

## INTRODUCTION

Teams and teamwork are essential competencies in the workplace, as many employers value interpersonal skills, teamwork abilities, and collaboration. In my Capstone class, I noticed that a common issue in teamwork arises from students' lack of knowledge on resolving conflicts and disagreements. This often leads to negative learning experiences, increased tension, and anxiety. My Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research addresses this problem and practices equity-minded team conflict resolution in my Capstone course. I incorporated lectures, practice sessions, self-reflection exercises, and partner evaluations into the course structure. This approach seeks to create a safe and inclusive learning environment where students can share their perspectives, build understanding and trust, and engage as equals. The goal is to replace behaviors such as dominance, control, avoidance, and personal attacks with collaborative and respectful communication during team conflicts. These practices are valuable as students move on in their future careers.

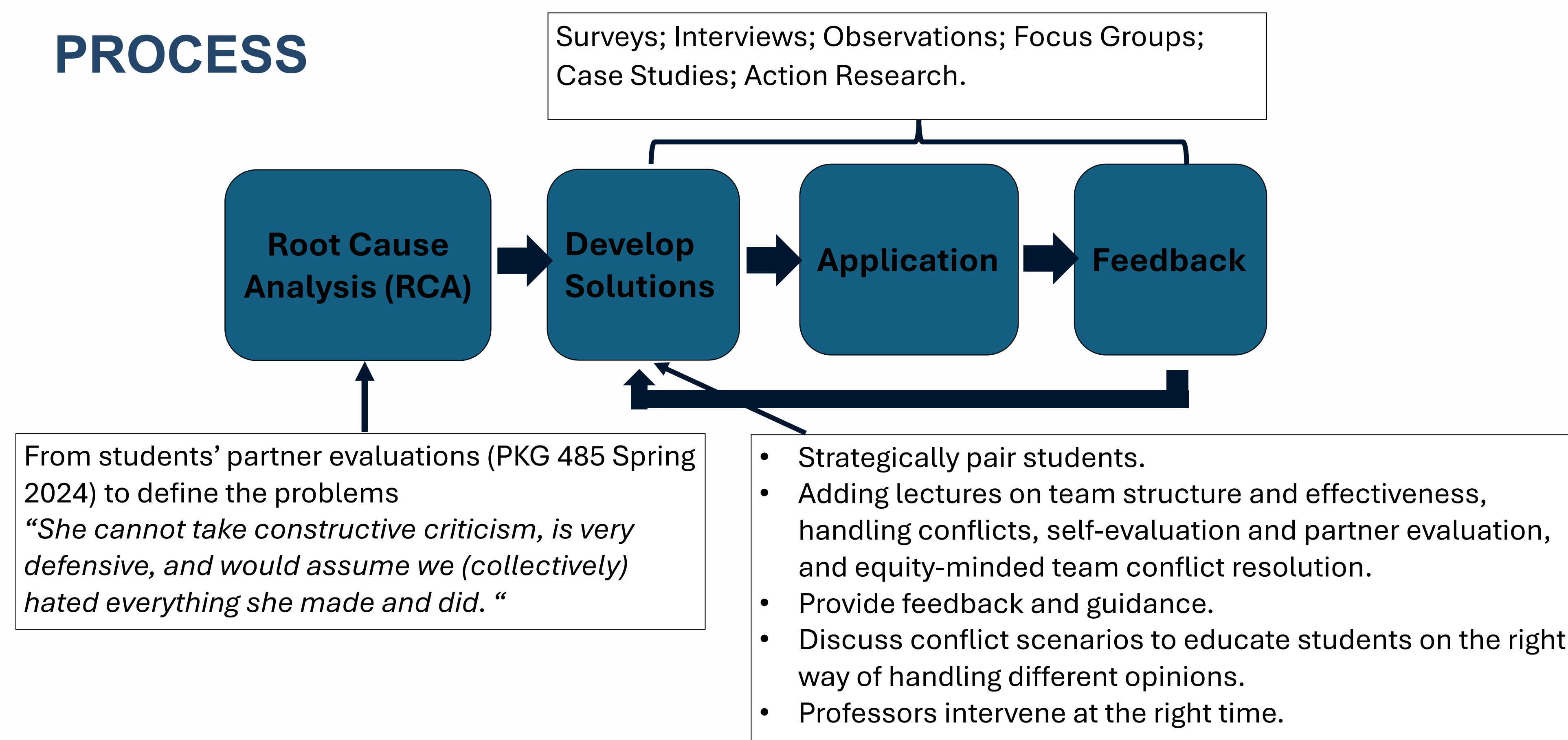
## METHODS

This research employed a qualitative method, focusing on exploring and understanding complex phenomena through various techniques, including surveys, interviews, observations, focus groups, and action research.

	Spring 24 PKG 485	Fall 24 PKG 490	Spring 25 PKG 485
<b>Students enrolled</b>	25	16	20
<b>Team members</b>	5	2	4
<b>Combination</b>	Two majors	One major	Two majors
<b>Weeks</b>	15	8	15
<b>Class hours per week</b>	4	3	4
<b>Design deliverable</b>	3	2	2
<b>Intergroup conflict</b>	Packaging to packaging Packaging to graphic design Graphic design to graphic design	Packaging to packaging Packaging to graphic design	Packaging to packaging Packaging to graphic design Graphic design to graphic design
<b>Instructor</b>	Packaging, graphic design, two companies	Packaging	Packaging, graphic design, two companies
<b>Conflict level</b>	Moderate to high	Low to moderate	Moderate to high
<b>Survey on</b>	Week 10	Week 8	Week 10
<b>Lecture time</b>	0	15 minutes	30 minutes
<b>Professors intervene</b>	Yes, two times after week 10	no	Yes, three times before week 10
<b>Conflict was resolved</b>	no	no	Some is The class is still in the process

