The past two weeks of this class have seen vast improvements for my students. Following the peer reviews, I emailed each of my students a summary of their scores along with my commentary on their strengths and some suggestions for improving their skills. It was interesting to analyze the scores; as a whole, I agreed with the average score each student received, but it was noteworthy that those students who received lower scores on average were more likely to rate themselves, as well as everyone else in the group, as perfect group members. The only other issue I had with my students’ peer review feedback was that I had one student, Ezequiel, only review the male members of the group; I had to email him to ask him to submit to me his review of Alex and Shreeja, which I found to be odd.

The past two recitations, I was able to see how my students took into account the feedback I gave them. Most of them took their feedback to heart and worked to improve the group dynamic. I asked two of the students, Misha and Evan, who were rated highly for their participation but less so for their cooperation with other group members to work on being a positive force within the group so that others can feel more comfortable expressing their ideas. They began complimenting others on their ideas and asking for others’ opinions, which made me very proud.

Alex was given lower scores for attendance and contribution, which was understandable due to her health-related absences, and even before the peer review feedback was sent out, she had been stepping up as a leader, being more vocal and helping to assign tasks to group members to organize the team. I asked her to continue that, and she has been working so hard when she is able to be present.

Shreeja was also rated lower for contribution, but in sitting in recent group meetings, I found that that wasn’t for a lack of ideas, but because other group members would tend to talk over her, leading her to sit back. I encouraged her to continue attempting to speak up and told her that, when I see the need, I will advocate on her behalf, as I see that she has good ideas that the group should consider and she always comes prepared with annotated research articles. Since then, she has been more vocal about her ideas and questions about the project.

Tristin received lower scores for participation as well. I noticed with him that he does a lot of work outside of class and is always asking questions about the assignments, but once we get to the group discussion he is silent, oftentimes distracted with other things on his computer. I asked him to be as present in class as he is within our group message. He has been more present recently in terms of work ethic during group discussions, but is still not apt to contribute unless I prompt him.

Ezequiel received lower scores for group cooperation and I had a student comment that he picks fights within the group about small details. In his summary, I encouraged him to bring a more positive attitude to class and be more encouraging of the other students. He is always bringing a lot of knowledge and ideas to class, but usually uses them to shoot someone down or speak over someone. His behavior has not changed much, if at all, since the peer review summaries were sent out.

Will and Manvir received the highest scores of the group, which I definitely agreed with. They participate without smothering anyone and always come ready to work and focus. As such, I asked them to start trying to fill my role as the mentor to attempt to balance the conversation and keep the group on track, as I believe they would both make wonderful mentors next year. While they have continued to work well within the group as usual, I haven’t seen an attempt to expand into a new role, which is understandable as they are hard at work on the final project. They have been great leaders within this group, especially in doing research to choose a topic and get the group started on the project.

The group’s project is coming along. They have completely finished the Empirical Analysis and have begun writing the rest. Outlines and research have been completed for the other two main parts of the project. About twice a week for the past two weeks they have been getting as many members of the group together to meet and work on the project. I’m very glad they are doing this, as working online never has the same effect. I have been unable to attend the last few meetings, and so I cannot comment on the frequency of attendance of each group member. Those who have been most active in communicating their progress to the group are Tristin, Manvir, Will, and Alex.