

## NACADA Module Transcript

### Using Mendeley and Zotero to Promote Collaborative Writing Projects

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#### **Overview**

Working with multiple people on a research project can lead to exciting comparisons and insights. However, being able to coordinate these kinds of research projects requires platform that enables sharing resources, writings, and notes. Mendeley is a bibliographic manager that allows sharing of articles, annotations, and article citations. It also facilitates the formation of research and writing groups with the capability to share developing insights and notes. Zotero is also a bibliographic manager that allows sharing of articles, annotations, and article citations - with the additional benefit of higher limits on the number of references that can be shared with others. The purpose of this module is to explain how to create research and writing groups in Mendeley and to supplement the sharing of research resources using Zotero.

#### **Setting up groups in Mendeley**

After creating a personal login and password for Mendeley, you can click on the “Groups” tab at the top of the screen to see your available groups. If you do not have any groups yet, you can click on the “Create a new group” button to create your group. Select a title for the group that describes the essence of your research or writing concepts. Once your group is created, you can begin inviting people to participate and collaborate with you.

#### **Inviting users to your group**

Once your group is created, you can begin inviting others to participate with you by clicking on the “Invite Members” button and entering their email addresses. From this view, you can also communicate about your research and writing project with other participants by making a post and attaching documents or images.

It is also possible to see what documents have been shared with your group by clicking on the “View group documents in library” link or by clicking on the “Library” tab at the top of the page.

### **Sharing articles and other resources**

The library view allows you to see all of the articles and resources that exist in your Mendeley database. You can click on the appropriate group link on the left-hand side of the page to see just those resources that have been shared with your group.

By clicking on the “Add” button at the top left of the page, you can add individual articles and documents or you can import entire bibliographic files into your database. This is where Zotero becomes a very powerful tool.

### **Using Zotero to import into Mendeley**

Mendeley imposes restrictions on how many documents you can share between group members. Zotero allows you to work around this challenge by enabling the creation of a bibliographic import file.

After creating a personal login and password in Zotero, you can click on the “My Library” tab at the top of the screen to see the documents in your Zotero database. If you do not have any documents in your Zotero database, you can add them by clicking on the green plus sign near the top of the library window.

### **Exporting documents from Zotero**

After checking the boxes next to the documents that you want to export from Zotero, you will click on the icon that has a folder with a green arrow pointing to the right. This is the export button. You will then be prompted to select the format for the file that you would like to export from Zotero. You should select the “RIS” option. Zotero will then create a file with extension .ris that you can save to your desktop.

### **Importing RIS files into Mendeley**

To import your Zotero documents into Mendeley Group library, first click on your group library link on the left of the page. Then you will click on the “Add” Button in the top left corner of the page on your Library tab. You will select “Import BiBTeX (.bib)” and then select the file created by Zotero. This should now upload all of your Zotero reference into your Mendeley database.

### **Collaborative writing and research**

Now that your group is created in Mendeley and you have shared your articles and resources with your group, you are ready to collaborate on your writing and research projects. Bibliographic references from your group library can be easily added to papers. As drafts are made of papers, they can be shared as documents with the group who can then make comments and give feedback. Developing research insights can be shared as posts to the group. Depending on the nature of your research and writing, you can choose to make a group public or private. This setting can be modified by clicking on the “settings” tab near the top of the group window.

As group research and writing progresses, additional participants can be invited into the group. The possibilities for collaboration on research and writing projects across universities and even continents are greatly facilitated by this technology. We challenge you to go and find like-minded individuals with whom you can collaborate today!