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An education program for busy researchers

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An Education Program for Busy Researchers

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Program Attributes

• Practical,
• Provides live-instruction in conjunction with a on-line tutorial,
• Geared for adult learners,
• Flexible enough to meet educational and scheduling needs.
• Cost effective
  – minimal staff
  – utilizes the talents and expertise of professionals who have an interest, specific training, and/or specialized knowledge to lead its workshops, seminars, conferences, and retreats
Program’s Purpose

- Educate anyone conducting or reviewing research at the University
  - includes approximately
    - 300 committee members,
    - 20 Human Studies Committee (HSC) staff members,
    - all faculty and staff vital in the conduct of the 3500 new and on-going human subjects protocols seen yearly by the HSC.
Program’s Objectives

• Provide information that will assist in the submission, conduct, and evaluation of research

• Ensure conduct of research meets proper ethical and regulatory standards
Foundation

- Adult learners prefer educational experiences to be relevant and immediately helpful in their daily lives or to be directly related to an area of interest.

- Needs of the adult learner analyzed and compared in relation to needs of organization and job function.

(Boone, 1985, pp. 19 – 38)
Foundation

• Teamwork approach with the adult educator as facilitator

• Active learning.
  – Class discussions, guided practice, peer teaching, and dependent group activities.
  – Small classrooms or conference rooms
  – Instructor to student ratios should be 1 to 15.
  – Learners are visual.
  – Lecture should last no more than 15 minutes followed by some type of activity.

(Boone, 1985, Harmin 1994, Herlin et al., 1995)
Design

- Based in adult education theory

- Designed to handle all educational needs
  - remediation,
  - initial and on-going education
  - clarification of issues
Design Meets Regulatory Compliance

- Human Studies Protection Regulations
- Good Clinical Practice 3.1.3
- Institutional Policy
- HSC Assurance of Commitment
- AAHRPP Accreditation Standard I-4
- Federal Wide Assurance
Methods

• Quarterly newsletters;
  – transferred to Lotus Notes format
• Bi-monthly question and answer sessions;
• Presentations at classes, departments, faculty meetings, committee meetings, conferences;
• Private educational sessions;
• Monthly new member orientations;
  – Augmented then reorganized
  – Made more practical
  – Currently being studied
Methods

• Application forms and guidelines;
  – clarified, updated, authenticated. References added
• On-line human studies training module;
  – Changing to CITI in 2004
• Website [http://medschool.wustl.edu/hsc/](http://medschool.wustl.edu/hsc/);
  – revised and expanded
• Establishment of a St. Louis IRB Consortium;
• In-services for HSC staff;
• Annual Town Hall Meetings, IRB retreat, regional or national conference;
Methods

• In-house resource library;
• Mock IRBs.
• Chairs’ Meetings.
  • information is presented and explained
  • HSC Chairs pass along information to respective committees
• HSC chairs and staff educate others through
  • comments at committee meetings,
  • critiques of protocol submissions,
  • letters and telephone calls to the investigators,
  • sharing of relevant articles.
Methods

• Heighten Committee Member/Staff understanding by having them
  – teach
  – write articles for the newsletter
  – lead seminars
  – conduct investigations into various areas of concern
  – sit on task forces
Evaluation

• Formal
  – qualitative questionnaires
  – individual feedback sessions
  – AAHRPP (Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs)
Evaluation

• Informal
  – feedback from committee members, staff and researchers through
    • letters,
    • e-mails,
    • telephone calls
    • personal remarks

– return of participants for follow-up sessions beyond what is required
Monitoring

• Continual monitoring of program effectiveness to provide the types of educational activities that
  – appeal to the population
  – provide necessary information to protect human subjects
Expansion Efforts

• “Live-instruction” offerings
  – Concentrate on areas of interest or difficulty
  – Designed to target specific audiences
    • novices,
    • intermediate,
    • or experienced personnel.
  – Facilitated by knowledgeable personnel

• St. Louis IRB Consortium
• Committee Members and Staff
Replication

• Personnel knowledgeable and experienced in
  – a variety of educational pedagogues
  – administering educational programs

• For adult populations, adult learning specialists with
  – a knowledge of psychology
  – or experience in dealing with diverse populations
Educator Qualifications

• Doctorate in Education, specializing in curriculum and instruction and higher education

• Extensive experience in developing and implementing educational programs for adult learners,

• Experience working in a health care setting

• Experience meeting needs of diverse populations and learners.
Replication

• Adequate
  – Financial support for salaries, materials, program advertisement, and on-going training for educators
  – Support staff,
  – Office and classroom space,

• University Commitment
  – Allowing the HSC to have a full-time educator
  – Mandating initial education
  – Encouraging on-going education
Outcomes

- Evidence that the education program is meeting the needs of professional research staff and faculty are
  - requests for private and group tutorials,
  - referrals to be educated,
  - attendance at workshops, seminars, retreats, and conferences,
  - numerous thank you notes.
Outcomes

• A result of these efforts is the interest generated in becoming more than a participant in the sessions.
• Many faculty and staff wish to lead or present scheduled sessions.
• Others approach the HSC with topic areas to be researched, discussed, or presented either in “live-instruction” sessions or in written format.
• As a secondary result, others beyond those volunteering are drawn into the process and educational outreach is expanded.
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