. Brcic, J. (2012). ...
 - 5. Chang, S. (2010). ...
 - Interviews*
 - 6. Aknin, L. A. (2014). ...
- Then, in the body of your abstract, instead of including a full citation, like this (Williamson, 2012), you can simply include the number, like this (3).

How to create references for your annotated bibliography? Follow these formats...

For journal articles and magazines (magazines might not have a DOI):

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume number, pages.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy

For Interviews (the part in italics should be the topic you discussed):

Rawn, C. (Interviewer) & Assanand, S. (Interviewee). (2013). *Goal setting in your life*. [Interview].

For websites with a corporate author (e.g. Learning Commons) but no date (n.d. = no date):

Learning Commons. (n.d.). *Profs and TAs*. Retrieved from <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/profs-and-tas/>

Note: We will be strict on checking formatting for the three formats shown above, but if your source doesn't 100% match these, do the best you can with what you can find on OWL

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

- **Before and during lab**, the team together will prepare an abstract of the major, critical findings from the investigation. This abstract should be typed and should be posted at the top of your team wiki, above the complete annotated bibliography. It should be no longer than 600 words, and should include the following, in brief (it's an abstract, after all!):
 - A brief statement of your team learning challenge
 - An assessment of the way this challenge impacts students' learning, based on data gathered from interviews
 - A summary of the main messages from scientific research on this topic (i.e., primary sources).

- A summary of the key messages being conveyed in secondary sources on this topic, including analysis of the quality of these sources and how the messages contrast with those from scientific research.
 - A conclusion about how to resolve your team learning challenge. Given all of the data you have collected, what do you recommend for people trying to deal with this challenge? It should be clear that this conclusion follows from your findings, particularly those from scientific research.
 - References to each source you used. You will be attaching the full annotated bibliography, which should be numbered 1 through 30 (and is not included in the 600 word limit!). In the abstract, as you draw an idea from a source, put the number of the source in parentheses at the end of the sentence, like this (2).
- **After lab (by the next day)**, log in to iPeer (details below) and evaluate each teammate's contributions so far. This evaluation is required and will serve as formative feedback to each teammate, indicating what he or she should keep doing well, and what he or she should work on to be a more effective teammate.
- **WHAT TO SUBMIT AT THE END OF LAB BY POSTING ON YOUR TEAM'S WIKI**
 - Abstract written by the team during lab
 - Complete annotated bibliography, which should have already been sorted by the team leader for this component
 - Evaluation of products
 - Individual annotated bibliography as handed in on paper before lab (and as posted on your team's wiki page); worth 20% total
 - Your annotation for your **five sources will be worth 2% each** (totaling 10%). Each annotation should thoughtfully answer the questions listed above as thoroughly as possible given the strict word range (200-300 words).
 - **5% will be based on** the quality of your summary paragraph, as well as writing style and quality.
 - Full marks will be awarded only in rare cases of exceptional critical analysis packaged in clear, concise writing.
 - Team synthesis and 600 word abstract (9%, graded out of 35 points, as dispersed below)
 - A brief statement of your team learning challenge (2 points)
 - An assessment of the way this challenge impacts students' learning, based on data gathered from interviews. (6 points)
 - A summary of the main messages from scientific research on this topic (i.e., primary sources). (6 points)

Thinking Ahead

Giving and receiving performance feedback to others is a common experience in the working world, and one that takes practice to do well. Moreover, it can help identify smaller problems before they escalate.

- A summary of the key messages being conveyed in secondary sources on this topic, including analysis of the quality of these sources and how the messages contrast with those from scientific research. (7 points)
- A conclusion about how to resolve your team learning challenge. Given all of the data you have collected, what do you recommend for people trying to deal with this challenge? It should be clear that this conclusion follows from your findings, particularly those from scientific research. (10 points)
- Numbered references to each source you used, inclusion of the full group's annotated bibliography sorted by source type, and reference to a variety of sources as appropriate, when referring to ideas that come from them (4 points).
- *Writing style and quality will not be explicitly evaluated, but lack of clarity and low quality writing will negatively impact the ability to successfully achieve the points above in the limited space.*

Creative Advertisement: Reach out to others who need to know what you've learned (9%, team)

- Dates
 - Plan to be created in class during Lab 3 on March 6 (80 minutes)
 - Presentation with peer evaluation during class on April 1 and 3 (half the class presenting, half the class evaluating on each day)
- Tasks
 - Before Lab 3, read your team abstract as a reminder of what your team has accomplished so far and start generating ideas for the creative advertisement.
 - Identify a team leader and a team recorder for this Lab, and a different team leader for ensuring the project is completed.
 - During Lab 3, design a way to translate your research-based advice on your team learning challenge into a medium that will reach the people who need this information the most: your peers. Summarize your design at the top of your team wiki, above your abstract.
 - Some example ideas: poster, movie, skit (on video), interactive website, interpretive dance (on video), article appropriate for the Learning Commons website, mobile application...
 - Your application should be consumable (e.g., readable, watchable) in about 5 minutes. During the class showcase (April 1 and 3), each team will be stationed around the room, and you will have the chance to display your application and evaluate others' creative applications. Keep this format in mind as you design your application.

Thinking Ahead

Changing up team leaders and recorders enables everyone to share in the responsibility and develop skills in both of these important areas.

