

# LEARNING TO LEARN COOPERATIVELY

## The Basic Elements of Cooperative Learning

Not all small group learning is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning incorporates five basic elements.

1. **Face-to-face promotive interaction**—refers to students talking to each other in order to share insights and ideas.
2. **Individual responsibility**—refers to holding students accountable for themselves to prevent “freeloading” in a learning group.
3. **Collaborative skills**—include skills necessary for effective group functioning, such as leadership, team-building, and conflict resolution.
4. **Group processing**—refers to how well the group is functioning aside from the academic products or performances.
5. **Positive interdependence**—the perception among members of the group that “we sink or swim together.”

## **Learning To Learn Cooperatively**

### **Individual Roles, Group Responsibility**

An effective way to build positive interdependence is to assign group members responsibility for the nature of the group process. Such responsibility is above and beyond the academic work that is being undertaken by the group.

The following are recommended roles that should be assigned during any cooperative group work session. These roles should be rotated through the members.

**1. Recorder**

**2. Checker for understanding**

**3. Encourager of participation**

**4. Elaborator/summarizer of ideas**

**5. Monitor of group process**