Three Components of a Weekly Meeting with a Student Research Group

By Thomas Kemp, Economics, UW-Eau Claire, Spring 2016

The students meet at least weekly to discuss finding from the previous week’s work, to assess total project development, and receive research direction for the upcoming week. The details of these meetings are as follows.

1. Each meeting begins with each student presenting the work that they have done over the previous week. The intent of this is to create a composite picture to all involved with the project how it is proceeding. In this way the more junior researchers are able to learn from the more senior researchers (and hopefully become more senior researchers themselves).
2. During the second part of the meeting we review any difficulties that have occurred. These might include obvious errors in the data, data being unavailable, or inconsistencies in the literature. We then proceed to discuss possible solutions or ‘work arounds’ to these problems.
3. In the final part of the meeting we allocate the next stage of research to the students. Students are assigned work based upon their abilities. More junior researchers will be responsible for basic tasks such as writing short reviews of the relevant literature, or creating a spreadsheet (with close direction). More senior researcher will be responsible for tasks such as contacting source agencies, programming spreadsheets, or writing sections of the final report.