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## OBSERVATIONAL AND ANALYTIC FEATURES FOR THE STUDY OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY TEAMS [ABSTRACT]

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### ABSTRACT

**Aim/Purpose** This paper proposes to bridge transdisciplinary team characteristics with the study of communication in teams. It proposes the question “what does the systematic study of transdisciplinary teams tell us about communication?” This paper addresses (1) a typology of transdisciplinary teams for observation and analysis; (2) features of communication within transdisciplinary teams; and (3) the role of complexity science in bridging the study of transdisciplinary teams with communication studies.

**Background** Working within transdisciplinary teams is a challenge as researchers and scholars strive to solve complex problems amidst rapid change and the complexities of coping with competing and shifting priorities. Inquiry into these sorts of complex teams requires a commitment to gathering and analyzing data that are dynamical representing emergent change within teams.

**Methodology** The paper draws on literature on transdisciplinary teams as well as highlights trends that can inform research and techniques for observing transdisciplinary teams.

**Contribution** By reviewing the definitions and impact these features have on the task of researching communication processes in transdisciplinary teams, scholars can inform the major challenges that transdisciplinary teams face on a regular basis: integration, praxis, and engagement.

**Keywords** transdisciplinarity, teams, features, characteristics, communication

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**Gaetano R. Lotrecchiano**, EdD, PhD is an Associate Professor in the Department of Clinical Research and Leadership in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences at George Washington University (GW) and a Senior Scholar in the Office of Clinical Practice Innovation. He is a fellow of the Cross-Disciplinary Cooperative at GW (XD@GW). His research interests are grounded in team science inquiry and include transdisciplinary leadership and education, social mechanisms of team science, collaboration readiness, and change dynamics in groups. His publications appear in *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, *International Journal of Organizational Design and Engineering*, *Telemedicine and E-Health*, *Clinical Translational Science*, *Integral Leadership Review*, *The International Journal of Transdisciplinary Research*, *VINE: The Journal of Information and Knowledge Management Systems*, and *Heliyon*, Elsevier's interdisciplinary science journal. He is the Associate Editor for the *Journal of Collaborative Healthcare and Translational Medicine* and the special issue editor of the 2014 issue entitled "Collaboration Science and Translational Medicine". Professor Lotrecchiano is a Morton A. Bender Teaching Excellence recipient and the present Chair of the GW Academy of Distinguished Teachers. Dr. Lotrecchiano has been faculty of the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences for 11 years and in that time has participated and led research projects in biomedical, learning, and social sciences. He has a broad background in team science and has been a contributing author and referee, especially in areas dedicated to the expansion of team science practice in knowledge producing teams (KPTs) in health and biomedicine. This combination of unique experiences and his networking abilities both within GW and across the field affords him a keen perspective to carry out and manage this project. In addition, he has collaborated with numerous individuals within scientific fields and across institutions in order to develop cross-disciplinary teams to carry out specific tasks.



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