Cooperative teams are much more than simply asking students to “work in groups.” Structuring activities that require both individual thinking and active group processing will yield the best results.

Invest time before class to plan how you will support and encourage collaboration during class. It will be time well spent!

| Positive Interdependence | Committing to other people’s achievement as well as one’s own is the heart of cooperative learning. Each team member perceives that he/she cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds (“sink or swim together”).

Strategies for occasional use: Assign each member complementary and interconnected roles that specify responsibilities that the group needs to do in order to complete a joint task. Each member only has a portion of the information, resources, or materials necessary for the task to be completed and the members’ resources must be combined in order for the group to achieve its goal. Divide the elements of a task so that the actions of one group member have to be completed if the next team member is to complete his or her responsibility. |
| Individual Accountability | Working collaboratively does not mean that individuals are not accountable for their learning. If done well, it means that group members are better prepared to succeed alone.

Strategies for occasional use: Develop a shared language of accountability in the class that groupmates can use to hold one another responsible for contributing to the group’s success (no “hitch-hiking”). Students individually complete a graded pre-assignment before coming to class. Students in a group receive bonus points if all in their group do well individually. |
| Group Processing and Behaviors | Careful analysis of why groups are working together and how well they are achieving the goals can provide continuous improvement of the learning process and promote buy-in for cooperative learning.

Strategies: Provide occasional but regular opportunities for groups to process how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships. Instructors can monitor group interactions to reinforce positive social skills and mediate poor ones, but for groups to function effectively, members must also establish and maintain positive relationships through strong interpersonal (social) skills. See the reverse side of this document for a resource to use with students as a handout or poster. |

*This resource is adapted from the Southern Center for Active Learning Excellence and from David Johnson and Roger Johnson [www.co-operation.org](http://www.co-operation.org)*
### Active Classroom Behaviors

#### Considering Alternative Ideas & Strategies

**LOOKS LIKE**
- Note taking
- Active thinking
- Eye contact among participants
- Accepting body language

**SOUNDS LIKE**
- "I like what you said and..."
- "I see your point and maybe..."
- "Have you ever thought..."

#### Achieving Group Consensus

**LOOKS LIKE**
- Reviewing all positions
- Active listening
- Asking pertinent questions
- Reviewing notes and materials

**SOUNDS LIKE**
- "Let's review all the points."
- "Do you agree? Why or why not?"
- "Let's go with this idea..."

#### Asking Probing Questions

**LOOKS LIKE**
- Eye contact
- Note taking
- Everyone involved
- Engaging conversation

**SOUNDS LIKE**
- "What if...?"
- "Why?"
- "What else?"
- "What supports that idea?"

#### Elaborating on Ideas

**LOOKS LIKE**
- Engaged students
- Furrowed brows
- Active communication

**SOUNDS LIKE**
- "Please give another example."
- "Tell us more."
- "Can you expand further?"

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This resource is adapted from David Johnson and Roger Johnson
[www.co-operation.org](http://www.co-operation.org)

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The University of Texas at Austin
Charles A. Dana Center

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