



Four Corners Exercise Overview – Online

Objective: This activity promotes critical thinking, exploring different perspectives and engaging in active discussion by working in teams based on students' collective opinions or answers to a question. Students will explore different perspectives and engage in active discussion by working in teams and virtually moving to different "corners" based on their collective opinions or answers to a question.

Steps to Facilitate the Online Team-Based Four Corners Exercise:

1. Introduction:

- Explain the purpose and objectives of the Four Corners exercise.
- Highlight the importance of exploring different perspectives and engaging in active discussion.

2. Form Teams:

- If you are doing this synchronously: Divide students into small teams (3-5 members each) using breakout rooms in Microsoft Teams.

To put students into breakout rooms in Microsoft Teams, you can either set them up before the meeting or during the meeting. Before the meeting, you can create and assign rooms in the meeting invite. During the meeting, you can create rooms from the meeting controls.

Setting up breakout rooms before the meeting:

1. Open the meeting invite: Locate the Teams meeting in your calendar and open it.
2. Access Breakout Rooms: Click on the "Breakout Rooms" option.
3. Create Rooms: Choose the number of rooms you want to create (up to 50).
4. Assign Participants: Select whether you want participants to be assigned automatically or manually.
5. Save: Save your changes.

Setting up breakout rooms during the meeting:

1. Start the meeting: Join the meeting from the Teams desktop app (Windows or Mac).
2. Access Breakout Rooms: Click on the "Rooms" button in the meeting controls.
3. Create Rooms: Choose the number of rooms and whether you want to assign participants automatically or manually.
4. Assign Participants: If you chose manual assignment, you can assign participants to rooms.
5. Open Rooms: Click "Open" to start the breakout sessions.

- If you are doing this asynchronously: To put students into teams (or groups) within D2L (Brightspace), you can use the "Groups" tool. You can create categories for groups, then either manually assign students to those groups or allow students to self-enroll. Alternatively, you can create teams through the Microsoft Teams integration within D2L, which allows for course-specific teams with synced class lists.

Detailed Steps:

1. Using the "Groups" Tool:
 2. **Navigate to the Groups Tool:** Go to Course Home > Course Admin > Groups.
 3. **Create a Category:** Click New Category to create a new group category.
 4. **Choose Enrollment Type:** Select how students will be added to the groups (e.g., manual enrollment, self-enrollment, or groups of a certain size).
 5. **Define Group Settings:** Enter a name for the category, specify the number of groups, and how many students should be in each group.
 6. **Add Students:** If you've chosen manual enrollment, you'll be able to manually add students to specific groups, [as described by DePaul University](#).
 7. **Allow Self-Enrollment:** If you've chosen self-enrollment, students will be able to choose which group they want to join, as described in the guide.
3. **Pose a Question or Prompt:**
 - Present a question or prompt related to the course material that has multiple possible responses or perspectives.
 - Example: "Which approach to solving climate change is most effective?"
 4. **Team Discussion:**
 - Allow teams to discuss the question or prompt among themselves in their breakout rooms.
 - Encourage each team member to share their thoughts and opinions.
 - Teams should reach a consensus on their collective response.
 5. **Move to Virtual Corners:**
 - Create four virtual "corners" using breakout rooms/discussion boards, each representing a different response or perspective.
 - Ask teams to move to the breakout room that best represents their collective response.
 - Example Corners: "Government Regulation," "Technological Innovation," "Individual Action," "International Cooperation."
 6. **Group Discussion in Virtual Corners:**
 - Once teams are in their chosen breakout rooms, students facilitate a discussion within each group.
 - Ask teams to explain their reasoning and share their collective thoughts with others in the same breakout room.
 7. **Cross-Corner Discussion:**
 - After the initial group discussion, all students back to the main video call and have representatives from each breakout room share their perspectives with the entire class.

- Or give them a deadline to write a summary of their perspectives.
 - Encourage respectful dialogue and consideration of different viewpoints.
8. **Reflection:**
- Facilitate a reflection session where students discuss what they learned from the activity.
 - Encourage students to reflect on how exploring different perspectives can enhance their understanding of complex issues.

Sample Reflection Prompts

1. **Team Dynamics:**
 - "How did your team reach a consensus on the response?"
 - "What role did each team member play in the discussion?"
2. **Reasoning and Perspectives:**
 - "What were the main reasons for your team's chosen response?"
 - "How did discussing different perspectives within your team influence your decision?"
3. **Learning Insights:**
 - "What did you learn about the different approaches to solving climate change?"
 - "How did this activity enhance your understanding of the issue?"
4. **Collaboration and Communication:**
 - "How did effective communication contribute to your team's success?"
 - "What strategies did your team use to ensure everyone's voice was heard?"