

## 2023 Technology Fee Full Proposal

**Title:** FeedbackFruits Group Member Evaluation Tool: Facilitating collaborative Learning at University of Florida

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**Sponsoring Organization:** Academic Technology

### **Purpose and Specific Objectives:**

[Excellence](#) is a UF Core Value setting the standard for faculty, students, and staff, to strive to be excellent by doing their best. [FeedbackFruits Group Member Evaluation Tool \(GME tool\)](#) will help faculty and students be excellent by communicating better and performing more efficiently and effectively as they engage in collaborative learning activities. Students can use this tool to provide and receive feedback within their group in a constructive and easy way without having to leave Canvas or open any new accounts on other platforms. The GME tool allows students to react and reply to the feedback they receive. It would help excellent group members to be recognized, and others to learn how to improve their performance.

Group work and collaborative learning are instructional strategies commonly used across UF's colleges. Two essential elements of these instructional strategies are reflection and peer-evaluation of students' performance. [UF's Instructor Guidebook](#) states: "[i]ncluding multiple opportunities for peer and instructor feedback is essential when evaluating group work" (p. 137). By regularly evaluating themselves and other group members' contribution to collaborative learning efforts, students are able to better regulate their learning and coordinate better with their peers. This allows faculty not only to formatively assess individual students' competence and contribution beyond the assessment of group products, but also to provide meaningful feedback. However, currently the availability of online tools affording group member evaluation is limited. Moreover, UF faculty and students do not have access to such a tool that integrates directly with UF's learning management system, Canvas. FeedbackFruit's GME Tool directly connects to Canvas groups and grading to provide students structured self and peer feedback opportunities without having them leave Canvas. The tool will also help faculty gain insight through its learning analytics dashboard.

The purpose of this proposal is to fund the implementation of the FeedbackFruits GME Tool LTI in UF's learning management system, Canvas.

The specific objectives for this project will be:

- Promote the use of GME tool across campus by publicizing the availability of the tool in Canvas through different channels such as UF websites, email, and Teams.
- Monitor adoption and use of the GME tool by reviewing user analytics.

This innovative tool will strengthen UF's support for excellent teaching and learning.

### **Impact/Benefit:**

As part of a successful pilot by Dr. Melissa White, an Instructional Assistant Professor at UF's College of Engineering in 2021-2023, FeedbackFruits LTI [has already been reviewed and implemented by UF](#). As a result, its benefits will be *immediately* available through Canvas to all faculty and students. GME tool is integrated into UF's Canvas LMS via LTI 1.3 (Advantage) and deeper integration via scoped OAuth 2.0. Therefore, GME tool can be used and copied over into other course shells and reused in new classes of various sizes. This integration also allows for automatic synchronization of different Canvas features, such as groups, grades, and assignments. FeedbackFruits complies with UF accessibility policy as a review conducted by UFIT using the Tier 2 VPAT Rubric shows (attached along with a recent external review).

The benefits of implementing GME Tool include:

- Providing structure for student self-evaluation
- Enhancing student meta-cognitive skills and self-regulated learning
- Facilitating peer evaluation and constructive feedback
- Providing faculty and staff with insight into group dynamics through its learning analytics dashboard
- Provide faculty with insight into individual students' performance and competence
- Saving faculty and student time

Canvas supports the creation of student groups and allows assigning grades to groups, but it provides only limited peer evaluation features, which are difficult to use, and there is no straightforward way to set a peer evaluation as a graded assignment. Adoption of the GME Tool would fill a gap that has been present in our LMS since we began using it in 2014. While UFIT Academic Technology has advocated with Instructure to make improvements to the Peer Review functionality, they have yet to release any notable improvements.

#### **Interest across UF:**

Across the university students are engaged in collaborative learning activities and the benefits of the GME tool generate interest. UF students we spoke with pointed to FeedbackFruits GME tool's unique features including the user-friendly interface and its ease of use. For example, one student said, *"it would be easier because we would not have to create an extra account and bypass some steps"* and another added *"it could help by seeing the answers in real time instead of having to go to another platform for a survey"* (graduate students at UF).

Referring to GME's unique feature enabling students to reply to feedback, a student stated that a *"standardized process to refute scores others gave you would also be helpful"* (graduate student at UF). Another student commented that the GME tool would be *"useful because I would like to praise those who I do find to be good group members, which is something I find important because I only come by them so often. Plus, I would like to know others' feedback on me and how I could be doing better as a group member"* (Anthropology undergraduate student at UF).

The structure the GME tools provides for feedback was noted as an advantage by another student: *"I think this tool can be particularly valuable because it can keep students' feedback centered on the set criteria/objectives. I think that a lot of the time, when students have to do peer feedback, they have no idea what to say; so, they just end up saying generic stuff. I think that this tool can really help improve this"* (MPH student at UF).

