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Table of Contents

Volume 15, November 2018

Overview

The Kentucky Journal for Excellence in College Teaching and Learning is a peer-reviewed electronic Journal sponsored by the Kentucky Council for Post-Secondary Education Faculty Development Group. General categories for articles include theory, research, and practice. In addition, the Journal will publish manuscripts containing media reviews, profiles, and commentary. The Journal initially targets the professional development of college and university faculty within the Commonwealth. Its primary goal is to enhance student learning by promoting excellence in teaching in higher education institutions in Kentucky and beyond.

Submission of Guidelines for Research, Theory, and Practice Papers, respectively

1. Submit original manuscripts as MS Word documents to the Journal website.
2. Use APA style when preparing the manuscript. Please refer to the American Psychological Association Manual of Style, Sixth Edition.
3. Include an abstract of 200 - 250 words for research, theory, and practice.
4. Use one-inch margins and double-space your text.
5. The length of your manuscript should be between 3,000 – 5,000 words in Times New Roman, 12-point font.
6. Use a minimum of tables. Provide image-ready tables, figures, graphs, and charts on separate pages. Include only essential data in the tables, figures, graphs, and charts. Combine tables whenever possible.
7. Do not include the author's name(s), positions, titles, or places of employment on the cover page to safeguard anonymity.
8. Do not use generic masculine pronouns or other sexist terminology in your manuscript.

Peer-reviewers read and recommend articles for publication under the research, theory, and practice categories. Articles published in the Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning, reflect the views of the authors and not of the Editors, Editorial Board, or Eastern Kentucky University.

Submission Guidelines for Media Review, Profile, and Commentary

1. Submit original manuscripts as MS Word documents to the Journal website.
2. Use APA style when preparing the manuscript. Please refer to the American Psychological Association Manual of Style, Sixth Edition.
3. Include an abstract of 120 words.
4. Double-space your manuscript and insert one-inch margins.
5. The length of your manuscript should be 2,000 to 3,000 words in Times New Roman, 12-point font.
6. Use a minimum of tables. Type tables on separate pages. Include only essential data in the tables. Combine tables whenever possible.
7. Do not include author's name(s), positions, titles, or places of employment on the cover page to safeguard anonymity.
8. Do not use generic masculine pronouns or other sexist terminology in your manuscript.

The editors review papers in the media, profile, and commentary categories. Articles published in the Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning reflect the views of the authors, not those of the editors, editorial board, or Eastern Kentucky University.

Brief Notes on Categories

Research
Educational research is a process of discovery that may or may not use the scientific method. There are limitations in the scientific method and other types of research methodology. The researcher recognizes and defines a problem, formulates a hypothesis, collects data, analyzes the data, and then provides a statement of conclusion that may or may not confirm the hypothesis.

Theory
Theory is a tested and testable concept that explains an occurrence. Researchers may analyze existing theories or apply them to contemporary situations. Sometimes researchers develop new interpretations to existing theories. A theory paper involves a lot of critical-thinking, reading, and reflection.

Practice
Practice involves almost everything teachers do relative to their profession. Teachers continuously try out new concepts and ideas, and reflect on "best practices." They usually share their successes with colleagues in the profession.

Media Review
We live in an era of information overload and teachers play the role of sorting out and managing the material they intend to use in their classrooms. Media reviews contain reports, demonstrations, and/or critiques of print or electronic resources that enhance or facilitate teaching and learning.

Profile
A profile is a feature story of a person that highlights the person's background, ideas, and accomplishments. Profiles describe qualities that are worthy of emulation.

Commentary
A commentary is a piece of writing that gives a perspective on an occurrence or event. It may clarify, explain, or illustrate issues related to the title.

The Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning

Mission

The Journal targets the professional development of college/university faculty in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. We also welcome submissions from faculty in the United States and overseas.

Goals

1. To adapt "best practices" to new teaching and learning contexts.
2. To promote innovative research in the scholarship of teaching.
3. To provide a forum for sharing successful teaching/learning strategies.
4. To profile individuals who exhibit excellence in teaching.
5. To stimulate ongoing professional development through teaching/learning resources.

Submissions

Articles must represent innovation in teaching and learning in higher education. Articles must be submitted exclusively to the Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning. Manuscripts must be double-spaced with one-inch margins, paragraphs indented five spaces, pages clearly numbered, 12-point Times New Roman font, and should use the most current edition of The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Upload an electronic copy to the Journal website.

Journal Content

The Journal will address innovative and practical teaching resources for faculty. It will also publish informative articles relating to the profession on topics such as:

- "Best practices"
- Innovative environments
- Collaborative practices
- Instructional technology
- Creative pedagogical approaches
- Student retention
- Diversity within the teaching/learning environment
- Creative and innovative teaching tips
- Successful teaching/learning practices
- Profiles of honorary award recipients
- Book and media reviews
- Professional meetings, workshops, conferences and resources

Publication Information

This peer-reviewed electronic Journal is sponsored by the Faculty Development Workgroup/Council on Postsecondary Education and published by the College of Education, Eastern Kentucky University. Reviewers represent faculty from public and private institutions of higher education all over Kentucky and beyond. A print copy of the Journal will be available at the annual Kentucky CPE Faculty Development Conference.

Special Thanks to Dr. Samuel Hinton

Editorial Staff of the KJECTL

A special thanks is extended to Dr. Samuel Hinton who served as the Editor of the Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching (KJECT) and Learning for seven years. Under his leadership the KJECT gained national recognition and is indexed and included in Cabell Publishing Directory and BEPRESS, which gives open access to all published articles. Dr. Hilton has a significant teaching background and is a prolific writer. Since joining the faculty at Eastern Kentucky University, he has distinguished himself as an excellent scholar, as well as a teacher and mentor to junior faculty—in short; he has been a wonderful asset to the College of Education, the University and as Editor of the KJECT.

Dr. Hinton joined the University in 1990 as an assistant professor. He was promoted to associate professor and tenured in 1993. He attained the rank of full professor in 2000. He is an affiliate faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership and has taught courses for the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology. He has advised new faculty during their navigation through the promotion and tenure process and has co-authored journal articles with colleagues.

Dr. Hinton is an alumnus of each of the following universities: Durham University, United Kingdom (Bachelor of Arts, English and Economics); University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia (Master of Education with specialization in the social and cultural foundations of education); Kent State University, Kent, Ohio (Master of Arts with specialization in college student personnel in higher education); University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia (Doctor of Education with specialization in comparative and international education); Andersonville Theological College and Seminary, Camilla, Georgia (Doctor of Ministry with specialization in missions); and St. Andrews Theological College and Seminary, Lexington, North Carolina (Doctor of Philosophy in Theology with specialization in pastoral theology).

Regarding distinguished accomplishments, Dr. Hinton has performed an exceptional job as Editor of the Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning. He transformed a conventional journal with a limited readership into a publication that reaches a national audience. His efforts illustrate how he employed his expertise in editorial services to advance the credibility and quality of the KJECTL so that contributors can have their scholarly articles explicitly recognized by peers in their discipline.

In the arena of scholarship, Dr. Hinton has published three scholarly books and multiple articles in academic journals, as well as made several presentations in national and international conferences. He has also published several children's books and two books of poetry.

Furthermore, Dr. Hinton is a recipient of three Fulbright-Hays awards (Brazil, Czech and Slovak Republics, and China, respectively). He was a Fulbright Senior Specialist Candidate for the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB), Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State (ECA), and the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), 2006 - 2011. He is currently a Fulbright Senior Specialist Candidate. J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB). Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State (ECA), and the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), 2014 - 2019.

The journal staff extends a resounding thank you to Dr. Hinton for his leadership working with the KJECTL and for the quality work he employed in making the KJECTL one of the nation's most read educational journal and a point of pride for the College of Education.

In This Issue

Charles E. Myers • Eastern Kentucky University

Nancy Armstrong, Tonia Mailow, Janice Thurmond, Lori Ballard, Anna Fowler, Dana Todd, and Dina Byers share their results on evaluating an undergraduate nursing program effectiveness is to monitor the percentage of students who pass the national licensure examination on their first attempt in "Mentoring Program for Graduating Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students." Faculty reviewed exit examination results, met students individually, discussed results, and developed individualized plans of study. Faculty mentors contacted students weekly to provide encouragement, assist students in troubleshooting through problems, and answer questions related to licensure preparation. This mentoring and remediation program was successful in improving national licensure examination pass rates with undergraduate nursing students.

Nicola F. Mason and Christine P. Carucci examine "The effect of Clinical Field Experience model (CFE) on pre-service music teacher's occupational identity" over two years. Prior musical experience was a strong indicator of occupational identity, further driven by the desire to work with a particular grade level or specific field of music education. Moderate correlation was found between pre-service teacher's levels of satisfaction with their CFE and current occupational identity. Results support use of a CFE in conjunction with appropriately aligned pedagogy courses in providing rich, contextual learning to teacher training programs in music education.

Anne Cizmar and Samantha Braun explore engaging student in the campus and community in civic engagement in "Engaging College Students with Information." They examine mobilizing student participation in learning about the importance of an event. They used a survey experiment to measure the effect of an importance of competitive events (sports and elections) has on student engagement.

Hagai Gringarten and Raúl Fernández-Calienes share the findings of their study in "Book Reviews in Student Journals: An Untapped Academic Niche." They analyzed over 200 American and international student journals for the presence and characteristics of book reviews. They concluded recommendations for future research and for educational policies in relation to student journals.

Casey E. George, Lisa Skultety, and Randi Congleton examine the role faculty members play in facilitating student outcome, including their learning, persistence, and degree completion in "Faculty Perceptions of What Makes a Student Successful in the Mathematical Sciences." They surveyed views of faculty mentors involved in a nationwide mentoring program aimed to support underrepresented student transition from undergraduate to graduate studies in the mathematical sciences on factors that contribute to students' success or lack of success in mathematics, statistics, and biostatistics. They offer implications on how universities may help faculty, including recruitment and retention efforts, and understand how their role as educators may affect student outcomes in these fields at the postsecondary level.

Carol Sommer and Josh Elliott enlighten us on the "The Use of Film as a Mid-Term Evaluation in a Multicultural Counseling Course." They use of films to share diverse cultures with students provides a rich opportunity to engage in personal reflection. They share their anecdotal regarding the usefulness of this exercise and suggestions for practice are included.

Michael G. Strawser presents an Dessau essay on general overview of a blended basic course at a large Southeastern university and discusses rationale, course design, and lessons learned in "Multiple Modalities: Renovating the Basic Course Through an Enhanced Blended Redesign." He

encourages instructors to creatively reach unreached students and create an atmosphere of accessible communication instruction in the basic course.

Rebecca Fredrickson, Karen Dunlap, Sarah K. McMahan, and Amanda Hurlbut explore the recent trend of giving authentic experiences to students in "Finding Opportunities Outside the Academy to Enhance Student Learning: A Paper on Practice." They highlight the work of one teacher education program as they looked for opportunities to utilize pedagogical expertise outside the academy walls as they guide preservice teacher educational skill development during the transition from collegiate classroom to their own K-12 classrooms in three primary focus areas: service learning, post-graduation continuing education, and opportunities for faculty research mentoring.

Charles E. Myers is an Assistant Professor of Counselor Education, Eastern Kentucky University, and Senior Editor for the *The Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning*.

Mentoring Program for Graduating Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students *RESEARCH*

Nancy Armstrong · Murray State University
Tonia Mailow · Murray State University
Janice Thurmond · Murray State University
Lori Ballard · Murray State University
Anna Fowler · Murray State University
Dana Todd · Murray State University
Dina Byers · Murray State University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dina Byers, School of Nursing, Murray State University, 217 Mason Hall, Murray, KY 42071. E-mail: dbyers@murraystate.edu

Abstract

One way to evaluate an undergraduate nursing program effectiveness is to monitor the percentage of students who pass the National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) on their first attempt. Development and implementation of a mentoring program was developed to improve NCLEX-RN pass rates. Purpose of the mentoring program was to identify and assist students enrolled in their last semester, who were at risk for being unsuccessful on NCLEX-RN identified by the Health Education Systems, Inc. (HESI) Exit Examination. Faculty reviewed HESI results and met with students individually, discussed results, and developed an individualized plan of study. Faculty mentors were assigned after graduation to students scoring less than 700 on the HESI Exit Exam. Mentors contacted students weekly to provide encouragement, assisted students in troubleshooting through problems, and answered questions students might have related to licensure preparation. This mentoring and remediation program was successful in improving NCLEX-RN pass rates with undergraduate nursing students. The success of this program has implications for undergraduate educators in all disciplines.

Keywords: nursing education, NCLEX preparation, mentoring

One of the most important ways to evaluate the effectiveness of an undergraduate nursing program is to monitor the percentage of students who pass the National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) on their first attempt. In fact, many state boards of nursing mandate that a certain percentage of students pass the NCLEX-RN. As well, accrediting bodies require a minimum percentage of students be successful on the registered nurse licensure examination on their first attempt, in order to maintain accreditation. The pass rate for the fall 2015 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) cohort for Murray State University School of Nursing (MSU-SON) had fallen to 71%. In spring 2016, faculty began the process of developing a plan to improve their NCLEX-RN pass rate, as it had dropped below the desired benchmark for the Kentucky Board of Nursing. A mentoring program was developed and implemented to foster a collaborative partnership between students and faculty to promote student success.

Review of Literature

Mentoring programs, combined with test-taking and remediation, have been shown to be an effective technique in improving student outcomes. Literature has shown, when implementing a testing and remediation policy, significantly higher NCLEX-RN pass rates have been achieved (Schroeder, 2013). Homard (2013) evaluated the combination of standardized test packages combined with reflective learning strategies and found that NCLEX-RN pass rates were significantly higher when students took advantage of

opportunities to practice test-taking. The use of a curriculum-wide standardized testing policy, combined with reflective learning, led to higher exit exam scores. One study found that implementing a standardized testing policy with remediation increased NCLEX-RN pass rates by 9 to 41 percent in five different nursing programs (Morrison, Free, & Newman, 2002). Students in a baccalaureate-nursing program reported that a self-generated plan of study and stress management strategies contributed to their success on NCLEX-RN (Bonis, Taft, & Wendler, 2007).