- During Lab 3, create a detailed action plan of what needs to be done to execute your creative advertisement. What does each teammate need to complete? When? Who is responsible for checking in (i.e., the team leader)?
 - Post the answers to these questions at the top of your team wiki.
- Evaluation of your creative advertisement project
 - This component is worth 9% and is evaluated on a team basis.
 - 5% of this grade will reflect our TA's evaluation of your project.
 - 4% of this grade will reflect the average of 5 peers' evaluations of your team's project.
 - The following criteria will contribute to your grade
 - Creativity in choice of medium and sophistication in execution
 - Ability to attract your intended audience (UBC students who need advice on that particular learning challenge)
 - Quality and clarity of advice that is given regarding your team learning challenge
 - Acknowledgement of references, so that it is clear that the advice is based on scientific research. The audience must be able to access the references in some way, but they don't have to appear directly on the advertisement itself (e.g., could take the form of an attachment or a hyperlinked list).

Thinking Ahead

Knowing teammates' strengths can open up a variety of opportunities in creative projects such as this. Take the opportunity to learn new skills from each other. You never know when they may come in handy.

Teammate Evaluation

- Twice throughout the term you will have the opportunity to evaluate and offer constructive feedback to your teammates – and to receive the same from them.
 - After Lab 2 (by February 14), the teammate evaluation will be conducted for *formative* purposes. That is, it's a chance for you to indicate what your teammates should keep doing well and what they need to work on.
 - At the end of the term (by April 8), the teammate evaluation will be conducted for *summative* purposes. That is, it counts toward each person's grade. Everyone will evaluate everyone else, and the average of each teammate's scores for each person will contribute up to 5% toward his/her grade.
- If you do not submit your evaluations of your teammates, this indicates poor team contribution. Therefore, 4 points (out of a possible 20) of your individual annotated bibliography grade will be deducted for each evaluation you miss.
- The software program we will use to conduct these evaluations is called iPeer, and has been used extensively at UBC, particularly in Commerce and Applied Science.
 - The link to iPeer will appear on the Connect site in the Assignments folder. When you click on it, it will take you to an external iPeer website.
 - Complete the peer evaluation for each of your teammates and yourself.

- There are 10 scale items and three open-ended responses.
 - To prepare, refresh your memory of your team agreements as you agreed on in Lab 1.
 - For the final evaluation, you will also be asked to distribute 50 points across teammates based on their contributions. No two teammates can have the same score.
- Be honest and constructive in your evaluations. Keep in mind that your teammates will receive the feedback, but will not know which teammate said what.

Thinking Ahead

Always keep track of the sources you consult and specifically reference in your projects. By appropriately crediting the work of others, you are demonstrating your ability to join a professional conversation.

References

Sibley, J., & Parmelee, D. X. (2008). Knowledge is no longer enough: Enhancing professional education with Team-Based Learning. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 116, 41-53.

Team formation for TBL. (n.d.). Retrieved December 21, 2010, from <http://teambasedlearning.org>

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Lab 1: Team Foundations Worksheet

Post your responses to each of these questions to your team wiki, which is available on our course website on www.connect.ubc.ca. *This lab is worth 2% of your course grade, and will be graded out of 60 points. One grade per team. Responses for every question will be graded. Please follow the instructions.*

1. Leaders

Team Leader for this Lab: _____

Team Recorder for this Lab: _____

Part A: Learning Team Agreements (Approximately 30 minutes; 30 points)

2. Team Members' Individual Contributions (out of 6 points)

This is where your team members let each other know their strengths and challenges, what they can contribute, what they want to work on, and what they need help with. While it is great to contribute based on your strengths, it is important that the team stays together and eventually everyone builds on areas that are challenging for them.

Team Member's Name	Strengths to contribute	Challenges to work on

3. Ground Rules (out of 4 points)

These are basic ground rules that each team member must observe. Show your commitment to these ground rules by adding them to your team wiki. Add more if you see fit, but do not remove any of these.

1. Members are committed to common goals.
2. Members are accountable to each other.
3. Members show respect toward each other.
4. All members share in the workload.
5. Members maintain timely communications with other members.

4. Communication Strategy (out of 8 points)

As a group, answer the following questions.

- A discussion board on Connect is ready for you; how often will each team member post to it and check it for others' posts?
- If someone has not posted to Connect on schedule, what is your back-up way of communicating with each other?
- When and how will you communicate with your team if you are unable to meet a deadline?
- How often (if at all) will you meet face-to-face outside of class? When? Where?

5. Team Goals (out of 6 points)

- What are your goals for completing these assignments? These can include objectives to complete the assignments, level of quality, and the processes the group will use to achieve these goals.
- What are the potential barriers to reaching the goals?
 - What conflicts might come up within the team or between team members during this course? How will team members handle team conflicts?
 - At what point would you seek assistance from the instructor or TA? What will you bring to them as evidence of the problem at hand?

Example Team Goals	Solutions to Potential Barriers
Work must be complete.	
Work must be submitted on time.	
All members must contribute equally.	
We will attempt to resolve all problems within our group by contacting members and discussing issues.	
All members must attend agreed on meeting times or notify other members of conflicts.	
All members must contribute and consider other members' ideas, opinions, and input. All members must behave in a supportive and encouraging manner.	
Team meetings will focus only on the task assignment (texting, checking email, or otherwise distracting the team is unacceptable).	

6. Statement of Commitment (out of 6 points)

By typing my name below, I acknowledge that I contributed to the development of these team guidelines and agreements, and I agree to abide by them for the benefit of the team.

[Each team member types his/her name below this statement.]

Part B: Brainstorm and Topic Choice (Approximately 30 minutes; 15 points)

7. What are the four most important issues that impact learning for at least some of your team members? (out of 4 points for generating and ranking any four issues; up to 5 points for creativity and thoughtfulness)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

8. Which one did your team choose as the focus of its investigation? Why? (out of 6 points)

