



## Group Writing Projects

Group writing projects present opportunities and challenges. Students accustomed to working alone can benefit from learning how fellow writers plan, research, draft, and revise. But working in a group requires coordinating schedules, dividing work equitably, accepting constructive feedback, and meeting deadlines.

### Reviewing the Assignment

Schedule an initial meeting as soon as possible. The primary focus, of course, is the paper assignment. Read your instructor's guidelines and highlight key expectations.

- What is the final product and when is it due?
- How much time do you have to plan, research, write, and revise?
- How many times will the group need to meet?
- Do members evaluate colleagues?

### Dividing Tasks

Two common approaches to dividing the project are

- Specialist approach—members volunteer based on their strengths: researching, writing, designing, editing, citing sources, proofreading, organizing group activities.
- Group-to-individual approach—all members work on planning and research; then the paper is divided into sections, and each member works individually on writing a section; all members participate in feedback and revision; one member edits final draft for consistent voice.

Regardless of your group's approach, make sure to appoint individuals to lead meetings, to record meeting notes, and to edit the final product so that it's more than several papers copied and pasted together.

### Keeping Each Other Accountable

The most common challenge with group work is uneven division of labor.

1. Create a written agreement that details member responsibilities (some groups use a contract).
2. Create an agreed upon schedule for group meetings.
3. Agree to a method for making group decisions about revising and improving your paper.
4. Set due dates for rough drafts and final draft for group proofread.
5. Create a contact list for all members and agree to check regularly.
6. Keep a record of all communications: email, Google Docs, Slack, meeting notes, etc.
7. Communicate with your instructor about any concerns.

### Collaborating with Technology

Apps like [Google Docs](#), [Slack](#), and [Doodle](#) make collaboration easier. Doodle allows members to enter their scheduling availability and generates mutually convenient times. Google Docs, available through your UARK account, allows members to share and edit a document and cuts down on emailing and the need for multiple meetings. Slack is a messaging app for teams that also allows document sharing and archiving of communication.