Students often lack confidence in their testing skills. Thomas and Baker (2011) discussed how test-taking success could be improved by implementing a plan that addresses content knowledge and test-taking skills. The authors acknowledge that mental ability plays a role in testing success, along with devoting time and persistence to the process of finding the correct solutions. Nursing faculty need to recognize that students are often fearful that they are not competent to pass standardized testing (McQueen, Shelton, & Zimmerman, 2004).

Spurlock (2006) described the accountability of both faculty and students in high–stakes testing. Faculty should provide quality education in the form of classroom instruction and clinical opportunities. The student, however, is responsible for being an active learner and should be the one in charge of their learning.

Criteria have been identified to assist underperformers in sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) academic programs. Wilson et al. (2012) found that students needed to recognize that their study habits were ineffective, for example, poor time management or continuing to use deficient study techniques that were developed in high school. Students also needed changes in mindset about their ability to learn difficult materials. This change requires students to make a commitment to work on new ways of learning and following through on this commitment.

Studies have evaluated whether mentoring styles play a role in academic success. Faculty mentoring has been shown to improve student's critical thinking and enhance commitment to learning (Crooks, 2013). Leidenfrost, Strassnig, Schutz, Carbon, and Schabmann (2014) evaluated different mentoring styles in a university academic setting. The results indicated no differences in student success among various mentoring styles and that success relied simply on the experience of having a mentor. Yim and Waters (2013) found that when mentors and students develop interpersonal comfort, the mentoring functions are more positive. The researchers also noted that effective communication between the two parties led to a greater level of mentoring support.

Not all students participate in mentoring programs. One study identified factors that contributed to the decision to participate in a mentoring program. Larose, Cyrenne, Garceau, Border, and Tarabulsy (2010) evaluated personality characteristics and found that students who agreed to participate in mentoring had more agreeableness and openness to new situations than students who declined participation. The researchers also found that students with positive attitudes about help-seeking were more willing to accept a mentoring offer. Mentoring programs have been identified as one way to improve student outcomes.

The Mentoring Plan

The development and implementation of the mentoring program was one piece of an action plan to improve NCLEX-RN pass rates. The purpose of the mentoring program was to identify and assist students enrolled in

their last semester, who were at risk for being unsuccessful on NCLEX-RN. A four-pronged approach was developed. First, students at risk of failing needed to be identified. Then, a testing and remediation policy would need to be developed. Next, an in-class NCLEX-RN review would need to be incorporated into the final semester for the nursing students. Finally, a plan for faculty members to work directly with at-risk students, once they were identified, would need to be in place.

In order to identify at-risk students, faculty administered the Health Education Systems, Inc. (HESI) Exit Examination. This comprehensive examination has been shown to be a valid predictor of student success on the NCLEX-RN (Phelen, n.d.). The test served as a means of discovering the students with the greatest likelihood of failure on the NCLEX-RN examination. The HESI exam has the following criteria: students scoring 900 or higher have a 98% probability of passing NCLEX-RN, students scoring 850-899 have a 94-95% probability, students scoring 800-849 have a 89-95% probability, students scoring 700-799 have a 76-91% probability, and students scoring 699 or less have a 49-72% probability of passing NCLEX-RN on their first try (Elsevier, n.d.).

The HESI Exit Exam was administered in the fourth week of the final semester. This time schedule was chosen to allow students time to prepare for the examination, if they so desired. In addition, this time would allow for early recognition of at-risk students and provide time for intervention. Once the results of the HESI exam were accessible, a lead faculty member reviewed the results and met with each student individually. Exam results were discussed and an individualized plan of study was developed. Students were instructed to access an individualized packet automatically generated from their HESI Exit exam results, based on identified areas of weakness. The students were expected to review the HESI study packet and other materials suggested by their faculty mentor. Faculty were able to monitor the students' progress on the review packet online.

An alternate version of the HESI Exit Exam was administered in the tenth week of the final semester. Students worked with a faculty member, who reviewed the results of the second HESI examination and met with each student to make adjustments to their study plan, as well as, encourage the student to access the individualized study packet for the second HESI test. During the final five weeks of the semester, faculty provided content reviews, in the classroom setting. The reviews focused on identified areas of aggregate weakness, such as pharmacology and maternal-child nursing. The students were encouraged to continue to work on their individualized study plans.

For each week of the five-week period, students were assigned quizzes consisting of 300 NCLEX-RN-style questions, for a total of 1,500 questions. Students were encouraged to review the rationales, to help them better understand how to answer questions effectively and to understand the content better. Students were required to achieve a score of 74% or above. Students met with a designated faculty member each week to discuss their progress. During the final week of coursework, the students were required to attend a comprehensive live NCLEX-RN review. A live review is an intensive course that usually lasts over two-three full days, which provides a full content review and test-taking strategies.

After graduation, a faculty mentor was assigned to students who scored less than 700 on the HESI Exit Exam. Student participation in the post-graduation mentoring program was voluntary. Mentors contacted students at least once a week to provide encouragement, assist the students in troubleshooting through problems, and answer questions students might have related to licensure preparation.

Students had access to a variety of resources materials to assist in NCLEX-RN preparation and for practicing test-testing skills. One resource used in the mentoring program was the NCLEX-RN Study Plan / Remediation Tool.

This tool was created in fall 2016 to assist students in organizing their plan of study and ensure consistency in student mentoring. The tool contains Bloom's Taxonomy, the distribution of content for the NCLEX-RN test plan, HESI Exit Exam scores, a remediation checklist, and a time management guide. The tool provides a visual representation of the individual student scores compared to benchmark scores on HESI and the NCLEX-RN test plan. A comprehensive list of known strategies for success is included on the tool, such as reviewing growth and development theories and National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) NCLEX-RN test plan. Space is available for faculty documentation that denotes student progress and promotes consistency among faculty members.

The tool was reviewed with students after their initial exam and it was used as a resource during the mentoring meetings. Identifying content areas that were below benchmark appeared to motivate students to take responsibility for their own learning. Even though the tool has components of required remediation, the focus was on NCLEX-RN preparation and developing a realistic, long-term study plan. Student collaboration with caring faculty yields a personalized strategic plan increasing accountability, while empowering success. The study plan is a valuable part of the mentoring process.

Results and Adjustments to the Mentoring Plan

In spring 2016, the mentoring program was implemented for the first time. Graduating students who scored 700 or less on one of the two HESI Exit Exams were identified. Eight students were offered the opportunity to participate in the mentoring program.

The spring 2016 cohort had a 91% NCLEX-RN pass rate for first-time testers, including the eight mentored students. Seven of the eight students who participated in the post-graduation mentoring program passed on their first attempt. Upon analysis of the spring 2016 pass rates, the post-graduation mentoring program was revised. This revision expanded the post-graduation mentoring program to include students who scored 800 or less on the HESI Exit Exam. The fall 2016 cohort pass rate was 97% for all first time test takers. The total number of students participating in the post-graduation mentoring program was 19. The mentored students achieved a 100% pass rate on NCLEX-RN on their first attempt. Because the lone failure from the fall 2016 cohort was a student scoring above 800 on the HESI Exit Exam, further revision was made to the mentoring program in spring 2017 to include students scoring less than 850. The combined average for fall and spring 2016 was 92%, which is 10% higher than the previous two years for the Murray State University School of Nursing.

The pass rate for first time test-takers on the NCLEX-RN for spring 2017 graduates was 88%. Of the 22 students who participated in the post-graduation mentoring program, 82% passed the NCLEX-RN on their first attempt. With the fall 2017 cohort of graduating students, no revisions were made to the format of the post-graduation mentoring program. However, faculty began student remediation earlier in the semester, while the students were still in the nursing program. In addition, the NCLEX-RN Review Course was incorporated. The students were required to complete the five-week online review course as a course

assignment. The fall 2017 cohort of students achieved a 96% first time pass rate on NCLEX-RN. There were 20 participants in the fall 2017 post-graduation mentoring program, with 95% passing the NCLEX-RN examination on their first attempt.

Implications for Educators

This mentoring and remediation program was successful in improving NCLEX-RN pass rates with undergraduate nursing students. The success of this program has implications for undergraduate educators in all disciplines. Literature suggests that mentoring programs have a positive impact and can improve academic outcomes in undergraduate students (Lunsford, Crisp, Dolan, & Wuetherick, 2017). Academic outcomes such as improved grade point average, progression in academic programs, and increased retention rates can be a result of mentoring programs (Crisp, Baker, Griffin, Lunsford, & Pifer, 2017; Lunsford et al., 2017). Mentoring and remediation programs can also be designed to prepare students for high stakes exams, such as NCLEX-RN or Praxis, graduate school, or participation in research (Lunsford et al., 2017).

Mentoring programs could be implemented with underrepresented groups. Minority populations are often underrepresented in nursing and other disciplines. Literature suggests that mentoring programs that include educational advising, test-taking, and coping strategies improve recruitment, retention, and academic success in African-American nursing student populations (Payton, Howe, Timmons, & Richardson, 2013). Increasing diversity in healthcare and other professions such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is essential. Evidence suggests that mentoring programs can be effective in increasing diversity in these disciplines (Crisp et al., 2017).

Along with the benefits experienced by students, research has found that mentoring and remediation programs are beneficial to faculty, as well. Benefits to faculty mentors include improved teaching and communication skills, and increased cognitive and socio-emotional development (Dolan & Johnson, 2009; Lunsford et al., 2017). This positive experience helps to improve professional satisfaction for faculty and program satisfaction for students.

Mentoring programs can be beneficial for faculty, students, and institutions of higher learning. Faculty benefit from improved communications and increased collaborative relationships with students. Mentoring also challenges faculty to stay current in their disciplines. Students benefit as well from increased collaborative relationships with persons with expertise in their fields of study. Students participating in mentoring programs have an increased likelihood of being successful in their coursework and other academic endeavors, such as high stakes testing. Institutions of higher learning benefit from faculty-student mentoring programs. Mentoring can lead to increased job satisfaction for faculty members. Likewise, mentoring can improve student satisfaction with their university and program of study. Retention and graduation rates have been improved through the implementation of mentoring programs. Mentoring programs have the ability create a positive learning and teaching environment, which increases the chances of student success.

Conclusion

The mentoring program was developed to improve first-time NCLEX-RN pass rates for the Murray State University School of Nursing. Students were identified as at risk for failure on the NCLEX-RN, based on their

results on HESI Exit Exam, and were invited to participate in the mentoring program. The mentoring program, along with testing and remediation, resulted in improved NCLEX-RN pass rates. Faculty needed to be engaged in the process of preparing graduating nursing students for success on the NCLEX-RN exam. Knowledgeable, interested faculty mentors can have a positive impact on NCLEX-RN pass rates. Students passing the NCLEX-RN on their first try have many positive outcomes. Passing the NCLEX-RN the first time helps students minimize costs, by limiting the number of licensure exam attempts and provides students with an opportunity to successfully enter the workforce promptly after graduation. Higher pass rate is also beneficial to the School of Nursing, helping to meet accreditation standards and maintain compliance with the Kentucky Board of Nursing regulatory standards.

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All authors are Faculty members in the School of Nursing, Murray State University.

The Effect of a Clinical Field Experience Model on Pre-Service Music Teacher's Occupational Identity *RESEARCH*

Nicola F. Mason · Eastern Kentucky University
Christine P. Carucci · Eastern Kentucky University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Nicola F. Mason, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Counselor Education, and Communication Disorders, Eastern Kentucky University, 521 Lancaster Ave., Richmond, KY 40475. E-mail: Nicola.Mason@eku.edu

Abstract

The effect of a clinical field experience model (CFE) on pre-service music teacher's occupational identity was studied. Pre-service music teachers completed a researcher-designed Clinical Field Experience Survey administered at the completion of 40 hours of CFE each semester for two years. Results from study indicated that prior musical experience was a strong indicator of occupational identity, and was further driven by the desire to work with a particular grade level or specific field of music education. Moderate correlation was found between pre-service teacher's levels of satisfaction with their CFE and current occupational identity. Results support use of a clinical field experience model in conjunction with appropriately aligned pedagogy courses in providing rich, contextual learning to teacher training programs in music education.

Keywords: clinical field experience, music education, occupational identity

Pre-service music teachers have multiple avenues in which they may enter the workforce, requiring that music teacher preparation programs encompass a variety of musical training opportunities. Music teacher certification typically includes the span of preschool through the twelfth grade, requiring that pre-service music teachers have a working knowledge of developmental characteristics across all levels. In addition, there are many traditional music roles within schools, necessitating the need for pre-service teachers to be trained in a variety of musical settings. Most regularly, these include general music, choral music, band, orchestra, and music appreciation. In order to prepare for a career in music teaching, pre-service music teachers must develop the mechanics required to teach and play a variety of instruments from all instrument families, including brass (trumpet, trombone, tuba, French horn), woodwind (flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, saxophone), string (violin, viola, cello, bass), and percussion (snare drum, timpani, mallet keyboards, other world percussion). They must also develop singing and performance skills associated with harmonic instruments, such as keyboard and guitar, and develop a concrete understanding of music-related technology, such as music writing software and sound production tools. In addition to music making skills, music educators must acquire the pedagogical skills for understanding and applying specific instructional methods used to teach in a variety of music settings. Most commonly, these include concert band/orchestra/choir (score study, transposition, conducting, interpretation, rehearsal pedagogy), the marching arts (drill writing, arranging and rehearsing), music appreciation (historical and theoretical knowledge), general music (application of a variety of pedagogies, including Orff Schulwerk, Kodaly approach, Dalcroze eurhythmics, Gordon's Music Learning Theory), and solo and ensemble performances. According to the National Association for Schools of Music (2016), students who are preparing to teach all levels and all specializations across the field of music, should be competent and have experience with:

a. Knowledge and skills sufficient to teach beginning students on instruments and/or in voice as appropriate to the chosen area of specialization
b. Knowledge of content, methodologies, philosophies, materials, technologies and curriculum development in music education.
c. Experiences in solo vocal or instrumental performance
d. Experiences in ensembles. Ensembles should be varied both in size and nature.
e. The ability to lead performance-based instruction in a variety of settings.
f. Laboratory experience in teaching beginning students in a variety of specializations (p. 118).

