

Cooperative Exam

What it is: Exams for which students answer some questions independently and some in groups. These type of exams may be called cooperative, two-stage, or pyramid exams.

Implementation:

- Prepare an exam that has an individual component and a cooperative group component.
- Questions may be in any format: multiple choice, short answer, problem-solving... Questions in the 2nd part may build on a questions from the 1st part or ask them in a new way.
- For the 1st part of the exam (often 30-45'), students individually answer questions and turn in their responses.
- For the 2nd part of the exam (often 30-45'), in groups of 3-5, students answer the same questions, new questions, or a combination of both depending on how you choose to format the exam.

Grading:

- Many instructors have the individual component count as 70-80% of the total exam grade, with the cooperative portion counting for the remaining.
- Many instructors do not penalize students if they perform better on the individual portion than on the cooperative portion.

Advantages:

- Exam is a learning experience
- Immediate feedback from peers
- Students achieve a higher level of mastery

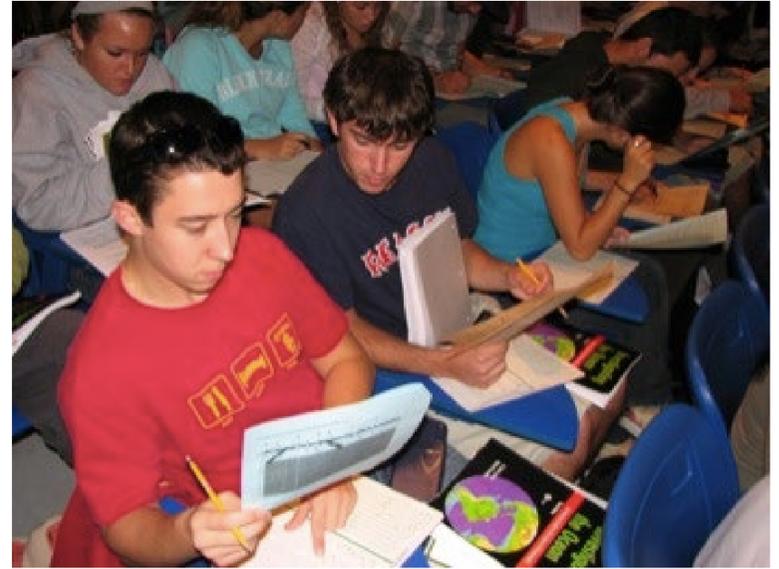


Photo by Mark Leckie

Student comments: (from Wieman et al., 2014)

- *I was able to instantly learn from my mistakes.*
- *It was good to compare methods and answers with others, and it allowed us to be more confident.*
- *Interesting. All had different ways of approaching the question. Very helpful to understand everyone's response and why they thought their answer was correct.*

References

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