Supporting Collaboration and Task Management in Student Project Teams

WPI Institute for Project Based Learning, 2021
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August	September	October	November	December

7 weeks at WPI

7 weeks on site

- **Background research**
- **Social science methods course**
- **Weekly meetings w/ faculty advisors**
- **Proposal for on-site work**

- **Stakeholder collaboration**
- **Data collection and analysis**
- **Design and testing of deliverables**
- **Weekly meetings w/ faculty, sponsors**
- **Report and community presentation**

PROJECT PROPOSAL
To: _____
From: _____
Date: _____
_____
_____

FINAL REPORT

Gold Standard for PBL

(Buck Institute for Education)

- Problem solving, critical thinking

- Collaboration

- Self management

Student Collaboration

+

Many hands→ Larger projects

Range of perspectives, abilities

Skills development for work, citizenship

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Uneven work distribution

Failure to value, draw on diverse resources

Incoherence; fragmented deliverables

Ineffective time management

1. Implement a shared drive and task scheduler
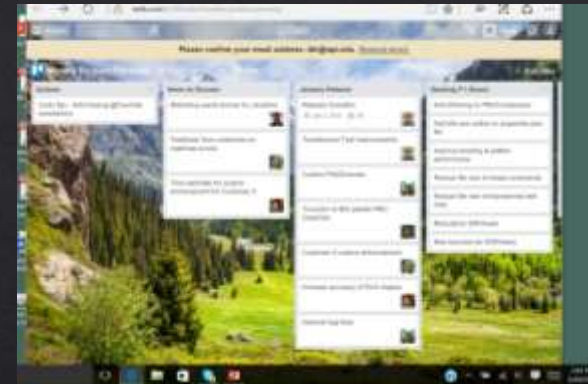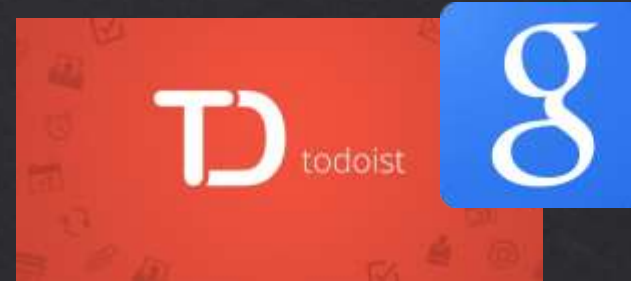

2. Discuss team roles

3. Use process documents to manage team work

4. Discuss and consolidate weekly findings through "Assertion-Evidence" slides
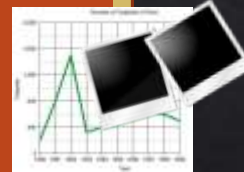
Tools and Practices for Project Management

1. Implement shared drive and task scheduler

Example folders for shared drive

Project Manager

Archivist

Editor

Designer

2. Discuss roles

Team Charter

Meeting Agendas & Minutes

Weekly Progress Reports

Evaluations & Reflections

3. Use "process" documents

-What **role** have you assumed, and how **effective** have you been in that role? What **skills and strategies** have helped you? What are the most **challenging parts** of this role?

-Would you suggest **changing or reassigning any of the roles** your team initially assigned? If so, explain.

-Would you suggest **changing your group drafting and revision process** in any way? If so, how/why?

-Would you suggest **changing your group's process for scheduling and running meetings** in any way? If so, how/why?

-Has your group been seriously impeded by any of the following? If so, circle **problems encountered but not yet resolved**. Explain at the bottom of this form.