Finally, the new National Standards for Music Education (National Association for Music Education, 2017) expect music educators to cultivate abilities of the three artistic processes, including creating, performing and responding to music within a variety of contexts and settings. The wide variety of skill sets required of pre-service music educators, paired with the rigorous performance requirements and developmental challenges of familiarity with various pedagogies related to all ages contributes significantly to the high expectations required for all music education degrees.

To better prepare teacher candidates for the rigors of teaching, teacher preparation programs are frequently turning to earlier, more deliberate field experiences and practicum requirements to help mold pre-service teachers' skills, practices, beliefs, and occupational identity. These field experiences, often referred to as "clinical field experiences" are an opportunity for pre-service teachers to "connect theory and content with practice; where they can hone their skills; and where their performance can be regularly assessed as they work with mentors who are themselves not only expert practitioners, but highly trained teacher educators" (Levine, 2010, p. 3). In teacher training programs, clinical field experiences are commonly used as a means of connecting the concepts, skills, and dispositions learned in a program of study to an authentic classroom environment. Zeichner (2010; citing Darling-Hammond, 2006; Tatto, 1996) stated that, "carefully constructed field experiences that are coordinated with campus courses are more influential and effective in supporting student teacher learning than the unguided and disconnected field experience that have historically been dominant in American teacher education" (p. 91). For pre-service music teachers, this means exploring a variety of music teaching settings and pedagogies appropriate for different grade levels, and in so doing, exposing them to a variety of career paths in music teaching. The purpose of this study was to document the effect of a clinical field experience (CFE) model on pre-service music teacher's occupational identity during two years of undergraduate clinical field experiences.

Defining Clinical Field Experiences

The *Blue Ribbon Panel Report on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning* released in 2010 had a significant impact on teacher education programs, specifically concerning field experience requirements. NCATE's (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) 2010 report, *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers*, stated that the preparation of effective teachers requires programs to be "grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses" (NCATE, 2010, p. ii). Prior to the accrediting bodies NCATE and TEAC (Teacher Education Accreditation Council) consolidating into CAEP (Council

for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation), many teacher preparation program's culminating or capstone field experience was the student teaching placement. In an effort to best meet the needs of P-12 students, new accrediting guidelines now require teacher candidates complete purposeful clinical field experiences prior to the student teaching semester. Studies have documented a variety of clinical field experience approaches including internships, microteaching, and field experiences that use a plethora of assessment tools such as observations and reflections (Whipp, 2003). Several studies have focused specifically on the connection between course content and clinical field experiences (Zeichner, 2010) as an attempt to provide more meaningful clinical field experiences. Zeichner stated that a "perennial problem in traditional college-and university sponsored teacher education programs has been the lack of connection between campus-based, university-based teacher education courses and field experiences" (p. 91). Some teacher preparation programs may include clinical field experience requirements within their curriculum but lack the connection between course content and field placements. Modeled after the recommendation of Grossman (2010), CFE were designed to bridge the gap between professional knowledge and skilled practice and provide students experiences teaching with a variety of music settings.

The Complexity of Occupational Identity for Music Educators

L'Roy (1983) defined occupational identity as the title applied to oneself when asked what one does for a living. The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) cites 15 professional undergraduate four-year degree programs in music alone. Pre-service music teachers are often drawn to the music education profession because of their identity as a musician, which is then integrated into the desired field of education. This unique duality is paramount to the occupational identity of music educators, and has been explained as a merger of teacher-musician (Austin, Isbell, & Russell, 2012). In addition, there is a multidimensional quality to the identity of music educators, including roles as teacher, musician, conductor/ composer, and entertainer/ entrepreneur (Russell, 2012). Continued research on the occupational identity of undergraduate music students reveals these complex identities are molded by a mixture of variables including socialization (Campbell, 1999; Conkling, 2003; Ferguson, 2003), attitudes of parents, peers (Haston & Russell, 2012), and music teachers before (Rickels et al., 2013), during, and after student's undergraduate studies in music (Benyon, 1998; Cox, 1997; L'Roy, 1983; Roberts, 2000; Woodford, 2002). According to Haston & Russell (2012), "Teaching experiences, in which pre-service music educators are responsible for planning and implementation of lessons, seems to have a profound impact on their identity development" (p. 387). Immersion in the field (ibid.), and positive interactions with peers, students, other music educators, and administrators (Russell, 2012) helps to solidify the occupational identity of music educators.

Setting and Participants

Students who participated in this study were undergraduate music education majors from a Southern university in their junior and/or senior years of study. Demographic data of the current sample was limited to gender, and included 51 females (52%) and 47 males (48%). Their participation was contingent upon admittance into the College of Education's Teacher Education Program, which required course completion of select

general education and introductory teacher education courses, minimum scores of 156, 162, and 150 on the PRAXIS CASE reading, writing and mathematics exams (respectively), and an overall GPA of at least 2.75. In addition, students were required to have passed a sophomore comprehensive music exam which included successful completion of select music theory, musicianship, and music history courses, as well as a juried performance and a minimum 2.75 GPA in music related coursework.

In order to be included in the study, students were enrolled in one of three core academic music courses that included elementary teaching methods, secondary teaching methods, and a laboratory ensemble. Within these classes, students learned pedagogical strategies appropriate for teaching across all music content areas, and engaging in the practice of designing and implementing developmentally appropriate instruction for each content area. Clinical field experiences were closely aligned with the course content. For example, the secondary teaching methods course required a minimum of 40 hours of clinical field experience with a teacher mentor in a secondary teaching setting. These secondary teaching settings may have included a variety of music teaching experiences and observations for grades 9-12 such as concert band, choir or Arts and Humanities classes. They also included intra- and extra-mural classes and activities, such as afterschool rehearsals, competitions, and individualized instruction. Field assignments required collaboration and mentorship between the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher (lesson plan design and instruction). They also included graded observations by both a clinical supervisor and university professor as well as teaching assignments, observations, and reflections that connected their clinical field experience with the content of the core academic music course in which they were enrolled.

Method

A researcher-designed survey was created to investigate the effects of clinical field experiences on the occupational identity of pre-service music teachers. The survey included informational items such as the age group and music classroom setting in which the students spent the most time working during the semester. It also included rank order questions, asking subjects to identify their ideal music teaching position and grade level, as well as the influence of past and present experiences on their ideal career choice. Two open-ended response questions asked subjects to elaborate on their choices of highest and lowest ranked music content and age levels. Finally, a Likert-type scale was used to measure satisfaction with a variety of teaching settings and strategies aligned with various occupational identities for music teaching during the semester.

Following IRB approval, the researcher-designed *Clinical Field Experience Survey* was administered at the completion of 40 hours of CFE each semester for two years, for four collection cycles. In the current data set, 98 (N = 98) undergraduate music education majors were surveyed. Field experiences included observations, micro-teaching, and regular reflections in elementary n = 44 (44.90%), middle n = 29 (29.59%) and high school n = 25 (25.51%) settings that aligned closely with core academic music courses.

Descriptive statistics of satisfaction with the CFE and preferred music occupation were calculated. A Spearman's rank order was used to correlate students' level of satisfaction with their field experience and their career interest. In addition, qualitative data regarding students reasoning for their occupational interests was collected and examined for recurring themes.

Results

Results of the CFE survey indicated that over a quarter of the respondent's occupational identities were most closely aligned with teaching in a high school band setting (27.55%, n = 27). Reasons given for top ranked career interests include the candidates' desire to work with a particular age (24.5%, n = 24) or a particular content area (13.3%, n = 13). A majority (30.6%, n = 46.9%, n = 46) felt their level of experience and current skill set was a contributing factor for their selected career choice. Lowest ranked career interests were based overwhelmingly on a lack of experience and skill with the occupation (44.9%, n = 44), and a perception of not having a connection or interest in the age (26.5%, n = 26) or content area (20.4%, n = 20) (see Figure 1). Satisfaction with the CFE placement was generally positive but did not appear to have a significant impact on the teacher candidate's occupational identity. Results indicated that school environment had the greatest impact on clinical field experience satisfaction ($\bar{x}$ = 4.67), followed by the classroom learning climate ($\bar{x}$ = 4.58) and opportunities to instruct ($\bar{x}$ = 4.50). Lowest in the students' reported satisfaction was their observation of the use of technology in the classroom ($\bar{x}$ = 4.21) with the observation of assessment strategies closely following ($\bar{x}$ = 4.23). A moderate correlation was found between the pre-service teachers' level of satisfaction with their field experience and their current occupational identity (r_s = .53). However, a strong correlation was found between the pre-service teachers occupational identity and their most influential content area, with band (r = .85), choir (r = .81), and orchestra (r = .78) all demonstrating a statistical significant relationship ($p < 0.05$) with their previous learning experiences.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to document the effect of a clinical field experience (CFE) model on pre-service music teacher's occupational identity during two years of undergraduate clinical field experiences. Based on the results of this study, pre-service teachers were very likely to prefer occupations with which they had the most experience. These results support similar research findings on the effects of clinical field experiences on occupational identify in pre-service music teachers (Campbell 1999; Conkling, 2003; Haston & Russell, 2011; Kim, 2013; McClellan, 2013). There was also a strong correlation between the experiences students had going into a program and those experiences they most identified with during their pre-service years. The moderate correlation between pre-service teacher's level of satisfaction with their field experience and their current occupational identity implies that the clinical experience model has the potential of playing a stronger role in the development of pre-service teachers' identities.

Considering the influential role of experience with regards to the development of occupational identity, it is crucial that teacher education programs accommodate for the diversity of settings in which music educators are preparing to teach. Though certification requirements vary from state to state, many music licensures span all areas of music (band, orchestra, choral, general, and arts and humanities) across all developmental grades (pre-school, elementary school, middle school, and high school). While it may not be feasible to provide experience at every level in every concentration area, it is important that teacher education programs offer a variety of opportunities for pre-service teachers to explore and interact with a multitude of ages and music making opportunities. By expanding on the potential

of the CFE to enhance student learning, a stronger correlation between teacher candidate's occupational identity and the CFE may develop during teacher candidate's undergraduate degree completion.

The need for contextual variety in the classroom setting provides a great challenge for teacher education programs. The uniqueness of a P-12 teaching license in "all areas," is quite different from the focus that is afforded in many other certification areas. As such, it is important for educational programs, particularly those overseeing licensure, to understand the complexity of a P-12 license and allow accommodations for program requirements. For example, it may be feasible for a middle school math candidate to complete an entire observation sequence in one school setting, but requiring a music teacher to stay in one setting actually narrows opportunities for gaining experience with a variety of music making situations. Closely working with specialists from each discipline and bearing in mind the implications of policy decisions should be considered for all teacher licensure programs. Given the P-12 model is by its very nature is one of great breadth, it is worth noting that additional research is needed regarding the amount of "depth" required in each setting for the clinical experience model to be most effective.

In summary, the clinical field experience model has many benefits for teachers in training and should continue to be embraced and expanded upon by teacher preparation programs. These programs provide immersion in the field and offer pre-service teachers an opportunity to begin shaping important aspects of their teaching beliefs and proficiencies. Providing rich, contextual based learning in conjunction with appropriately aligned pedagogy courses can be strong factors in shaping the occupational identity of pre-service music teachers.