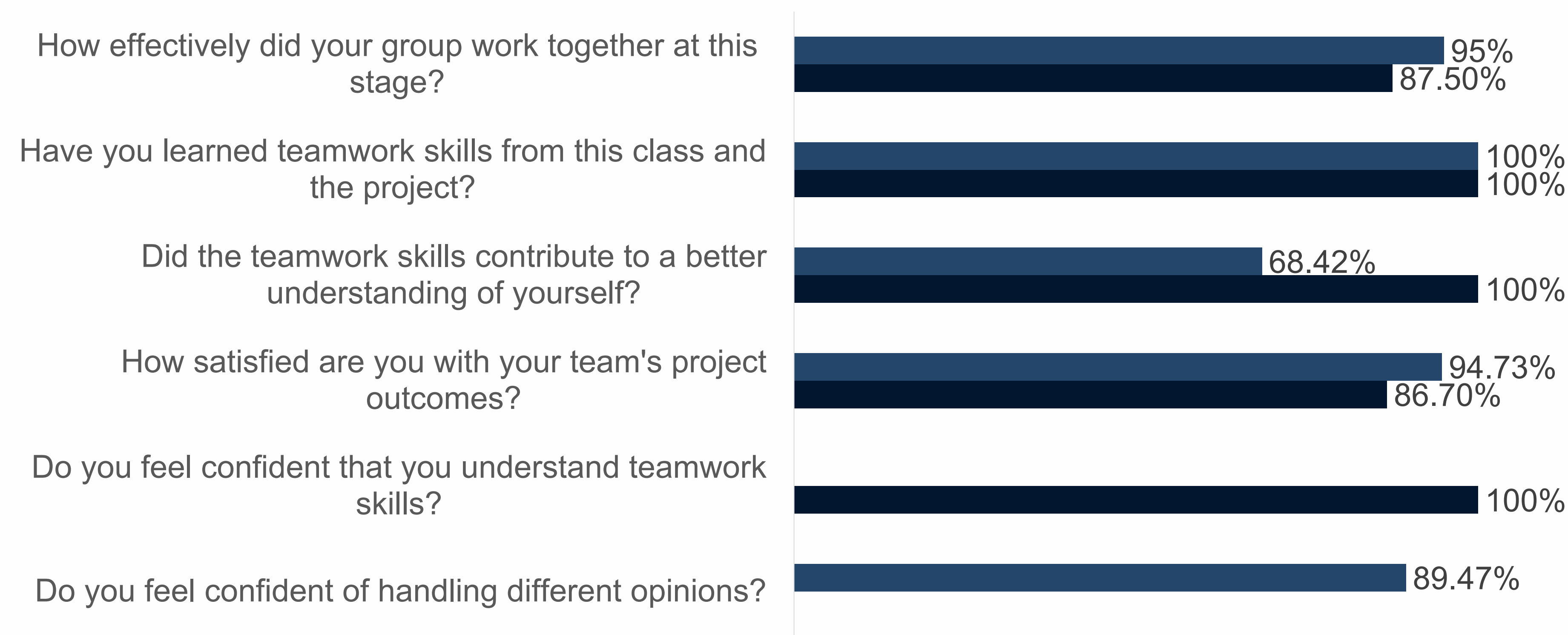
*Spring '24, Fall '24, and Spring '25 course comparison*

## PROCESS



## RESULTS

*Fall 2024, Spring 2025 Capstone Courses Students Survey Results*



## DISCUSSION

"How effectively did your group work together at this stage?" 87.5% of students in PKG 490 Fall 24, and 95% of students in PKG 485 Spring 25, agreed that their team worked very effectively. The data indicates that enhancing lectures and providing additional guidance, along with professor intervention through individual conversations with students, could significantly improve teamwork efficiency.

"Did the teamwork skills contribute to a deeper understanding of yourself?" In Fall 2024, the response rate of "Yes" was 100%, while in Spring 2025, it was 68.42%. The remaining 32% of students who said "No" were all from teams that had interpersonal conflict. They also belonged to the same demographic that reported having trouble with disagreements. This data suggests students with strong personalities need more and longer time to change themselves.

In the Fall '24 survey, the question was, "Do you feel confident that you understand teamwork skills?" All students responded affirmatively, which led me to conclude that the question might have been too general. I refined it to focus on "handling different opinions." In the Spring '25 survey, the response changed: 89.47% of students reported that they could manage conflict well, while over 11% indicated that they struggled to handle differing opinions effectively.

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conflicts in student teamwork are unavoidable, regardless of the circumstances. It is crucial to guide students in understanding and navigating effective ways to handle teamwork, disagreement, and tension in the Capstone course. Relevant lectures and topics need to be integrated into the course syllabus.
- Learning teamwork skills and conflict resolution can take the entire duration of the course. A longer timeframe typically yields better results and outcomes. In contrast, short-term teamwork projects often struggle to achieve planned objectives for conflicts usually begin to emerge within teams between weeks 4 and 9.
- Instructors must intervene during the project's early stages by closely observing team dynamics and addressing any red flags that arise in the initial survey. Interventions after week 10 are often more challenging and less effective in resolving team conflicts. Without training in teamwork skills and professional intervention, conflicts can accumulate and escalate into significant issues that negatively impact the learning experience.
- The course framework significantly enhances students' learning and experience by integrating research on equity-minded conflict resolution in team settings.



*Spring 24 Course Project Outcome Example*

## REFERENCES

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research reported in this poster was supported by the *Wisconsin Teaching Fellows & Scholars Program* grant, administered by the Universities of Wisconsin, from 2024 to 2025.

