

CSCE 747 - Assignment 0 - Team Selection

Due Date: Thursday, January 19th, 11:59 PM

Overview

In this class, you will work in small groups. Most homework assignments (if not all) will be group assignments. This handout outlines the group selection process, the expectations on the groups, and some hints on how to run an effective team.

Group Selection

The class will be divided into groups of people. Students are strongly encouraged to form their own groups of compatible people. A team should consist of **three people**. If you cannot find a team to work with, you can submit your name to the professor, and they will assign you to a team.

The team selection process works as follows:

1. Attempt to find a team to work with. If you find two colleagues, e-mail the professor with the information requested below and you have a team.
2. If you have one colleague and want a random third member assigned, or if you just want to be assigned to a team, e-mail the professor and inform them of this. We will assign the remaining members to your team.
3. If you are an APOGEE student, you may choose to work on your own. Just e-mail the professor and let them know your preference.

Deliverable

Please send one e-mail per group. In the email, we want to see (1) name of each team members and (2) email address for each team member. We will assign a team number.

Group Organization

Most students prefer a democratic group organization. In a minority of groups, this can - in fact - work. However, most groups find they need some form of leader. We suggest you consider electing a “manager” for the team. The manager is responsible for calling meetings, assigning responsibilities, making sure deadlines are met, etc. We also recommend that you rotate the “manager” position throughout the semester, so that you all share this responsibility. You are free to choose any team organization you want.

Division of Labor

While it is to be expected that some members of your group will be better writers, some better programmers, and so on, you are not to divide the labor on these grounds alone. This class is to be a learning experience, and each of you should get a substantial amount of practice in all of these areas, not just the ones you are already good at.

Note: From experience, the integration of a document (integrating the parts developed by team members, making sure they are consistent, and making it look like a good document) takes a lot longer than you think. Thus, integration should start several days before the actual deadline.

Problems in the Team

Your team is almost certain to have some problems. For example, some team member will not pull their load, might not be as prepared as the rest of the team, or simply does not want to work on the assignments. In this case, do not immediately come to the professor for help. You are working in a team and you are responsible for resolving the problems. Naturally, if the problems are severe, feel free to come and see us. Switching team members will only be allowed in the most severe of circumstances.

From experience, not knowing what the expectations are is the most common problem in teams. One team member may think she/he is pulling her/his load, but the rest of the team is griping amongst themselves that this person “never does things right”. By keeping all expectations explicit through the action items on meeting minutes, you can avoid a lot of problems. Communicating these expectations clearly and voicing concerns within the team clearly are a must.

Should the problems be severe, you are encouraged to contact the professor to arrange a group mediation session.

Peer Evaluation

When working in the team you will be subjected to one or more peer evaluations. You will also evaluate your peers. When performing the peer evaluation, you should be honest without being vengeful. More on this topic will follow later in the class.

Expected Workload

This course may be a lot of work. The assignments may not seem that tough when you start out, but you will discover that all the reading, writing, and producing test cases can be difficult and time-consuming tasks.

Remember: Grades are not assigned in proportion to how many hours you spend on the assignments. Grades are assigned based on the quality of your work. Use your time wisely!