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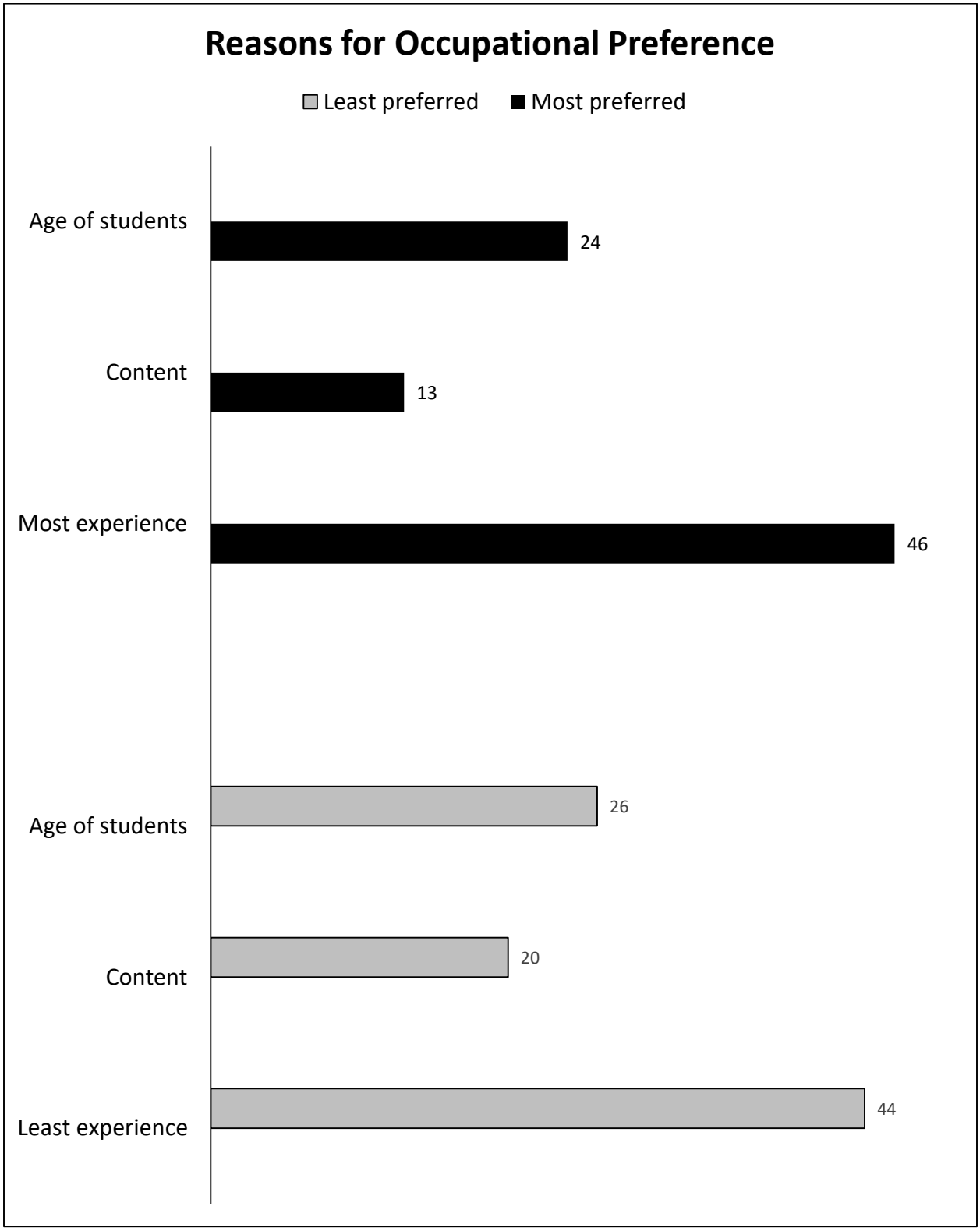
Nicola F. Mason is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Eastern Kentucky University.

Christine P. Carrucci is a Graduate Coordinator for the Department of Music, Eastern Kentucky University.

Figure 1. Reasons for most and least preferred music education occupation preferences



Engaging College Students with Information *RESEARCH*

Anne Cizmar • Eastern Kentucky University
Samantha Braun • Eastern Kentucky University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Anne Cizmar, Department of Government, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky 40475. Email: anne.cizmar@eku.edu

Abstract

Engaging college students in their campus and community is a goal shared by many in higher education and government. Yet engaging students can be a difficult task. In this paper, we extend the existing literature on student engagement to include civic engagement. We test one possible method of mobilizing student participation—learning about the importance of participation in an event. We analyze whether providing students with information about the competitive, important nature of events may spur participation. We present results from a survey experiment on how learning about an upcoming competitive midterm election and competitive basketball season may motivate students to become engaged. We find that learning about the basketball season spurs the likelihood of student basketball attendance, and that learning about the election changes student considerations about what issues are important in the election.

Keywords: civic engagement, student engagement

Americans today are considerably less involved in their communities than Americans in previous generations. People are disconnected from their neighbors, communities, friends, and families. Fewer people today are having family dinners, entertaining friends in their homes, bowling in leagues, signing petitions, and attending club meetings than before (Putnam, 2000). By many different measures, it is apparent that Americans are disengaged from their communities. This disengagement is especially true for the 18-25 population, who are even less participatory than other Americans (Putnam, 2000).

Many scholars, members of the media, government officials, and members of the university community are concerned about lack of youth engagement and participation. Student engagement is related to a number of desirable outcomes for students and society. Many studies have indicated that students who are less engaged on campus may be getting less benefit from their college education (Astin, 1984; Coates, 2005; Hu & Kuh, 2002; Hu, Kuh, & Lu, 2008; Kuh, 2001, 2005; Pace, 1995). In the community, declining civic participation has been connected to a less prosperous society (Putnam, 2000). As a result, spurring student involvement both on campus and in the community is a common goal.

In this paper, we extend the existing literature student engagement to include civic engagement. We test one possible method of mobilizing student participation—learning about the importance of participation in an event. We analyze whether providing students with information about the competitive, important nature of events may spur participation. We present results from a survey experiment on how learning about an upcoming competitive midterm election and competitive basketball season may motivate students to become engaged. We find that learning about the basketball season spurs student basketball attendance, and that learning about the election changes student considerations about what issues are important in the election. The implications for mobilizing students to become engaged citizens are discussed.

The Importance of Engagement

Student engagement in the university setting refers to the "resources invested by both students and their institutions intended to optimize the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institution" (Trowler, 2010, p. 2). Many aspects of student engagement have been considered to date, including interaction with faculty and peers, supportive campus environment, active learning, and enriching activities (Smith, Sheppard, Johnson, & Johnson, 2005). Student engagement, and how to spur more of it, has been an important research topic considered by many scholars because it has been linked to a number of desirable outcomes, including student satisfaction, persistence, and academic achievement (Astin, 1984; Kuh, 2005). Students who are more engaged in their learning are more successful.

One aspect of student engagement that has received less attention to date is student civic engagement in the campus and surrounding community. Colleges and universities are concerned with mobilizing students to participate in campus events that may help to build a strong sense of community among the students. They also have become concerned with developing partnerships between institutions of higher education and the surrounding communities. These partnerships are considered mutually beneficial because they allow university faculty and students to share their expertise and commitment with the surrounding communities, while engaging in active learning. Yet despite the potential benefits of civic engagement, many students today are not civically engaged.

This lack of engagement is particularly troubling in the political realm because the health of our democracy depends upon citizen engagement. Our political system is founded on the idea of popular sovereignty—that the legitimate authority of the government is derived from the consent of its people. This makes voting an instrumental part of American democracy. Without eligible voters participating in this civic duty, our democracy would cease to exist. Yet, a large majority of college voters is visibly absent and apathetic in campaigns and on Election Day.

Lack of Engagement

In general, Americans today are disconnected from larger society, as can be seen from many different measures of civic engagement (Putnam, 2000). People are less participatory in community organizations, bowling leagues, garden clubs, and other groups. Many Americans are even disconnected from their own friends and families—having fewer family dinners and fewer friends over to their homes. There are different explanations for this decline in civic engagement, including the impact of large corporations (Heying, 1997), residential segregation (Uslaner, 2012), and other aspects of current American society including urban sprawl and the electronic entertainment (Putnam, 2000).

Although scholars dispute some of the reasons for declining civic engagement, different measures of civic engagement all tell the same story—Americans are disengaged in their communities today. Those in the typical student profile (aged 18-25) are particularly unplugged from their communities. They are less likely to read the news, sign political petitions, attend public meetings, write a member of Congress, work for a political campaign, and serve as a member of a local organization than older Americans, or earlier cohort generations of 18-25 year olds (Putnam, 2000). This disengagement not only impacts individuals'

lives, but also society as a whole. Lower civic participation in community organizations, public or school events, and community volunteering means lower social capital. States with higher social capital have better schools, safer neighborhoods, and healthier and happier citizens (Putnam, 2000).

As a result, scholars and political leaders are very interested in how college students may be engaged in civic events, particularly voting. Many explanations for the lack of student political participation have been offered, including that young voters lack the community attachment needed to spur political activity (Highton & Wolfinger, 2001). In particular, there are certain life steps most people must undertake in order to gain the community attachments they believe are needed to be politically active. These steps include getting married, securing a job, and having a family. Many college students have not experienced these life steps yet, thus making them less likely to vote (Highton & Wolfinger, 2001). Similarly, many college students are still developing their political attachments (Niemi & Hanmer, 2010). As young adults finish college they are likely to have different political opinions then when they started, as they have been exposed to new ideas, information, and people as agents of socialization.

Voter registration laws may also play a reason why young Americans do not vote. Registration laws in the United States make voting more difficult than in almost any other democracy (Hanmer, 2009, p. 21). This challenge in itself does not explain the relatively low rates of college voters as compared to the general American public. However, college students are more likely to live at school far away from their voting location (Niemi & Hanmer, 2010) and are more likely to move in between elections (Highton & Wolfinger, 2001). The high mobility rates of this population, mixed with varying voter registration laws by state, may also contribute to the low voter turnout amongst this age group. Since changing voter registration laws would be extremely difficult as laws are set state-by-state, and many places are reluctant to liberalize voting laws, this is also unlikely to be a fruitful avenue of change that will help to mobilize college voters.

The final commonly cited reason that young voters fail to vote is lack of interest in the campaigns and lack of campaign contact. The rates with which campaigns contact voters have a direct correlation with whether the voters will show up to vote. This is true for all voters—older voters and younger voters alike (Niemi & Hanmer, 2010). Like any other voter, the more the 18-25 year old population is exposed to politics and come into contact with campaigns the higher the likelihood of turnout is. Yet campaigns have limited resources and in order to maximize those resources they will reach out to the easiest voters to contact and those who are most likely to show up at the polls (Wattenberg, 2007). Given their high mobility rates and continual absences from the polls, college voters are not the easiest voters to contact, and are sometimes considered a risky group to microtarget because they may not show up on Election Day. College voters are also harder to mobilize using traditional get-out-the-vote techniques, such as door knocking and phone calls. As a result, campaigns may choose to focus on other voters whom they feel like they are more likely to mobilize. However, with limited campaign contact, many young Americans remain apathetic about elections and absent from the polls on Election Day. This apathy is problematic in a democratic political system based on popular sovereignty, and has implications for the health of our democracy and for the types of legislation passed.

Survey Experiment

Existing research indicates that student engagement, in campus and in the community, is important both for student success as well as for society as a whole. Yet it can be difficult to mobilize students to participate in their communities. Many of the existing blockades to student engagement—busy work schedules, lifecycle stages, voter registration laws, and others—cannot be easily changed. However, providing information to help students see the importance of participating in elections and campus events may be increased. One existing study indicates that college course content, specifically whether students take classes that teach civics skills, may help to increase civic engagement (Hillygus, 2005). We expect then that college students who are presented information about the importance of an upcoming event—a midterm election or basketball season—are more likely to participate than college students who are not provided information about the upcoming events. We specifically target college students for our experiment both because college students are a readily accessible population, and because college students ideally would be learning about the importance of community engagement during their time in college. As a result, we view college students as a critical group for mobilization.

We conducted a survey experiment on campus in October 2014. Surveys were administered in various classes around campus during the week of October 27th, about one week before both the 2014 midterm elections and the start of college basketball season. For each class, students were invited to participate in the research study and provided an informed consent to sign. Students who agreed to participate in the study were given the following instructions:

Thank you for agreeing to participate. Please follow these instructions.

1. Open the white envelope and read the story inside. Once you have finished reading the news story please put it back inside the white envelope. You won't be able to refer back to the story when answering questions. You can take notes on the story as you read if you find it helpful.
2. Next, open the red envelope and complete the survey inside. Once you have finished the survey, please put it back inside the red envelope.
3. Paper clip the two envelopes together and turn them in.

The instructions were both read aloud to students before they received their packets and included with the packets themselves so that students could refer back to instructions while completing the study if necessary. The packets the students received included the instructions page, one white envelope, and one red envelope, all paper clipped together. Inside the white envelope was one of the two news stories—either a story about basketball or a story about the midterm election. Inside the red envelope was the survey, which was the same for all students.

Students were randomly assigned to one of two groups. One group of students read a news story about the upcoming midterm election and the competitive Senate race between Mitch McConnell and Alison Lundergan Grimes. The other group of students read a news story about the upcoming Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) basketball season. Both stories were similar in length and style. The election story was 425 words long and the basketball story was 426 words long. Both articles also had similar titles—"Expecting an Exciting 2014-15 EKU Men's Basketball Season" and "2014 Kentucky Senate Race Too Close to Call"—and emphasized the competitive nature of the Senate race and the upcoming

basketball season. We were able to obtain 150 student participants, half of which received the basketball story and half that received the election story.

In order to help ensure that students actually read the stories, the instructions indicated that they would be answering questions about the story they read and would not be able to refer back to the story when answering the questions. To further check that students read the news stories, there were two factual questions (one for the basketball story and one for the election story) included at the end of the survey. The results indicate that most students did in fact read the stories, as shown in Table 1.

Among students who read the basketball story, nearly 87% correctly identified the basketball record from the 2013-2014 season, as cited in the news story, as compared to less than 15% of students who read the election story. Among students who read the election story, 89% correctly identified which candidate was ahead in the recent polls as compared to only 12% of students who read the basketball story. These factual knowledge questions based on the news stories indicate that most students carefully read the news story to which they were assigned.

Findings

We find that reading news stories and learning about current events can mobilize students to civically participate, but only for sporting events in this case. As Table 2 shows, students who read about the upcoming basketball season were more likely than students who read the election story to report that they were going to attend a basketball game. Nearly two-thirds of students who read the basketball story were planning to attend a game, whereas only half of students who read the election story were planning to attend a game during the season. For voting, there was no statistically significant difference in terms of whether students said they were going to the polls. Nearly three-quarters of students who read either story indicated they were planning to vote. Based on typical college student voter turnout, it is unlikely that three-fourths of the students actually did vote on Election Day. This indicates that college students, although they may not actually participate, will provide socially desirable answers when asked about voting. They know enough to know that voting is considered a "good thing" and want to appear civically engaged. Other voters tend to indicate they are more civically engaged than they actually are as well, as previous studies have shown (Abelson, Loftus, & Greenwald, 1992; Belli, Traugott, Young, & McGonagle, 1999; Duff, Hanmer, Park, & White, 2007; Granberg & Holmberg, 1992; Selb & Munzert, 2013).

