

Vibrant Groups (0 to 5)		Warning Signs (0-3)		Challenged Units (0 to 5)	
_____	Respectful dealings among colleagues, group members, dealing with differences and disagreements openly; inclusive, welcoming	_____	Complaints disproportionate to other groups in area	_____	Serious misconduct: discrimination; sexual; financial; criminal, etc. (arrests, lawsuits...)
_____	Open discussion of ideas and research; high productivity, effective shared governance	_____	Email and/or social media wars, harassment, silos, conflict aversion	_____	Culture that suppresses or hides problems; punishes reporting; group schisms, battles, flareups
_____	Culture of excellence and quality; successes of others acknowledged, celebrated	_____	Requests for transfers, departures, lack of diversity	_____	Repeated inability to hire, retain quality group members; absence of diversity, or even a commitment to it
_____	Cordial interactions in group; positive tone even through disagreements; conflicts are addressed, resolved constructively	_____	Disproportionate wash-out rate; departures with terminal ms, etc.	_____	Toxic atmosphere for group members, trainees, research staff, students, underrepresented groups
_____	PI knows about work, progress, and provides appropriate mentoring for stage of career of each individual	_____	Declining productivity over time	_____	Wildly uneven productivity even at same career stages
_____	Appropriate acknowledgement of contributions of others	_____	Funding for students insecure; system for allocation not known, communicated	_____	Very infrequent or no group meetings, or ineffective meetings; sub-text in conversations
_____	High level of communication—willingness to listen, compromise; problems addressed, not submerged	_____	Student seek intervention from outside offices; feel a need to hide problems	_____	Lack of transparency, hidden agendas; sides chosen in disputes
_____	Constructive criticism welcomed and heard; willingness to listen, compromise	_____	Lack of innovation, willingness to take chances, risk failure	_____	Research program stagnation
_____	Group members support each others' development; strengths; peer-to-peer mentoring occurs	_____	Discord among students or discord between students and PI, disrespect between groups	_____	Group members sabotage or undermine each others' projects
_____	Collective vision of goals and priorities	_____	Limited sense of group priorities	_____	Many individual priorities detracting from shared purpose
_____	TOTAL _____	_____	TOTAL _____ (subtract)	_____	TOTAL _____ (subtract)

About the AUDiT

The Academic Unit Diagnostic Tool (AUDiT) provides a way to create a snapshot of the vibrancy and challenges of a research group or theme.

The primary purpose of the AUDiT is diagnostic reflection, designed to support and catalyze effective change; it is not a validated instrument. The tool can help leaders identify particular areas of focus, stimulate discussions within a unit, and point to possible paths to reinforce vibrancy within a unit. The numbers that result from use of the AUDiT are not meaningful as absolutes or as a “total” indication of how well a unit is doing; they can be an effective starting point to stimulate thinking and discussion about issues that affect daily life and interaction in the unit.

Where the AUDiT surfaces significant issues, it can help leaders and unit members focus efforts on ways to improve and to develop a plan to restore vibrancy.

Scoring the AUDiT

Assign a number to each cell: the more the statement in the cell describes your research group, the higher your score should be.

The green and red columns use a scale from 0 (NA or not at all like my unit) to 5 (this describes my unit perfectly). The yellow column uses a scale from 0 to 3.

After you’ve evaluated each statement, add up the scores in each column. Then subtract the sum of the yellow and red columns from the green column’s sum.
(Total = Green - Yellow - Red)

Consider your Assessments

Reflect upon and use your assessments to support your future planning and efforts:

Consider your scores for the Green cells. Elements supporting a vibrant culture must be nurtured and maintained. Although they may be of lesser concern than more urgent issues, they need to be sustained and, where possible, built upon. Where you have a 2 or 3, what could move that element to a 4 or 5?

Next look at the Yellow cells. Items in this column are often early-warning signs of problems to come. It is easier to deal with potential problems at a preventative stage than trying to cope with them once they have become critical. Which items in the yellow column could be moved to the green column with some work?

Then, look at the Red cells. (If you did not identify any red items for your unit, congratulations!) None of these are good and some have implications requiring immediate, likely external, intervention.