Affinity Research Groups

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INTRODUCTIONS

Meet at least people in the next 5 minutes and share your research interest.
WORKSHOP GOALS

• Teach the basic components of ARG
• Explain the differences between an ARG and traditional research groups
• Create an awareness of how ARG activities are implemented
BRAINSTORMING

• Each group member, in turn, contributes or passes.
• The recorder writes down each contribution on a flip chart.
• Brainstorming ends when each person passes.
• Generate as many ideas as possible.

Guidelines
No discussion during brainstorming. Every idea is a good idea. Scaffolding is encouraged.
ROLE ASSIGNMENTS

- Recorder
- Timekeeper
- Direction giver
QUESTION

• What challenges do you face when running a research group or being in a research group?

• Time: 10 minutes
GOAL OF AN ARG

Develop students’ skills and engage students in experiences that will provide them the ability to be successful in their current and advanced studies, research, and the workforce.
An ARG is a non-hierarchical model that promotes:

- Collection of best practices
- Cooperative group interaction
- Deliberate and intentional development and practice of skills
- Support structures

Expand participation by recruiting students who may not normally be involved in research
ESSENTIAL ARG ELEMENTS

Core Purpose/Values
Student Connectedness
Deliberate Practice of Skills
**CORE VALUES OF AN ARG**

**Student Success**: An ARG values the deliberate development of skills in each student to ensure success.

**Cooperation**: An ARG values cooperation in all interactions, including mutual respect of opinions and ideas of all members, promotive interaction, positive interdependence, and individual accountability.

**Excellence**: An ARG values excellence and strives to achieve it in all its actions.
STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS

• Students build connections among members of the group.
• Students support other students in their development as a researcher.
• ARG practices build student connectedness.
Do not assume that students join a research group with the necessary skills to be successful.

- Teach skills.
- Practice skills in an intentional and deliberate manner.
- Promote establishment of cooperative teams.
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

• Cooperative team skills
  o Ability to ask probing questions
  o Active listening/participation
  o Summarizing discussion
  o Resolving conflict

• Research skills
  o Setting goals and objectives
  o Research plan development
  o Literature survey
  o Poster presentation

• Team management skills
  o Defining tasks and activities
  o Defining timelines
  o Setting meeting agenda
  o Documenting meeting minutes

• Communication skills
  o Oral
  o Written
  o Constructive critique
AFFINITY RESEARCH GROUP CORE ACTIVITIES

- **Annual Orientation**
  - ARG Philosophy
  - Team building
  - Basic group and research skills

- **Workshops**
  - Deliberate Development of Skills

- **Core Purpose Connectedness Skills Develop.**
  - Clear Goals and Objectives
  - Defined activities
  - Defined Deliverables

- **Regular Group Meetings**
  - Problem solving
  - Domain expertise
  - Skills practice
  - Accountability

- **Project Mgmt.**

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COOPERATIVE TEAM SKILLS
IMPORTANCE OF TEAM SKILLS

Why do we teach team skills? (Doesn’t everyone already know how to work in teams?)

Why do we practice team skills? (Doesn’t everyone already do this?)
COOPERATIVE TEAM SKILLS

Basic Elements

- Positive interdependence
- Face-to-face promotive interaction
- Professional skills
- Individual accountability
- Group processing
A. Break into groups of three. Assign a number 1-3.

B. Group individuals assigned the same number. Tasks:
   — learn the assigned material
   — plan how to teach the material to the other members of your group

C. Come back to your group prepared to:
   — teach material to the other members of your group
   — learn the material being taught by the other members

A. Create triads

B. Prepare in groups.

C. Return to original triad.
STRATEGY FOR PRESENTATION: VAM

Visual
Active
Memorable

Time Limit: 15 minutes
**PREPARATION**

*Time Limit:* 15 minutes to prepare

*Note:* You will have 2 minutes to teach to your group.
AFFINITY RESEARCH GROUP CORE ACTIVITIES

Annual Orientation
ARG Philosophy
Team building
Basic group and research skills

Workshops
Deliberate Development of Skills

Core Purpose
Connectedness
Skills Develop.

Project Mgmt.
Clear Goals and Objectives
Defined activities
Defined Deliverables

Regular Group Meetings
Problem solving
Domain expertise
Skills practice
Accountability

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• Look for examples of how elements of cooperative learning are incorporated.
ARG IN DIFFERENT VENUES

- General courses
- Research course
- Project class
- Tutoring and learning
- Student organization

CONTACT INFORMATION

WEBSITE: HTTP://CAHSI.ORG
HANDBOOK: CREATING AND MAINTAINING PRODUCTIVE RESEARCH TEAMS

AMAZON BOOKS
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CHALLENGES

- Getting everyone to work together
- Time Management
- Finding everyone’s strength
- Organization (project planning)
- Communication skills (different styles)
- Building community
- Time commitment

- Student professionalism
- Dealing w/ varying skill levels
- Mutual respect
- Balance b/w independent and collaborative research
- Finding good resources
- Generational conflict
- Optimizing knowledge distribution
Design:

- Mixed methods design incorporating interviews, surveys, participant observation, and document analysis.

Analysis of interviews explicate how:

- Students become members of ARGs
- Group identity and cohesiveness are formed
- Members participate in larger professional communities
- Participants identities are transformed.
72% of ARG students felt that their research experience had influenced their intentions to pursue graduate school.

ARG students have also authored or co-authored journal articles at twice the rate (13%) of a large, diverse national sample of REU students (n = 500).

ARG students have presented a paper or poster at a national conference at three times the national rate (51%).

Note: Differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.