In regards to which issues students thought were "most important" in the election cycle, students who read the election story were more likely to say that jobs/employment was the most important issue as compared to those who read the basketball story. Respondents reading the election story were also more likely to say that Republican control of the Senate was the most important issue. As shown in Table 3, 20% of those who read the election story said that employment was the most important issue in this election as compared to 5% of respondents who read the basketball story. Republican control of the Senate was cited as the most important issue by 24% of election story readers, as compared to only 7% of basketball story readers. Both of these differences are statistically significant, and further indicate that students carefully read the news stories. In the election story, the importance of the election was discussed, including three references to GOP control of the Senate. Jobs and employment are mentioned twice in the story as important in the election.

Students who did not read the election story instead were more likely to say that wages, coal, and education were the most important issues. Based on discussions with students following the conclusion of the survey, many students reported being concerned about education and wages because these issues impact them directly—they are often working minimum wage/low paying jobs and trying to pay for school. When students were not prompted by the news story to focus on campaign issues widely discussed by the media in this election, such as GOP control of the Senate and employment issues, students did not consider these issues when answering the survey.

Conclusions and Implications

Civic engagement in one's campus and community are hailed as beneficial to students and important to the health of society. Scholars, pundits, and university and community leaders often lament the lack of civic engagement on behalf of students. As the future leaders of tomorrow, many hope that students can become more engaged in their communities. We attempted to mobilize student participation by using news stories to convey the importance of participation in two events—basketball game attendance and voting. We find that it is possible to influence students' opinions and actions through providing them with information. Students who read about the competitive upcoming basketball season were more likely to report that they planned to attend a basketball game to support their school. Students who read about the competitive upcoming midterm election, though, were no more likely to respond that they intended to vote. Instead, nearly three-fourths of all students indicated they were planning to vote, regardless of information learned about the election.

On one hand, it is good that students demonstrate knowledge that voting is socially desirable behavior. Students know that they should vote and that it is normatively a "good" thing to do. However, translating this knowledge that voting is important into action is more difficult. Conversations with students following completion of the survey indicated that they are turned off by politics. Although they know that they should vote, they still do not like politics. Many said that they did not like the "bickering" between candidates or the negativity of the campaigns. Others commented that they did not care for either candidate in the election and felt like they had to pick the "lesser of two evils." Still, reading about the election did provide factual knowledge to the students about the race, and did change their considerations about what issues were important in the election.

Overall, we find support for existing theories that claim college students fail to become civically engaged in part because community leaders do not reach out to them. When students are provided with information regarding the significance of upcoming events, they respond. The campus community and political system may be able to reverse the disengagement trend among 18 to 25 year olds through reaching out to them. Explaining why their participation is significant may spur student involvement. Our conversations with students indicate that it is important for colleges and universities to carry out the distribution of this information in addition to the campaigns themselves. Students reflected that they preferred to hear information that was non-partisan and not advancing one particular candidate/party in the election, as is the information coming from the campaigns themselves. This type of messaging may be driving down student engagement because students are turned off by the nature of the campaign messages. As a result, institutions of higher education may be

more successful at trying to civically engage students.

Tables

Table 1

Factual Knowledge by Story Topic

Story Topic	Basketball Story	Election Story	Difference
Basketball Record Knowledge	87%	15%	72*
Senate Election Poll Knowledge	12%	89%	-77*

Notes: *$p < .05$

Table 2

Engagement by Story Topic

Story Topic	Basketball Story	Election Story	Difference
Basketball Game Attendance	65%	50%	15*
Midterm Election Voting	72%	73%	-1*

Notes: *$p < .10$

Table 3

Most Important Issue By Story Topic

Story Topic	Basketball Story	Election Story	Difference
Jobs/Employment	5%	20%	-15*
Wages/Minimum Wage	11%	2%	9*
Coal	22%	11%	11*
Education	15%	2%	13*
Republican Control of Senate	7%	24%	-17*

Notes: *$p < .05$. Other popular issues mentioned by students included the economy, the Affordable Care Act/healthcare, and women's rights; none of these issues had statistically significantly different mentions across the story topic. About 9% of the sample gave other assorted answers that were not commonly mentioned.

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Anne Cizmar is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government, Eastern Kentucky University.

Samantha Braun is a former student, Eastern Kentucky University.

Book Reviews in Student Journals: An Untapped Academic Niche *RESEARCH*

Hagai Gringarten · St. Thomas University
Raúl Fernández-Calienes · St. Thomas University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Hagai Gringarten, Gus Machado School of Business, St. Thomas University. E-mail: hgringarten@stu.edu

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Abstract

In this article, the authors present the results of their research into the presence and characteristics of book reviews in more than 200 student journals all across the United States and several other countries. They used a list of student journals, not including student-edited legal publications (such as law reviews and law review companions) or student-edited newspapers. They then analyzed the list to determine selected characteristics of student journals such as presence or absence of reviews, location of journal, fields or topics, sponsorship, frequency of publication, and source country of journal. The authors conclude with recommendations for future research and for educational policies in relation to student journals.

Keywords: book review, student research, student success, journal, publishing, undergraduate

In today's wired world, with so many different venues for student writers to distribute their research, the book review – an opportunity to share knowledge, enhance professional profile, and improve academic standing – remains an often forgotten and underestimated asset. Yet, for student writers, book reviews in student journals offer many advantages and can open windows to student success as well as to future publishing opportunities. This article is a presentation of the results of research into the presence and characteristics of book reviews in more than 200 student journals all across the United States and several other countries.[1]

On Books and Book Reviews

First published in 1884 and heralded as "the definitive record of the English language," *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines a book as a "portable volume consisting of a series of written, printed, or illustrated pages bound together for ease of reading" (Book, n.d.b, a), while the *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines it as a "non-periodical printed publication of at least 49 pages excluding covers" (Book, n.d.a, para. 1). Although printing was invented in China in the 6th century A.D. (Book, n.d.a), the printed books era began with Gutenberg's Forty-Two Line *Holy Bible* published in Europe in 1455 (Keh, 1998) and did not gain commercial acceptance until the 1800s when "bestseller" lists first appeared in London in 1891 (Archer & Jockers, 2016).

In the age of über-cyber activities, publishing business models are changing rapidly, and book publishing is more challenging than ever before due to the time it takes to write, produce, and publish books.

[1] This article is an expansion of a poster originally presented at the 9th Annual Florida Statewide Symposium "Engagement in Undergraduate Research," on October 21, 2016, at the University of Central Florida, in Orlando, FL.

Keh (1998) asserted that "the entire process of getting the completed manuscript to the consumer is a complicated one" (p. 107). According to one book agent (Laube, 2011), it takes approximately two years from "idea to print" (para. 8). In the era of rapidly changing consumers' wants and needs, and instant printing, publishing, and global communications, where consumers "want it yesterday," books are at risk of coming to market with outdated information or product. However, books still experience tremendous growth, possibly because they can present research topics in depth, reach wider audiences, have enduring value, and perform specific roles that other media cannot (Baetens & Prislan, 2014). Today, books have become an important part of the human experience, being an integral part of our culture, education, business, and economy. In the U.S.A. alone, about 55,000 fiction books are published yearly, and many more are published as eBooks and in other formats (Archer & Jockers, 2016; cf., E-book, 2018).

With the growth of book publishing, book reviews also have become an important source of information for authors, book publishers, retailers, and readers. Book reviews serve an important function for readers, providing them with quality control, time saving information, exposure to new material or research findings, and enhancement of marketability of books, authors, and reviewers (Baetens & Prislan, 2014). The *Harvard Review* describes a book review as reader-centered: "Before beginning the review, think about the reader. What should the reader know?" (2016, p. 1). Dr. Margaret Proctor at the University of Toronto points out that a book review "is not primarily a summary," but instead is an analysis, commentary on, and evaluation of a work (n.d., p. 1). In fact, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Writing Center (n.d.) focuses on the dialogical nature of a book review, stating it "allows you to enter into dialogue and discussion with the work's creator and with other audiences" (p. 1). Indiana University (2011) guidelines put it succinctly: "reviewers answer not only the *what* but the *so what* question about a book" (p. 1; emphasis in original).

Literature Review

A great deal of research and information exists on student writing – its forms, its importance, and its presence or absence in contemporary pedagogy and educational practice. What is not so abundant, however, is research and information on student journals.[2] Some data exists, but it is not enough.

Some authors have focused on the process of creating student journals (Farney & Byerley, 2010; Higgins & Uigín, 2014; Hart, 2012; Ho, 2011). Other authors focus on specific fields of study – for instance, Pritchard and Thomas (2010) on the sciences. Still other authors focus on specific themes – for instance, Murray (2015) on student publishing's contributions to student retention; Badke (2014) on student publishing as a measure of effectiveness; Caprio (2014) on student publishing as promoting skills for future leadership and change; Weiner and Watkinson (2014) on what students learn from participating in an undergraduate research journal; and Walkington (2012) on student publishing as developing dialogic learning space.

Methodology

The Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) has maintained a list of student

[2] In this study, the term "student journals" includes student-edited academic publications but not student-edited law reviews or newspapers; see details below.

journals for some time (CUR, 2016). The CUR website gives the name, web address, and a brief description of more than 200 student journals all across the United States and a few other countries. Thus, the starting point for the present research was the CUR list of student journals because it was a list of academic publications and by a leading national organization representing more than 900 universities and colleges (CUR, 2018). CUR formed the basic level of information, which the researchers then expanded into a larger, more elaborate, and detailed database so they could analyze the list to determine selected characteristics of student journals.

The researchers did *not* include student-edited legal publications such as law reviews (more than 680 exist; Washington & Lee University School of Law, 2018) or law review companions (almost 70 exist; Legal Scholarship Blog, 2017). These publications have a long tradition in legal academia and are publishing forums in which students exert significant influence (Christensen & Oseid, 2007). The researchers also did not include student-edited newspapers (cf., e.g., Tennant & Chyi, 2014; Hogan, 2013; Doctor, 2012). Both are beyond the scope of this study.

Research Questions

The investigators developed several research questions:

- Do student journals publish book reviews?
- If so, which student journals publish them?
- Where are the student journals located (i.e., in the United States or in other countries; in which U.S. states)?
- What fields or topics to the student journals cover?
- Which universities or other organizations sponsor the student journals?
- Which universities have the most student journals?
- Which countries have the most student journals?

Process

The investigators followed several steps in the process of researching the student journals. First, the turned the CUR list into a database. Then, they reviewed the websites of each journal searching for physical location(s), sponsoring organization(s), field(s) of coverage, collegiate level of journal, and most importantly, inclusion of book reviews, and added information to the database. The investigators viewed a journal as publishing book reviews only if published a book review in the last three years. Next, they made corrections to any errors they found (e.g., updated or changed web addresses).

The researchers began their investigation with the CUR list, which in early September 2016 consisted of 197 student journals. When the research and analysis were complete, the researchers rechecked the source of the list on 20 October 2016 and discovered it had grown by 20 new entries for a total of 217 student journals. The researchers then added these new entries to the database and followed the same investigative process to acquire and record data. Because the researchers saw the possibility of repeated updates continuously altering the count, they took the date of 20 October 2016 as the baseline for the present research.

Results

The final list of student journals included 217 entries. Research revealed that of the total number of 217 student journals, only 9 publish book reviews, which represents 4.15% of the total (see Table 1). The

universities with the most student journals are Columbia University with five and the University of California at Berkeley also with five. Seven different countries publish student journals on the list, and they include nations in the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East (see Table 2). Of the student journals that publish book reviews, six are from universities and organizations in the U.S.A., and two are from universities outside the U.S.A. (see Table 3). Of the student journals that publish book reviews, five are from U.S. states, and three are from countries other than the U.S.A. (see Table 4). The student journals that publish book reviews cover mainly four different fields, cover multiple disciplines, or are interdisciplinary (see Table 5).

Discussion

The famous phrase, "publish or perish," coined to describe the continued academic pressure to publish in academic institutions that focus on research, also can relate to competitive undergraduate institutions. Student journals can serve an important venue for disseminating academic scholarship by students, enhance academic reputation, and create a positive image for the university as a research institute with quality student body that contributes empirical and theoretical research. As we stated in a different study, "publishing is one of the very few tangible 'proof of excellence' for academics and can be an effective tool for building reputation, gaining prestige, and enhancing personal brand" (Gringarten & Fernández-Calienes, 2014). Student journals that publish book reviews provide an important service to students as well as to academia. To student authors, they offer another method to document academic success – to graduate schools, employers, promotion committees, and others – especially if the journal is peer reviewed. Further, such student journals (1) offer an entry point to the world of writing for publication, (2) provide added value to resumes, (3) enhance marketability, and (4) hone skills that can be useful for academic pursuits. To both students and researchers, they provide quality control, time savings, and exposure to new research findings.

Conclusions

The present research revealed that only 4.15% of the total number of 217 student journals, publish book reviews. The researchers encourage student editors, faculty, university and college administrators, and others interested in promoting high quality student research and publishing to encourage student journals to develop and adopt submissions policies that include book reviews. Since book reviews can be an essential part of research and publication, student journals that do not publish book reviews are missing an opportunity to provide important benefits to students, researchers, and academia.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The limitations of the present research include the following. First, the researchers had no control over the original list of student journals they used as a basis for the study. In other words, the list already existed, which means an organization external to the researchers compiled that list, determined selection criteria for it, and maintained it. Second, the list of student journals consists almost exclusively of publications in the English language, which places specific limitations (e.g., linguistic, cultural, geographic) the scope of the research. Third, the list of student journals is online, which means its creator can update it at any time without warning; unscheduled and repeated

updates to the list continuously altered the count of the number of journals, so the results of any analysis can become outdated very quickly.

