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## **SELF-CHOSEN STUDENT GROUPS - WHAT IS THE STUDENT IMPACT IF ONE IS NOT PART OF HIS/HER IDEAL TEAM?**

### **Abstract:**

Colleges and universities have increased student group work in business curriculum since the business community is looking for students able to work in this environment. Although it has been shown to provide students with added teamwork, communication, and problem solving skills, group work creates challenges in grading, social loafing, and motivation. To help reduce these issues, professors have allowed students to pick their own teams, which has created its own set of issues and concerns. Although studies have shown students prefer to choose their own teams, transfer students, student with learning challenges, or just the “odd man out” issue when social circles do not match team sizes, could cause those students to have a negative learning experience. Through a research study of undergraduate business students at Wisconsin Lutheran College, the author hoped to gain a greater understanding of the impact on learning that students face when they are not able to join their ideal team choice when teams are self-selected. Students in Microeconomics (BUS 181) where the professor chooses the teams and two classes where students choose their own teams provided the research subjects. The author utilized an adaptation of a study instrument from Marks and O’Connor (2013), conducted at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia. Although the author was concerned that students that were able to choose their own teams, but did not become part of their ideal team, would have a negative learning experience compared to other self-selected teams as well as teams assigned by the professor, the data gathered did not support the hypothesis. Convenience sampling and small sample sizes may have contributed to the results, and thus additional research and analysis should be completed on this important topic.

### **Keywords:**

Group Work, Colleges, Universities, evaluation, education impact

**JEL Classification:** I21