

## Collaborative Teaching Models and Templates

Following is a list of general models for faculty collaboration and course structures, reflecting practices that are widely recognized for their value for students and faculty. Each of these is very briefly outlined below. For more information on these models, please contact Crisca Bierwert, Assistant Director of CRLT at [crisca@umich.edu](mailto:crisca@umich.edu).

### ***1. Models of Faculty Collaboration (other variations also exist)***<sup>1</sup>

Collaborative teaching includes variation in faculty interactions – but does not involve faculty teaching “half-time” or “part-time.” In fact, collaborative teaching usually requires more time and coordination than teaching a course alone. James (1995) advises that the benefits of collaboration have little to do with faculty participating in the administration of a course, but derive from the type and degree of collaboration shared by the faculty members.<sup>2</sup>

#### **1. A. The models below share the following features, which make them collaborative:**

- More than one faculty member plan and teach the course together.
- Topics, materials and assignments are integrated and/or interrelated.
- Collaborating faculty usually attend every class session, although they may have different roles, or complementary roles, in those settings (see below).
- Collaborating faculty consult with one another regularly during the course and plan any needed course adjustments together.

#### **Co-Teaching**

- Faculty plan presentations closely together, so their presentations complement one another. They also may comment on one another’s presentations, and on course material. They sometimes co-present.
- When facilitating student discussion, they may co-facilitate, they may divide the group, and/or the faculty not facilitating may add comments.

#### **Alternate Teaching**

- Faculty jointly plan instruction, but only one presents material, with the other responding at any time.
- The faculty change roles throughout the course, even within each topical unit.
- This is not a “tag-team” approach, where the faculty simply alternate presenting materials without co-planning or responding to one another.

#### **Lead and Support**

- One faculty member leads in presentations and another specializes in organizing and facilitating small groups.

#### **Rotational Teaching**

- While designing the course together, faculty individually develop student projects and/or clusters of assignments that will complement one another.
- The students are divided into heterogeneous groups and work on different projects at the same time.
- As the term proceeds, the students rotate among the different projects.

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<sup>1</sup> adapted from Friend, M., Reising, M., & Cook, L. (1993). “Co-teaching: An overview of the past, a glimpse at the present, and considerations for the future” in *Preventing School Failure*, 37(4), 6-10.

<sup>2</sup> Davis, James R. (1995). *Interdisciplinary Courses and Team Teaching*. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education/ Oryx Press.

- Faculty rotate working with different groups in their area of specialization, and in working with groups help them to integrate the projects into the overall course.

(Note: **Tag-team teaching** involves course planning by faculty who “divide the labor” and schedule themselves to alternate in presenting material to students. While valuable in specific contexts, this approach is not here considered to be collaborative teaching. This methods may be very valuable in specific contexts.)

**1. B. The model below is for a large-scale collaborative course that may involve only one faculty who attends every class, but requires the collaboration of many faculty. The following features make these *coordinated collaborative courses*.**

#### **Integrated Lecture Series**

- One or more faculty coordinate course planning and content, which will draw on the expertise of a larger group of faculty.
- A faculty planning group, representing the fields of specialization entailed by the course, collaborate on course design: planning course goals, agreeing on course design principles, providing ideas and guidelines for teaching strategies, and identifying how to assess student learning outcomes. This group, or a comparable one, evaluates the success of the course over time.
- Guest faculty provide lectures, mini-lectures, panel presentations and/ or facilitating of discussion. The coordinating faculty plan how the students will work with this material. Guests may or may not be involved in the core planning group. The number of guest lectures may vary.

#### **2. Institutional Structures for Collaborative Course Offerings**

**2. A. Below are some examples of how collaborative courses are listed.**

##### **Collaborative Course**

- One course number with more than one faculty member listed as the instructor of record.
- Two (or more) courses, with separate registrar’s numbers and separate faculty listings, that meet in the same place and time. Students register for one or the other course. Sometimes called “meet together” courses.
- Two courses, with separate registrar’s numbers, meet sequentially, in the same place, so that the two faculty members attend one another’s courses (doubling their contact hours). Students must register for both courses.

##### **Coordinated Collaborative Course**

- One course number with one faculty member (the coordinator) listed as instructor of record.

**2. B. The following describes other, more complex structures:**

**Linked Course** (Two separate courses, from different disciplines, linked in an integrative seminar.)

Seminar course, taught collaboratively by two faculty members, that links separate lecture courses that each faculty member teaches separately in the same term. The seminar provides a framework for students to bring together themes, topics, and analytical tools, from two courses taught separately by these two faculty members. Faculty teach the seminar together as the second course for each. Some students register for both courses and seminar, while other students register for only one course.

**Learning Clusters** (develops linked course concept)

Integrative seminar course links content of three or four other courses, used when curriculum permits (or requires) students can to commit a full schedule to these related courses. Sometimes focused on general education, sometimes is discipline-specific.

**Complementary courses**

Two separate courses planned by two faculty members to be integrated or complementary with one another. The courses are listed in separate departments or programs, with separate numbers, and meet at different times. In one variation, students must register for both courses. In another variation, the combination of courses is recommended (or required) for some students, but not all students take both courses.

**Related courses that can meet together** (not to be confused with “meet together courses” that meet together all of the time)

Two separate courses planned by two faculty members to be complementary with one another in some respects, but meet separately most of the time. The courses scheduled at the same time. The courses meet together sometimes, for faculty to share lecturing and leading discussion for both groups, and for the students to share views on related material.

**Lab component** (lab supplements class time, providing enough time for integrative student projects)

A lab time for a collaborative course, that students are required to register for along with the collaborative course number(s). Useful for co-curricular components of instruction (like community-service learning), instruction on complex projects, or student-directed projects.

**Intensive course or mini-course**

Courses with one- or two-credits, or that take place in time blocks shorter than Fall and Winter terms, in which students and faculty work together for a sustained, intensive time. The collaborative teaching structure may have any of the above forms. These structures are often used for experiential or co-curricular teaching and learning.

**Federated Learning Communities**

- Federation of more than two disciplinary courses, in which faculty plan and coordinate the courses together. New core courses may be jointly developed.
- May include a program seminar. For students, this provides a discussion section for integrating the elements of a learning community or curricular program. For faculty, a program seminar provides discussion of scholarship and research relevant to the course of study being linked.
- May provide support for “master learners,” that is faculty members released from teaching for a specific period to study in new areas. These faculty lead discussion sections to assist students in the new material, and they provide support for other faculty with feedback on effective teaching methods and student learning obstacles and outcomes.