Future researchers into student journals that publish book reviews could follow several paths. First, future researchers could repeat the research on this CUR list of 200+ student journals on a regular basis (e.g., on January 1st of every year for a number of years), which could update the count, reset the baseline, and reveal trends. Second, researchers could expand beyond the CUR list of 200+ student journals, which would broaden the input data. Third, researchers could focus on student journals in languages other than English, which also would broaden the input data. Fourth, researchers could focus on student journals outside the geographical limitations of the English-speaking world (the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and others), which again would broaden the input data. Last, and perhaps most importantly, future researchers could investigate (1) reasons why so few student journals include book reviews, (2) if student journals themselves value other types of writing more than book reviews, and (3) specific strategies for communicating the value of book reviews to student editors or administrators.

Tables

Table 1

Student Journals "By the Numbers"

Types of Journals	Number of Journals
Number of Student Journals on list	217
Number of U.S. states with Student Journals	38
Number of non-U.S. Student Journals	11
Number of countries with Student Journals	7
Number of Student Journals that publish Book Reviews	9

Table 2

Countries with Student Journals

Countries with Student Journals	
Australia	Scotland
Canada	U.S.A.
England	Wales
Qatar	

Table 3

Student Journals with Book Reviews

Schools in USA	Schools Outside USA	Company
Armstrong State University	Aberystwyth University	Berghahn Books
Fordham University	Monash University	
Gettysburg College	University of Warwick	
New College of Florida		
University of Wisconsin, Madison		

Table 4

Student Journals with Book Reviews

State	Country
Florida	Australia
Georgia	England
New York	Wales
Pennsylvania	
Wisconsin	

Table 5

Student Journals with Book Reviews

Fields of Book Reviews	
Education	Politics
History	Interdisciplinary
Literary Criticism	Multiple disciplines

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Hagai Gringartenis is an Associate Professor in the School of Business, St. Thomas University.

Raúl Fernández-Calienes is an Associate Professor in the School of Law, St. Thomas University.

Faculty Perceptions of What Makes a Student Successful in the Mathematical Sciences

RESEARCH

Casey E. George • University of Louisville
Lisa Skultety • University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Randi Congleton • Chatham University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Casey E. George – University of Louisville, Higher Education Administration, 1905 S. First Street, Louisville, KY 40292. Email: caseye.george@louisville.edu

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Abstract

Faculty members play a key role in facilitating student outcome, including their learning, persistence, and degree completion. Through analyses of online survey data, this study investigates the views of faculty mentors involved in a nationwide mentoring program that aims to support underrepresented students' transition from undergraduate to graduate studies in the mathematical sciences. Specifically, faculty member's perceptions of what factors contribute to students' success or lack of success in mathematics, statistics, and biostatistics are examined. Reasons for success cited by faculty are highly individualized, such as innate ability, motivation, and dedication, yet some contextual and structural factors, including research opportunities and climate-related issues, are identified as well. Faculty members point to pre-collegiate teaching, but not college-level teaching, curriculum, or pedagogy as important to student success, raising question as to how they view their role in students' learning. Implication are offered in terms of how universities may help faculty, and particularly those involved in recruitment and retention efforts, and understand how their role as educators may impact students' outcomes in these fields at the postsecondary level.

Keywords: math, success, faculty, college students

In recent decades, much national discussion, attention, and funding has been dedicated to broadening participation in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields (Bonous-Harnmarth, 2000; Hill, Corbett, & St. Rose, 2010; National Science Board, 2010; National Science and Technology Council, 2013). Within STEM fields, the mathematical sciences—math, statistics, and biostatistics—are unique in the sense that the knowledge and skills necessary in these areas are highly transferrable to other STEM fields and can be utilized in a variety of occupations. Yet, domestic women and students of color remain underrepresented in these fields, particularly at the highest education levels. While the notion of broadening participation may suggest an emphasis on access to and entry into STEM, long-term success and retention in STEM is also necessary, particularly at the postsecondary level—a critical juncture whereby individuals train and prepare for entry into the STEM workforce. In 2012−2013, the U.S. awarded 1,843 doctoral degrees in mathematical science, with 46.5% awarded to U.S. citizens. Of the 857 domestic students who earned these degrees, 26.8% were women, 2.8% were African American, 2.9% were Latino, one was an American Indian/Alaskan Native, and one was a Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (American Mathematical Society, 2013).

National Science Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and other funding agencies, as well as universities, are investing in recruitment and retention programs in STEM fields with the assumption that faculty involved in such efforts understand their role

in relation to student outcomes, including but not limited to learning, persistence, and degree completion. However, this assumption has not been scrutinized, and if incorrect, it may undermine efforts to broaden participation in STEM. While empirical studies have identified a multitude of factors that relate to persistence in STEM, little remains known to what faculty, who may act as gatekeepers to STEM majors (Lee, 2006), attribute to student success. This study is an exploration of a group of faculty members committed to helping underrepresented students succeed in the mathematical sciences and their perceptions of what factors relate to success or lack of success for students in these fields. Specifically, what factors do faculty mentors attribute to student outcomes in the mathematical sciences, and how might such factors differ for underrepresented students? The resulting findings will help inform how faculty teaching and mentoring can shape the persistence of underrepresented racial minority undergraduates and their continuation into graduate programs (George, Neale, Van Horne, & Malcom, 2001).

Literature Review

Although postsecondary or mathematics success can be defined and determined in a number of different ways, student outcomes such as persistence to degree completion are measureable indicators of success. The current body of literature related to persistence and degree completion in STEM, including the mathematical sciences, has largely focused on individual factors, such as students' demographics, educational aspirations, perceptions, and expectations. More recent work has incorporated contextual factors, such as climate and the interactions with faculty. More specifically, student outcomes in STEM are related to the number of advanced high school courses a student takes (Long, Iatarola, & Conger, 2009; Rose & Betts, 2001), peers majoring in STEM (Astin & Astin, 1992), a students' intent to major in STEM during their freshman year (Astin & Astin, 1992; Bonous-Harnmarth, 2000), relationships with faculty (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), classroom practices (Sanchez, 2000), financial aid (Ishitani, 2006), and working with faculty on research projects (Herrera & Hurtado, 2011). Self-assessment of abilities related to a particular career (Correll, 2004), perceived ability in mathematics (Nix, Perez-Felkner, & Thomas, 2015), interest in mathematics (Maltese & Tai, 2011), and play a role in student persistence in STEM. The persistence of underrepresented minority undergraduates may be increased by creating experiences for these populations to take part in undergraduate research, involvement in academically related clubs and organizations, and interactions with peers (Chang, Sharkness, Hurtado, & Newman, 2014).

Career outcomes for individuals can also be used as longer-term measures of success. For instance, women in STEM were less likely than their non-STEM counterparts to have a major-related occupation ten years after degree completion (Xu, 2013). This disparity indicates that persistence in STEM is not only a serious concern during a student's time at a university, but also after graduation. Consequently, considering success in terms of long-term choices beyond academic achievement and persistence could be of great importance.

More specific to mathematics, students' performance in "gatekeeper" courses, such as calculus, is key for longer-term persistence in the field (Treisman, 1992). Miller (2015) surveyed female tenure-track or tenured professors in mathematics at elite institutions to inquire about personal and programmatic factors they believed led to their success in their doctoral programs, as defined by their

position in academia. Although examined in hindsight, Miller's study is similar to the current study in that current faculty members are asked about what contributes to the success of students in mathematics. Academic preparation prior to entering their doctoral program and having access to high quality graduate courses were deemed important factors, as well as having a supportive advisor.

More recent discussions of factors pertaining to underrepresented student success in college has focused more on differentiating between students "surviving" and "thriving" (Schreiner, 2010). This line of work, which could also be applied to underrepresented students' experiences in STEM, aims to build assessment strategies that acknowledge postsecondary success as more than completing a college degree. The thriving orientation incorporates students' "(1) engaged learning, (2) academic determination, (3) positive perspective, (4) diverse citizenship, and (5) social connectedness" (Schreiner, 2010, p. 4). In other words, measurable indicators of success such as degree completion may be indicators of students surviving their college experience, while more complex, holistic measures of success reflect the degree to which they thrived during their postsecondary education. Currently, there is a lack of investigation into what factors faculty perceive as pertaining to their students' success in mathematics, statistics, and biostatistics.

The mechanism of mentoring to broaden participation in STEM is utilized in K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, and workforce settings (Gamse, Martinez, Bozzi, & Didriksen, 2014; George & Neale, 2006). Empirical research has highlighted a number of positive benefits for both students and faculty involved in mentoring (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Newby, & Heide, 2008; Santos & Reigadas, 2002), but has yet to recommend an ideal mentoring structure to ensure a successful mentoring relationship and outcomes. Faculty members' decision to mentor may be shaped by institutional incentives, beliefs about students at their institution, and, primarily at research-intensive institutions, potential gains to their own productivity (Eagan, Sharkness, Hurtado, Mosqueda, & Change, 2011). However, despite the prevalence of mentoring programs in STEM and the notion that faculty mentoring matters, it is unclear how faculty members view the factors that contribute to students' success, including their own role in student outcomes.

Data and Methods

The present study is derived from a larger research effort, funded by the National Science Foundation, which examines the experiences and perceptions of students and faculty mentors in math involved in the National Alliance for Doctoral Studies in the Mathematical Sciences. A qualitative approach was used for the present study in order to gain an understanding of key individuals' perspectives about the phenomenon of success in mathematical sciences (MS) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Merriam & Associates, 2002). Relying on an interpretive qualitative approach, the analyses were centered on "clarifying, explicating, or explaining the meaning of some phenomenon" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 158).

The National Alliance

The Alliance is a postsecondary recruitment and retention program which seeks to serve students in math, statistics, and biostatistics (hereafter "the mathematical sciences" or MS) in order to broaden participation of domestic students who are traditionally underrepresented in these fields

(i.e., women, racial and ethnic minorities, and students who do not have access to high-level math courses). The structure of the Alliance is based on a nationwide network of invested faculty members committed to underrepresented students' success in the mathematical sciences. These faculty members serve as mentors to students throughout the country who attend a variety of institutions. A main goal of the Alliance is to retain students through the completion of the doctorate through mentoring, "networking, and exposing students to information and opportunities they might not otherwise have.

Data Source

In Fall 2013, 370 Alliance faculty members were invited to participate in an online survey administered through Survey Gizmo. Faculty members were provided a unique URL so allow them to complete the survey over the course of multiple sessions, and were provided multiple reminders to do so. While the mentor survey asked a number of questions related to the Alliance program, the practice of mentoring, and climate and culture of math, this study focuses on four open-ended survey questions pertaining to reasons for students' success:

1. In your opinion, what makes a student successful in the mathematical sciences? Consider undergraduate and graduate students, and also attributes, experiences, and structures that make a student successful.
2. How, if at all, are the reasons for success different for underrepresented students?
3. In your opinion, why might a student not be successful in the mathematical sciences? Consider both individual and structural factors.
4. How, if at all, are the reasons for not being successful different for underrepresented students?

One hundred and thirty-three faculty mentors began the survey (36% response rate). For the present study, the data were then restricted to faculty who completed the survey, provided answers to the four survey questions listed above, and those who were faculty members in math, statistics, or biostatistics.[3] Table 1 summarizes the profile of the 60 faculty members who met the inclusion criteria for the study. The majority of mentor respondents from both data sources were White males working in mathematics or applied mathematics as full professors.

Participant responses to each question were independently coded through an open-coding strategy by three researchers, including the first two authors of this study. After open-coding thematic analysis was done in order to brainstorm potential themes, the data were then organized in order to generate key, recurrent themes that were suited for this research project. Through an iterative process, the research team discussed all discrepancies until a consensus was reached. This approach allowed the researchers to identify, categorize, and describe the common themes of interest across mentors' responses (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Each response could be coded in more than one way.

Student Success in Math

Analysis of the mentor data reveals salient themes in mentors' perspectives on what makes a student successful in math. Tables 2−5 display the codes of the faculty

[3] Some faculty members who responded to the survey were from other STEM fields, such as the natural sciences or computer science. Following the restriction of the data, no biostatistics faculty members were included in the final sample.

mentors responses for each of the four online survey questions. As a reminder, responses could be coded with more than one theme, and percentages shown reflect the appearance of themes across mentors' responses. Results are discussed in terms of the percent of respondents whose answers featured each theme. For ease of interpretation, the percent of codes for each identified theme is also provided. Given the qualitative nature of this study, quotes representing salient themes are also provided and discussed.

Reasons Students Succeed in Mathematical Sciences

When asked about reasons for all students' success in MS, respondents' answers were largely based on highly individualistic reasons, including a student's motivation and hard work (n = 29), management of failure (n = 16), innate ability (n = 14), and enjoyment of math (n = 10) (see Table 2). However, contextual factors were also deemed as important, including support from faculty and mentors (n = 26), research opportunities (n = 22), and financial support (n = 4). The citation of students' strong math background (n = 13) can be viewed as a manifestation of a student's past academic opportunities, thereby becoming an individual-level factor related to the context to students' secondary schooling.

A Latina mathematics professor from a doctoral/research university indicated "patience, practice (doing a lot of exercises), dedication, emotional stability, steel nerves" as what makes a student successful in the mathematical sciences, limiting their response to individualistic factors. Others emphasized students' innate abilities. A White male statistics professor at a doctoral/research university cited two reasons students are successful in MS: "(1) an innate, God-given ability to perform quantitative reasoning; (2) a strong work ethic." In this sense, only the second factor cited can be viewed as malleable, while the first factor is deemed fixed. Students' connection and favorable reaction to the subject of math itself was also cited:

In my opinion, to be successful the students first and foremost should like Mathematics, the style and the philosophy of rigor, reason, and logic. Various other abilities are crucial for success in Mathematics, including hard work, self-discipline, ability to communicate with peers and colleagues, and constant desire to learn.

