

COGS108 TEAM POLICIES

Your team will have a number of responsibilities for completion of the COGS 108 group project. While there are only three deadlines - the project proposal, the project check-in, and the final project submission due on the date of your final - there is a lot that will have to be done for a successful project. Your project proposal will help set up a schedule with your teammates to make sure that you are all on the same page throughout the quarter.

Note, that while one member may contribute more to any specific portion of the project, all members should be contributing equally across the entire project submission. For example, one group member may find the datasets you'll end up using in the project and will write the code to wrangle the dataset into the format you want. However, that person should NOT write all the code in the project. Another member would then contribute the draft of the code to visualize the data, while yet another member would edit and improve upon that code. This project is meant to be a collaborative. But, in a successful collaboration, all participants must carry their weight and contribute equally.

Everyone should contribute in some way or another to each of the following project aspects:

- Deciding on the project topic, searching for possible datasets, and honing the data science question.
- Writing well-commented and clear code to wrangle, explore, visualize, analyze, and communicate your groups' findings.
- Writing the accompanying text throughout the project to explain each section.
- Editing the text and code throughout your project for grammar, misspellings, and clarity.

While portions of the project can and should be done individually or in pairs (it's not easy to have five people working on code for the same section at once!), your team should assign tasks and deadlines evenly across members. Regular meeting times throughout the quarter should be scheduled in advance to check in with one another, discuss progress, see if the project is on task, and see if anyone is stuck. The best approach is to discuss each person's strengths up front, divide up responsibilities, develop a schedule for when each part will be done and who will be responsible for each section, and then check in regularly throughout the quarter to ensure progress is being made. To guide this, part of your proposal will require a project plan with sections assigned to each person in the group.

Upon submission, the names of every team member who participated actively in completing it should be included on the submission.

Having a Plan

Group work isn't always easy - Team members sometimes cannot prepare for or attend group sessions because of other responsibilities, and conflicts often result from different skill levels and work ethics. When teams work and communicate well, however, the benefits more than make up for the difficulties. In fact, teams with diverse skill sets and background often result in the most interesting and successful projects. One way to improve the chances that a team will work well is to agree beforehand on what the team expects from everyone else. Reaching this understanding and setting deadlines to accomplish each goal for this project will be required as part of your team's Project Proposal.

Additionally, toward the end of the course, you will be sent a survey to evaluate the team's progress as well as each member in the group's contributions. While this will not be collected at this point in time, it will serve to show you what information will be collected about you and your team at the end of the quarter. At this point, you'll be able to evaluate whether or not there is anything your team needs to work on for successful completion at the end of the quarter. This form will be collected and considered when your grade is calculated at the end of the quarter. This means that there is a possibility of different members of your team receiving different grades for the final project, should some members not contribute equally.

Dealing with non-cooperative team members

If a team member refuses to cooperate or complete their assigned tasks that you all have agreed upon on the project, you should first inform the uncooperative team member via email (or some other form of written communication) that they have not been pulling their weight and that they'll need to demonstrate significant improvement within a week, spelling out specifically what must be completed (i.e. edit code for wrangling section, write discussion, etc.). If there is no subsequent improvement, the team members should notify Professor Ellis. This can be a post to Prof Ellis individually on Piazza. Please include details and specifics. Note that teams should be working steadily throughout the quarter on their projects. Prof Ellis should know of any ongoing issues by week 7 at the latest.