Ted Hendrixson, a master's student, shared with us his experience with other similar tools and how they compare to FeedbackFruits GME tool:

*"I can think of three distinct peer-feedback tools I have used in my time studying at UF, and the only one that actually showed the feedback I received was the CATME tool. I think being able to view the feedback you receive is important for professional growth, and learning to accept constructive criticisms, as will certainly happen in the workplace. The problem with CATME is that it has a very unfriendly user interface. I have used it a few times and feel that it has a very steep learning curve. Further, I have never used it with a free response option, which I think could potentially be helpful.*

*I believe this tool from FeedbackFruits would be quite useful! The user interface seems easy to navigate and understand, which would likely be more conducive to people accurately completing peer evaluations and subsequently reviewing the ones they receive.*

This is more useful than any peer feedback tool I have seen employed at UF yet due to the user-friendly nature of the FeedbackFruits tool. As previously mentioned, the CATME tool is not self-explanatory. Even reading the results I received on that tool felt difficult. This new tool would likely encourage more effort to be put into completing and reviewing peer evaluations.” – **Ted Hendrixson, MPH student, University of Florida**

Among UF faculty and staff, the GME tool has also generated great interest as the following quotes from these key UF people shows:

- “Collaborative learning is at the core of the learning opportunities that The Office of Interprofessional Education at the University of Florida provides for health professions students in seven UF colleges. We prepare health professions students to work effectively in health care teams. We see great value in using a team member evaluation tool that helps our students provide better feedback to each other more easily. This tool will help students develop their teamwork skills. The Office of Interprofessional Education is interested in using this tool and supports the proposal.” – **Dr. Amy Blue, Associate Vice President, The Office of Interprofessional Education**
- “Currently there are no easy to use peer review tools available and given the amount of group work given in online courses to build community, I am very interested in testing out a peer review tool that can facilitate learner engagement and also is easy for instructors to grade.” – **Joleen Cannon, Director, Center for Online Innovation & Production**
- “I encourage and support the use of Feedback Fruits' peer review features in UF courses. I currently know of faculty that have had to create elaborate assignments to gather information for group peer review purposes. They are disappointed that there isn't a better, more automated option. If there was an easier option for peer evaluation and feedback, both students and faculty would benefit.” – **Kathryn Rush, Instructional Designer III, Center for Online Learning and Technology (COLT), College of Agriculture and Life Sciences**
- "At Warrington, peer review is essential to our students' learning process. Canvas's existing peer-review tool is frustrating and laborious and does not adequately satisfy our students' needs. A tool that makes the peer review learning process engaging and seamless would be a valuable addition to our curriculum." – **Dr. Megan Leroy, Assistant Dean, Director, Teaching & Learning Center, Warrington College of Business**
- “A group member evaluation tool integrated in Canvas would contribute to students' collaborative learning and faculty feedback at UF.” – **Dr. George Hack, Associate Dean for Educational Affairs, College of Public Health and Health Professions**

#### **Research and case studies:**

The FeedbackFruits GME Tool is being used at numerous universities in the US and internationally, including [Cornell University](#), [University of Pennsylvania](#), and [University of Wisconsin-Madison](#). For example, at the [University of Delaware](#) using the tool inside Canvas streamlined the group-evaluation process making it quick and easy for instructors and students. Recently [a study](#) conducted in the Australian university Deakin University where this tool was implemented to support team-based learning has found it to be scalable (classes in the study ranged in size from 7 students to 700), to improve student accountability, and self-regulated learning (Gunning et al., 2022).

#### **Sustainability:**

The contract would include implementation of FeedbackFruits GME Tool's LTI in Canvas. We estimate that it will take approximately one year to design and implement a communications campaign to roll out the tool to UF campus, and prepare training materials. It would take an additional semester to review and report on adoption of the tool.

In terms of cost sustainability, we are requesting funds for **2.5 years** to evaluate if the benefits of the tool are worth funding further. If the University of Florida is satisfied with adoption of the tool after 2.5 years, we would request that UFIT consider funding the tool going forward.

**Timeline:**

Stage 1: Implementation (up to 4 months) (meets Benchmark 1)

- Contract negotiation
- Documentation/website creation
- Drafting of communications plan

Stage 2: Launch product and implement communication plan (2 years)

Stage 3: Analytics and Feedback (1 year) (meets Benchmarks 2 and 3)

- Collecting use statistics, interest in implementations in other systems, and student feedback.
- Annual reports

**Budget:**

FeedbackFruits offers University of Florida to pilot the GME tool for 6 months for \$7,500 (40% reduced fee) and then offers a 10% discount for a two-year contract for an annual fee of approximately \$49,000.

We are requesting funding for the 6-month pilot and a two-year contract to take advantage of the reduced rate, for a total request of \$105,500.

The quote from FeedbackFruits is attached.