This faculty member, a male associate professor in applied mathematics at a doctoral/research university, points to the nature of math and suggests that importantly, students love math for what the subject represents. In addition to the students' emotional reaction to MS, other individual attributes are their work ethic and interest in learning.

Contextual factors pertaining to all student success were cited less often, comprising approximately 25% of all codes. However, these factors highlighted important factors relating to student success, such as "a good foundation in mathematics at the high school level where they take as many advanced courses as possible; a mentor who encourages them and challenges and helps them with the mathematics," as indicated by a Black female assistant professor in mathematics at a doctoral/research university. A Black male professor in mathematics at a Master's-granting institution responded with "mentoring, good teaching, and good academic environment." Both of these responses and others pointed to the contextual factors that surround the student, creating opportunities and supportive environments allowing the student to succeed.

Not surprisingly, some responses incorporated both individual and contextual factors. For instance, a White male professor

in mathematics at a doctoral/research university described success as relating to:

Talent and work ethic. How hard a student works is the variable that they can control. This said, it is easier to work hard given a good support network. The most important thing here is a group of people who believe in the student, and support the student. Direct and frequent contact is key.

He pointed to individual-level factors that can be modified, as well as contextual factors, including the type and frequency of contact with a set of supportive individuals/contacts.

How Reasons for Success Differ for Underrepresented Students

Next, respondents were asked how, if at all, the reasons for success differ for underrepresented students. A third of faculty respondents did not view the reasons for success in math as different for underrepresented students (see Table 3). Nearly a quarter of the faculty cited mentoring, guidance, and encouragement. A number of the themes identified could be characterized as contextual factors pertaining to the institution, such as climate issues (n = 5), curricular and research opportunities (n = 5), peer and advisor relationships (n = 4), and financial support (n = 3). However, individual-level factors were also identified, including students' self-confidence (n = 3) and interest in math (n = 2). Similar to responses to the first survey question analyzed, some themes, such as pre-college preparation in math (n = 9) and college knowledge (n = 6) can be viewed as contextual factors manifested in individual students.

Some responses were multi-layered and insightful into the structural and contextual challenges that underrepresented students in MS face, including a lack of opportunities, climate related issues, and the resulting sense of belonging. A Black female assistant mathematics professor at a Baccalaureate-granting institution responded:

Underrepresented students are not typically afforded meaningful research opportunities in the mathematical sciences, especially those at PWIs [Predominately White Institutions]. Many of these students aren't attracted to the mathematical sciences because they don't feel as they 'belong' in the field. This may stem from the lack of visibility of underrepresented groups in the mathematical sciences.

Multiple faculty also indicated that underrepresented students might lack proper academic preparation, in both general and specific to math, as well as college-going knowledge due to being first-generation college students. A response from a White male mathematics professor at a doctoral/research university focused his response on underrepresented students from two specific groups:

African-American students in my university are very poorly prepared in their high schools and come into our college with atrocious math backgrounds. Hispanic/Latino students have a little bit better background but poor self-image regarding college (possibly as many are first-time college attenders in their family.)

This perspective points to socio-structural issues pertaining to historical educational inequities, as well as students' general success in college, not just in MS. A Black female assistant professor in mathematics at a doctoral/research university pointed to the lack of available courses that would prepare them to be successful in MS: "Many underrepresented students do not have access to more advanced courses in their high schools and even in their undergraduate institutions, like HBCUs [Historically Black Colleges and Universities]."

A White male department chair and associate mathematics professor at a

Master's-granting institution cited multiple reasons pertaining to context in the following detailed response:

Students from underrepresented groups often must overcome the factors that have led the groups to which they belong to be underrepresented in the first place. For example, for first-generation college students, the lack of familial experience in college may lead to a less robust support system and more uncertainty about one's ability to be successful in college. A student of low socioeconomic status may have received a substandard mathematical education in high school. Students from cultures that do not emphasize the importance of education may have fewer positive role models. In addition, students from underrepresented groups must often overcome the perceptions of their peers and even their faculty members, who may view them as less able. For these reasons, the quality of mentoring and support that a student from an underrepresented group receives may play a more significant role in their success than in the success of their majority peers.

His response is complex in that it simultaneously incorporates: 1) an understanding of the lasting impact of structural inequities in education and society; 2) deficit perspective in which underrepresented groups do not value the importance of education; and 3) a recognition that underrepresented students must navigate and overcome negative racial stereotypes. This response, while one of the more detailed answers received, points to faculty members' recognition of the multiple and often interacting factors that contribute to underrepresented students success in MS.

Reasons Students Do Not Succeed

In order to more deeply explore faculty perceptions around student success, the online survey also asked faculty reasons why students might not succeed in MS. The reasons cited for students not succeeding in MS appear also appear to be highly individualized (see Table 4), with the top two reasons cited as a lack of commitment and dedication (n = 26) and poor math preparation (n = 22). Other individual-level factors included life issues (n = 11), lack of interest in or love of math (n = 7), low confidence levels (n = 7), lack of intelligence (n = 13), and poor study skills (n = 3). Contextual factors were cited as contributing to why students may not be successful, including lack of support (n = 12), climate issues (n = 10), poor mentoring (n = 8), and structural issues (n = 7).

A White male associate professor in mathematics at a doctoral/research university indicated that students are not successful in MS due to "not having clearly defined goals, not working hard enough, poor choice of courses, not forming study groups or support networks." His response largely focuses on the individual, even placing the onus of creating a support network on the student. A White male mathematics professor at a doctoral/research university questioned student's innate ability prior to citing other individual-level reasons for not succeeding: "Assuming ability is there, the reasons include lack of persistence, lack of long-term goals, making poor personal decisions, change of interest." Similarly, a White male statistics professor at a doctoral/research university indicated "because the student is not sufficiently intelligent or sufficiently well-trained, or because they are not willing to work hard enough to succeed." Such answers ignore the structural or contextual factors that may shape students' outcomes in MS, and question students' intelligence or innate ability rather than question their educational opportunities.

Contextual factors were mentioned in less than a third of the coded responses,

suggesting that some faculty recognize the ways in which mathematics departments can influence students' success. For example, contextual factor included a "sink or swim environment; lack of peer support," as described by a White female mathematics professor at a Master's-granting institution. A Black female associate professor and department chair in applied mathematics at a Baccalaureate-granting institution spoke about the differential impact of the historical legacy of mathematics departments on underrepresented students, as well as individual characteristics that impact the chance of all student to survive.

I think mathematics departments are historically White patriarchal structures, so females and minorities are at a disadvantage when trying to succeed within this structure. I also think that it takes a certain kind of student -- confidence, persistence, dedication, determination--to step into this environment and develop their own survival structure/techniques to get ahead.

This faculty member is acutely aware of how the socio-historical context of mathematics departments impacts students, and may possibly reflecting on her own success as a Black female in the field. The mention of survival structure and techniques necessary for students to succeed emphasizes the need for the student to adopt to the environment they are in, versus seeing institutional transformation of the department, college, university, or even program.

Reasons Underrepresented Students Do Not Succeed

Finally, faculty were asked to indicate why underrepresented students might not be successful in MS (see Table 5). While over a quarter of respondents did not view any difference for underrepresented students, the reasons others cited included climate and feelings of isolation (n = 11), lack of social support (n = 9), lack of role models (n = 8), limited college knowledge (n = 7), poor math preparation (n = 6), and lack of financial support (n = 5). Five of the faculty indicated that the reasons for students not succeeding in MS were magnified for underrepresented students.

A lack of social support network through supportive mentors, role models, and peers, was frequently cited, and was often connected to underrepresented students' feelings of isolation. For instance, a White male assistant professor in mathematics at a Master's-granting institution indicated that underrepresented students might not succeed because "they may not identify themselves as often with others in their peer group or be more intimidated to seek out relationships with faculty members." Likewise, a Latino professor of mathematics at a doctoral/research university described the following scenario that explicitly links interpersonal relations with peers and faculty to students' sense of belonging:

If the minority student is the only one in a mathematics class, that student might be reluctant to ask questions for fear of being singled out. Minority students bring with them a culture to the university environment and this might cause a clash. Moreover, most mathematics faculty are not minority and minority students might find that the educational difference between themselves and the faculty is too wide to allow effective communication.

Although a number of the factors identified are what an individual student may be lacking, they are symptoms of larger issues, including a lack of diversity within MS departments.

During initial analyses of the data, comparisons were also made according to the Carnegie Classification of the faculty member's home institution (e.g., Doctoral/Research, Master's-granting,

Baccalaureate-granting).[4] Although the results suggested there was not much variability in the responses provided between faculty members working at the various types of institutions included in the study, this is not to suggest that context does not matter. Instead, the employing institution's mission or population of students they serve does not seem to have much effect on faculty perceptions of reasons for student success (or lack thereof). As evidenced in the data, context appears to matter more as it relates to climate issues and sources of support for students.

Discussion and Implications

Individual and contextual factors, often interwoven, appear throughout faculty members' responses as to why students, including underrepresented students, may or may not be successful in MS. Perhaps most interesting, while support from faculty and mentors are mentioned, their roles are discussed more in the form of advising and mentoring than in teaching math. *None* of the mentors talked about the importance of teaching or pedagogy during the students' postsecondary training, and the connection between teaching and student success was only discussed in terms of the student having (or lacking) a strong math preparation and background *prior* to beginning math at the postsecondary level. The faculty surveyed appeared to exhibit a "learned helplessness" where their lack of reflection on how their own curricula and pedagogy are entirely absent from reasons for students success (or failure) in MS. If faculty view their contributions to success primarily through mentoring, this perspective diminishes the importance of their role and responsibilities related to formal instruction, or even their role in students' success beyond their immediate department as student outcomes relate to larger institutional efforts (Kezar, Gehrke, & Elrod, 2015). Furthermore, the perception that academic-related factors that impact success are limited to pre-college math preparation also brings into question how faculty members view the purpose of collegiate instruction in MS.

While adequate pre-college math preparation is important, some faculty surveyed seemed to adhere to a "fixed mindset" whereby intelligence is viewed as unchanging, rather than a "growth mindset" whereby intelligence can be shaped through learning and practice (Dweck, 2006). This finding raises the question of the underlying reasons faculty members may have such beliefs. Faculty who *only* believe students with an innate ability to do math will be success may fail to recognize that students' academic success is a consequence of educational opportunities, structural influences, and socialization, as well as students' potential to learn. If the identification of innate ability as the lone reason for student success *and* if it solely a biologically-driven factor associated with a student's race, ethnicity, and/or gender, such perceptions may hinder efforts to change the diversity of these fields as a whole.

A number of the reasons cited for why underrepresented students do not succeed in MS can be addressed through program and policy adjustments, including forming formal support networks, increasing financial aid, and purposefully addressing departmental and institutional climate issues to facilitate students' sense of belonging. Other barriers to underrepresented students' success in MS, such as inadequate pre-college math preparation or increasing college-going knowledge among first-generation students and their parents, are beyond the purview of any single academic department, college, or

[4] Available upon request.

university. Factors such as a lack of college-going knowledge or lack of financial aid are likely to impact students' overall postsecondary success, not just their educational outcomes within MS.

Based on the role the faculty respondents have in the Alliance program, the finding that a third of the respondents indicated that the reasons for success do not differ for underrepresented students was surprising. In addition, only a quarter of the respondents cited mentoring, guidance, and encouragement as particularly important to underrepresented students' success. These responses were unexpected given the faculty members' involvement as mentors in a program designed to aid underrepresented students persist in MS through the completion of the doctorate. These faculty members may have adopted a neutral perspective due to a desire to be politically correct or adhering to a color-blind worldview, which limits their identification of factors pertaining to different groups of students' success. An alternative explanation is how the faculty view the Alliance program or their role within the program. Mentoring is a focus of the Alliance, but it also serves students through other means, including hosting an annual conference where students learn about short-term and long-term opportunities in MS, as well as career options in academia, industry, and government. Faculty may see their main role as not a mentor, but instead interacting with the Alliance program and the students it serves for recruiting students to their graduate programs. Additional interviews or focus groups could give insight into their motivations for serving as mentors while maintaining this neutral perspective, as well as identifying the multiple roles that faculty may serve and prioritize in their interactions with the Alliance program.

A number of the survey responses provided evidence of faculty's negative racial stereotypes. For instance, some responses suggested that racial and ethnic underrepresentation is equated with first-generation, low-income status, or not being academically prepared prior to entering college. While there may be a correlation between these statuses, the belief that racial and ethnic minority students are also low-income, the first in their family to attend college, or not having adequate preparation may be an incorrect assumption that alters how faculty perceive and subsequently treat the underrepresented students they are seeking to serve through the Alliance program. Likewise, the assertion that African Americans do not value education or results in a lack of positive role models are racial stereotypes which have been proven incorrect by past research (Anderson, 1988; Ceballo, 2004; Valencia, 2002). The juxtaposition of faculty members involved in a program attempting to broaden participation in the MS to traditionally underrepresented students with evidence of negative racial stereotypes points first to the lasting impact of such harmful beliefs, and second to the need to explore faculty perceptions in order to begin the process of identifying how such beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes may alter behaviors (including mentoring and teaching practices) towards underrepresented students from certain backgrounds. Faculty may benefit from targeted training efforts that challenges these stereotypes and increases their awareness of how such beliefs may alter their interactions with students.

How faculty members define and conceptualize success likely shaped their responses to the survey questions. Through analyses of other data gathered from approximately 45 Alliance mentors (in preparation), faculty members' views about general success in MS were largely centered on external measures of success, such as having a career in academia, conducting research, publishing, being recognized by

peers, securing grant funding, and having students who succeed academically. With regards to what success in MS means to them personally, these mentors' responses were more indicative of internal or intrinsic measures, including career satisfaction, helping others in math, making a contribution to their field, solving math problems, and mentoring. Other general signs of success, such as conducting research, were also cited as measures of personal views of success. However, this supplemental analysis provides insight on how they view success in general and within MS, rather than how they define success for their students.

