

## **Working in Groups: Mentor Lesson Plan**

Start out in groups of 3 or 4. Group work is a big part of University learning, particularly in the UNST program. It is also important in careers, government, and community. Our mentor session are, in part, practice for these situations.

### **Part One (5 min.)**

Brainstorm on whiteboard (whole class):

Name a few situations in which group work is required.

Neighborhood association, community garden, co-op, town councils, legislature, corporate think-tanks, etc.

### **Part Two (5 min.)**

Brainstorm on whiteboard (in groups):

Think about your experiences working in groups.

What facilitates successful group work?

What impedes group work?

Attitudes and behaviors?

Avoid getting personal.

### **Part Three (remainder of class)**

Listen to *This American Life: Ruining it for the Rest of Us*

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/370/Ruining-It-for-the-Rest-of-Us>

### **Answer questions (in groups):**

1. What do you think of the research conclusions?
2. Do you think that the behavior of others influences your participation and/or behavior?
3. The groups in these experiments were small (4 people). Would the results have been different with a larger group?
4. In most groups, each member is dynamic, changeable, subject to the pressures of the rest of the group. In these experiments, the bad apple is playing a static role and is not affected by the others. Do you think this matters? How?
5. I wonder what the make-up of the groups was like. If one of the participants had a strong personality or natural leadership ability, would they have changed the influence of the bad apple?
6. Can bad apples be changed?
7. What are some strategies that you might use to deal with difficult group situations?

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