Unequal distribution of work
Trouble attending, showing up (on time) to meetings,
Tendency of some to dominate or hide in group meetings
Disrespect towards team members
Differences about which ideas/approaches to implement
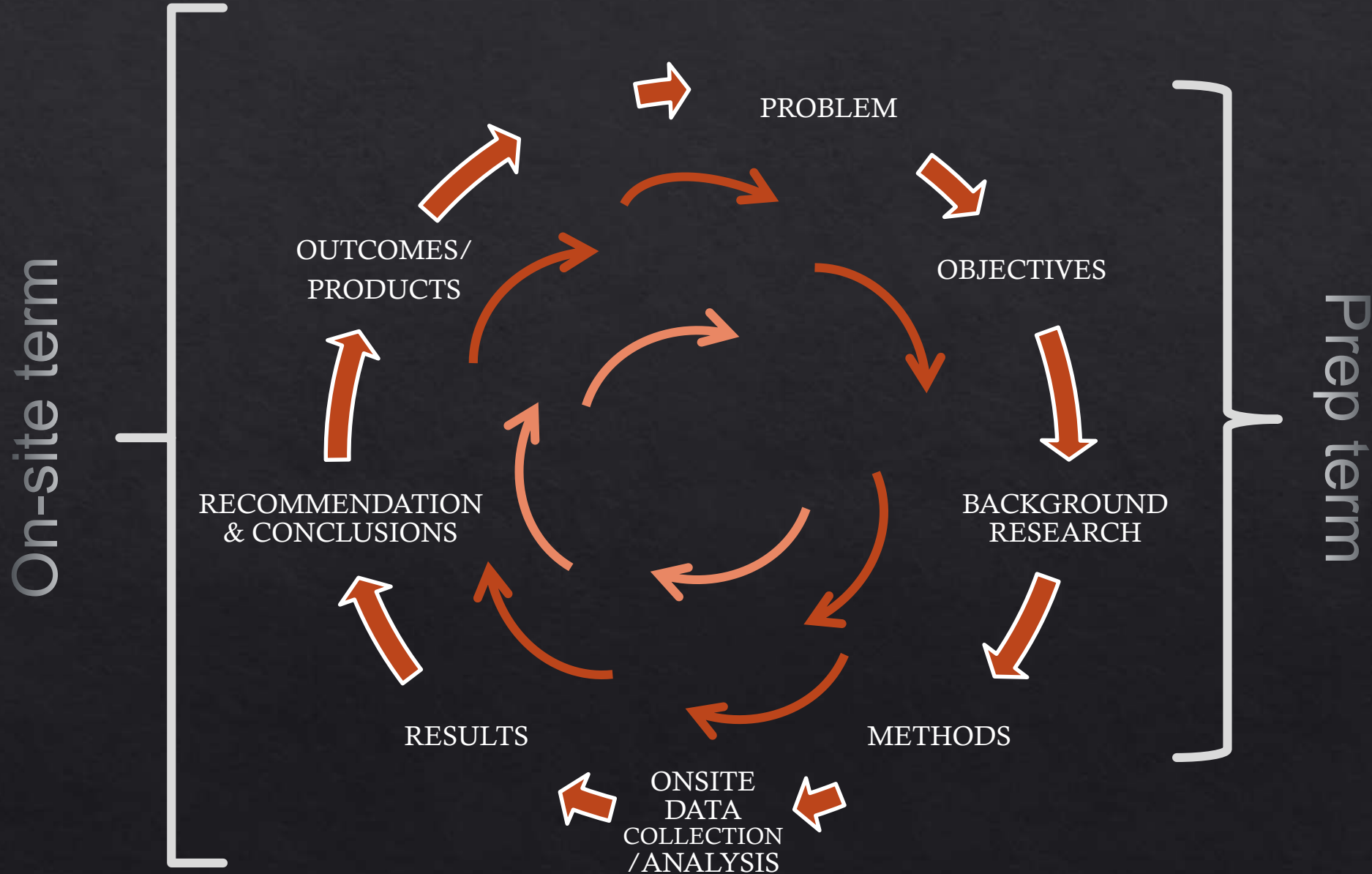Failure to share research findings/progress with the team

Trouble getting writing done on time
Lack of motivation about the project
Lack of clarity in team goals or tasks
Conflicting work and communication styles

TEAM EVALUTION/REFLECTION: END OF PREP TERM

4. Share weekly results with team and faculty advisors through "Assertion-Evidence" slides

Problem-Solving Process in PBL

On-site term

Prep term

PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

METHODS

ONSITE DATA COLLECTION /ANALYSIS

RESULTS

RECOMMENDATION & CONCLUSIONS

OUTCOMES/ PRODUCTS

Violence against Women: A Worldwide Problem

1 in 4 Australian Women Have Experienced Violence

25%

1/3 of Police Work Done in Victoria is Due to Violence Against Women

Hume is the Most Violence-Prevalent Community in Victoria

Example of Assertion-Evidence slides showing the PROBLEM

Wide-scale development around EYNF has significantly increased.

EYNF

4

The USFS's historical approach to conservation created tensions with the local community.

8

We determined community land use and value through stakeholder interviews and participatory mapping.

18

Example agenda for student team meeting

TEAM AGENDA

- Update and check on tasks
- Share/discuss findings from individual research
- Consolidate findings/decisions into assertions and evidence for slides.
- Creates brief progress report for faculty meeting

Example agenda for weekly meeting with faculty

JOINT MEETING AGENDA

▪ Student discussion leader reviews progress report highlights, challenges (~10 min)

▪ Advisors learn about students' evolving research and provide feedback by discussing assertion-evidence slides (~30 min)

▪ Minute-taker sums up key action items from discussion (~ 5 min)

- Which ideas are most relevant to the work your students do?

- What other changes / additions have you made or might you make to help students better manage their collaborative project work?

- Where might relevant tools and activities discussed here be integrated into your current project schedule/ structure/syllabus? What resources might be needed?