So Much to Do, So Little Time:
Managing the Workload in a
Student-Centered Course

GMU Lunch and Learn
December 1, 2015
Laura Wheeler Poms, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor, Global and Community Health
Where does the time go?

- A recent study suggests that faculty members work about 60 hours per week
  - 12% on class preparation
  - 12% on instruction
  - 11% on course administration (including grading)
  - 13% on email (including student class related emails)

- Magnified in a large class!

Source: https://thebluereview.org/faculty-time-allocation/
ALT Classroom

- 8 tables X 9 seats = 72 students
- Whiteboards
- 1/flat screen per table, plus main screen
- Lots of excitement!
Class Policies

- Start restrictively
- Watch exceptions
- Pre-determine flexibility
- Prepare to defend
Make ups/Late Work/Extra Credit

- Don’t accept late work!
  - Exploding appendix rule
- Don’t offer extra credit!
- Create enough assignments so one or two can be dropped (or the extra can be .... extra)
- Use Blackboard
  - multiple submissions
Grading

- Not every assignment needs to be graded
- But all assignments should have value
Formative Assignments

- Preparation assignments (credit/no credit)
  - Increases engagement with material
    - Comprehension quizzes (graded by BB)
    - Problem sets
    - Reflections
    - Create your own problems

- Go over homework in class
  - Less grading, more time for questions
Graded Assignments

- Resist the urge to assign too much
- Stagger assignments
  - 5 per week vs. 45 at once
- Provide written instructions and study guides
- Use rubrics
- Submit to BlackBoard always!
Group Work

- Reduces grading load
- Works well for in-class activities that count for participation points
- Emulates “real world” experiences
- Remember to include peer evaluation
# Group Work

## Epi Report Team Member Evaluation
Submit on BlackBoard by Report Due Date

**Evaluated by:**

**Group Members:**
- Member Name #1 (you)
- Member Name #2
- Member Name #3
- Member Name #4
- Member Name #5

Please rate **yourself** and your group members using this scale. Make sure the number corresponds to how you entered the names above. Failure to turn this form in by the due date will result in a **30 point deduction** in YOUR grade. No exceptions. Note that the higher the number, the more you agree with the statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>![Rating Scale]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
<th>#4</th>
<th>#5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The group member attended and actively participated in the group meetings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The group member completed his or her portion of the work in a timely manner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The group member provided high quality work that met the standards set by the group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The group member exhibited strong interpersonal and communication skills (i.e., replied to emails in a timely manner, contacted other group members regarding attendance or other issues, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I would volunteer to be in a group with this person again.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total - Please be sure to total each column**

Please explain your neutral or negative ratings of other group members:

Please discuss in several well-constructed sentences what you contributed to this project. Be specific.
Feedback

- Use guided peer review
  - Pair/share on student created problems
- General notes to class on common errors
- Wander with a purpose
- Rubrics, rubrics, rubrics!
Student Communication

- Official GMU email only
- Set parameters
  - Response times
  - Deadlines for questions
  - Office hours by appointment
Organization is Key!
In conclusion

- Set expectations early
- Don’t grade everything
- Use groups
- Stay organized
- Enjoy!

Any Questions?