In practice, university administrators and leaders of programs such as the Alliance should help faculty reflect on their own role in student success and on how their teaching practices, assumptions, and even stereotypes may impact student persistence or attrition in a program. While the faculty featured in this study are mentoring, and through these actions have signaled the importance of mentoring for students, not all faculty engage in the mentoring students. Additional inquiry is needed to determine how faculty not involved in mentoring programs or other outreach efforts view their role in facilitating student success.

To connect research to practice, researchers should educate math faculty about the multiple and complex factors that lead to student success to emphasize how structural issues, inequity, and lack of opportunities shifts the onus of success from the individual to a contextualized phenomenon. Intervention efforts should be considered by departments that want to improve retention and success for all math, statistics, and biostatistics students, as well as for those who are underrepresented in these fields. For example, a near-peer mentoring program where students mentor those in close approximation to their own status (i.e., seniors mentor juniors or graduate students mentor undergraduate seniors) can be developed to help address social and institutional factors related to success. Finally, faculty and departments may wish to examine the extent to which students are merely surviving their classes and program, versus thriving (Schreiner, 2010).

Limitations and Future Research

Given the population of focus, the generalizability of the findings is highly restricted, and may only reflect the perceptions of faculty members who serve as mentors in the Alliance who participated in the study. Although the results may not reflect the viewpoints of other faculty members in the mathematical sciences, those featured in this study were ideally suited given their involvement in the mentoring program, which suggested they have a vested interest in students' success. While the survey data gives insight into these individuals' beliefs about factors pertaining to student success in math, some of the responses to the open-ended survey questions were brief, resulting in limited insight.

A more targeted interview or focus group, focused on understanding more deeply how faculty define success (and how this definition may vary by sub-groups of interests, sub-disciplines, institutional contexts, faculty positions or titles, and faculty members' own educational and career trajectories) could yield deeper insight into how their own positions, employment contexts and personal histories may shape their perceptions about success. Future investigations could also incorporate other aspects of faculty perceptions or viewpoints, including faculty members' teaching philosophies, pedagogical practices, and epistemologies, with possible connections made between their views of success and their methods, theories, or approaches to teaching and learning. Related to this notion,

additional research should be conducted to investigate specifically why faculty mentors may not view their teaching or learning that occurs in college as critical to student success. The wording of our survey questions may have affected how faculty responded, and if asked explicitly how faculty members facilitate or effect student success, additional insight is likely to be gained.

Investigating faculty members' mindsets—specifically whether they exhibit a growth mindset, where knowledge and skills can be gained through hard work, or a fixed mindset, where knowledge and skills are innate (Dweck, 2006)—may shed additional light on faculty members' views of student learning as it relates to success, particularly in terms of how their own mindsets shape their views of success and barriers to success for different groups. Finally, a longitudinal study of faculty (or ideally graduate students who later enter the academy as faculty members) may bear witness to the processes by which faculty form their perceptions about success, as well as how those perceptions may change over time or be influenced by contextual factors such as their home institution's mission.

Conclusion

This study explored faculty's perspectives on student success into the high-demand fields of the mathematical sciences. Insight was gained in terms of how a group of faculty who are providing mentoring to underrepresented students in math view reasons of success for the very students they are serving. As efforts continue to broaden participation in STEM fields and specifically in math, statistics, and biostatistics, further explorations should investigate faculty members' views of collegiate teaching and its effect on student outcomes. A better understanding of how faculty members view their own role in facilitating student learning and student success will allow for more purposeful engagement and training of faculty in efforts to support students in the mathematical sciences.

Tables

Table 1

*Profile of Survey Respondents** (*n* = 60)

		N	%
Gender	Male	41	68.33%
	Female	19	31.67%
Race/Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	10	16.67%
	Asian	3	5.00%
	Black or African American	12	20.00%
	White	41	68.00%
	Other	1	1.67%
	Multiracial	4	6.67%
Disciplinary Affiliation	Mathematics	37	61.67%
	Applied Mathematics	22	36.67%
	Statistics	2	3.33%
Position	Assistant Professor	10	16.67%
	Associate Professor	14	23.33%
	Full Professor	34	57.00%
	Department Chair	7	12.00%
	Other (Center Director)	2	3.33%

**Note*. Total percentage may exceed 100% due to respondents self-identifying with more than one category.

Table 2

Reasons Students Succeed in the Mathematical Sciences, as Perceived by Faculty Mentors

	N	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Codes
Motivation and Hard Work	29	48%	19%
Support from Faculty and Mentors	26	43%	17%
Manage Failure Well/Perseverance	16	27%	10%
Innate Ability	14	23%	9%
Strong Math Background	13	22%	9%
Enjoy Math	10	17%	6%
Research Opportunities	8	13%	5%
Financial Support	4	7%	3%
Good Communication Skills	4	7%	3%
Willing to Ask Questions	2	3%	1%
Other	29	48%	19%
Total Number of Respondents	60		
Total Number of Codes	155		
Average Number of Codes per Response	2.6		

Table 3

Reasons Underrepresented Students Succeed in the Mathematical Sciences, as Perceived by Faculty Mentors

	N	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Codes
No Difference for Underrepresented Students	20	33%	22%
Mentorship, Guidance, Encouragement	14	23%	16%
Pre-College Preparation in Math	9	15%	10%
College Knowledge	6	10%	7%
Climate Issues/Sense of Belonging	5	8%	6%
Curricular and Research Opportunities	5	8%	6%
Strong Peer & Advisor Relationships	4	7%	4%
Self Confidence	3	5%	3%
Financial Support	3	5%	3%
Interest in Math	2	3%	2%
Academic Support	2	3%	2%
Effort	2	3%	2%
Fewer Family Obligations	2	3%	2%
Amount of Time Spent on Campus	1	2%	1%
Other	12	20%	13%
Total Number of Participants	60		
Total Number of Codes	90		
Average Number of Codes per Response	1.47		

Table 4

Reasons Students Do Not Succeed in the Mathematical Sciences, as Perceived by Faculty Mentors

	N	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Codes
Lack of Commitment and Dedication	26	43%	20%
Poor Math Preparation	22	37%	17%
Lack of Support	12	20%	9%
Life Issues	11	18%	9%
Climate Issues/Feelings of Isolation	10	17%	8%
Poor Mentoring	8	13%	6%
Structural Issues	7	12%	5%
Lack of Interest in or Love for Math	7	12%	5%
Low Confidence Levels	7	12%	5%
Lack of Intelligence	5	8%	4%
Poor Study Skills	3	5%	2%
Other	11	18%	9%
Total Number of Participants	60		
Total Number of Codes	129		
Average Number of Codes per Response	2.2		

Table 5

Reasons Underrepresented Students Do Not Succeed in the Mathematical Sciences, as Perceived by Faculty Mentors

	N	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Codes
No Difference for Underrepresented Students	17	28%	19%
Climate/Feelings of Isolation	11	18%	12%
Lack of Social Support	9	15%	10%
Lack of Role Models	8	13%	9%
Limited College Knowledge/First-Generation Status	7	12%	8%
Poor Math Preparation	6	10%	7%
Lack of Financial Support	5	8%	6%
Reasons for Departure Magnified for Underrepresented Students	5	8%	6%
Family Obligations	3	5%	3%
Discouraged from Pursuing Math	2	3%	2%
Too Challenging	1	2%	1%
Other	15	25%	17%
Total Number of Participants	60		
Total Number of Codes	89		
Average Number of Codes per Response	1.48		

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Casey E. George is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership, Evaluation and Organizational Development, University of Louisville.

Lisa Skultety is a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Randi Congleton is the Director of Multicultural Affairs, Chatham University.

The Use of Film as a Mid-Term Evaluation in a Multicultural Counseling Course *PRACTICE*

Carol Sommer · Eastern Kentucky University
Josh Elliott · Eastern Kentucky University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Carol Sommer, Department of Educational Leadership, Counselor Education, and Communication Disorders, Eastern Kentucky University, 521 Lancaster Ave., Richmond, KY 40475.
E-mail: carol.sommer@eku.edu

Abstract

Masters-level multicultural counseling students completed a midterm evaluation based on four films. The use of films as a means to share diverse cultures with students provides a rich opportunity to engage in personal reflection that might not otherwise be available for all students, especially those in small rural areas. Students collaborated in groups to demonstrate familiarity with concepts from class readings and to explore personal feelings and reactions to each film. Anecdotal evidence is presented regarding the usefulness of this exercise, along with suggestions for practice.

Keywords: multicultural counseling competency, counselor education, film-based pedagogy

The 21st century has seen exponential growth in the increasingly complex intersections of cultural identities. The field of counseling and counselor education has been at the forefront in addressing issues related to diversity for years (Arrendondo, Rosen, Rice, Perez, & Tomar-Gamero, 2005; Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2016; Roysircar, Arrendondo, Fuertes, Ponterotto, & Toporek, 2003; Roysircar, Sandhu, & Bibbins, 2003). Recent revisions to the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (MCC; Ratts et al., 2016) reflect the profession's commitment to the evolution of identity development. The Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) offer a framework to implement multicultural and social justice competencies into counseling theories, practices, and research (Ratts et al., 2016). This conceptual framework emphasizes the intersections of identities and the interplay of how power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship. Ratts et al. presented the following developmental domains in competency attainment: (1) counselor self-awareness, (2) client worldview, (3) counseling relationship, and (4) counseling and advocacy interventions. Within the first three developmental domains lie aspirational competencies that affect a counselor's ability to work effectively with diverse client, including attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, skills, and action (Ratts et al., 2016).

Pedagogical tools for developing multicultural sensitivity in counselors-in-training include traditional approaches such as lectures, discussions, and examinations based on reading assignments. Additionally, counselor educators have turned to more experiential activities including student reflections upon novels, films, and multicultural events. Although the use of film in multicultural counseling courses is not new, in most instances the activity has involved viewing one film and participating in guided discussion. We offer an example of using film that involves both a reflective component as well as a content comprehension evaluation to achieve progress towards the first two developmental domains, noted previously. In addition, in contrast to other examples provided in the literature, the assignment described in this article highlights the use of four films used concurrently to provide a greater depth of exposure to a wider range of multicultural

situations. Before describing this assignment in detail, it is important to review the current literature on the use of film in counselor education.

The Use of Films in Counseling and Counselor Education

Toman and Rak (2000) noted almost two decades ago, that "teaching-with-cinema literature is sparse" (p. 105); however, an increasing number of more current publications reflects the fact that films and other examples of cinematography are powerful learning tools. We grow up watching cartoons, movies, and television shows that teach us about various versions of life. There is also a plethora of documentary films that explain different paradigms of human existence. Wedding and Niemiec (2003) stated that films are an effective pedagogical tool in psychotherapy because they can introduce clients and their family members to mental disorders, provide them with deeper insights and understanding of their personality, and create meaningful therapeutic metaphors aligned with their experiences. They emphasized that "at best cinematherapy can be a major catalyst for change in psychotherapy; at the very least, it is a valuable tool and useful adjunct to treatment" (p. 214). Greene, Barden, Richardson, and Hall (2014) reported that "the use of experiential education is one pedagogical tool that has been supported in effectively connecting multicultural theory to practice, offering an avenue for students to challenge personal beliefs and behavior patterns, in both cognitive and affective domains" (p. 63). In films, actors set the stage for emotional reactions that create personal identification with the characters and their situations. Television shows also offer an opportunity for growth. Many viewers form unique relationships with TV characters and experience emotion and connection with them. In other words, people form relationships with television or film characters as if they are part of their story, which helps these individuals to imagine what it is like to be in the characters' situations and to understand what they are going through.

Over the years, several authors have offered compelling examples of the use of film in counselor education. We present a sampling of this literature that demonstrates varied applications. Koch and Dollarhide (2000) used the film *Good Will Hunting* as a teaching tool for counseling theories. They asked students to watch the film, discuss their reactions immediately after the movie, and then write a reaction paper. They used stimulus questions to help facilitate class discussions. Scholl, Gibson, Despres, and Boyarinova (2014) used the film *October Sky* to teach career counseling theories. They instructed students to watch the film and then write essay responses to stimulus questions. Films have also been used to illuminate concepts related to family systems. Hudock and Gallhager Warden (2001) used film in this regard and they stressed the attainment of perceptual, conceptual, and executive-level skills via conceptualizing the "fictional family" according to family systems perspective as seen in the 1994 film *When a Man Loves a Woman* (p. 117). These authors used five questions aimed at guiding students through the concepts of family systems. Similarly, Stinchfield (2006) suggested the film *Ordinary People* to demonstrate elements of family systems thinking. She described an approach wherein students viewed the film and then discussed specific questions that helped them examine family cohesion, flexibility, and communication. Stinchfield noted that her approach allowed the students to "interact with the material in an active manner that allows for application and discussion" (p. 127).

Films have also been used to illustrate issues connected to case conceptualization, diagnosis, and treatment. Wedding and Niemiec (2003) discussed the clinical use of various films in psychotherapy with a single client in conjunction with a client case presentation to describe the process and the outcome. Pearson (2006) presented the use of *The Hours* as an effective tool for teaching diagnosis related to mood disorders. Schwitzer, Boyce, Cody, Holman, and Stein (2005) advocated for the use of film and other media to represent popular characters in clinical supervision to provide practice cases for clinical assessment and treatment formulation. They suggested the character Scarlett O'Hara from *Gone with the Wind* as one example. Schwitzer et al. noted important reasons for using media characters for practice cases as their use can "reduce practitioner discomfort, increase familiarity and comprehension, provide intermediate experience for skill development, and enhance confidence" (p. 60). Although these authors noted the usefulness of this approach, they also suggested the need for supervisors to discuss the potential for some sources to "reinforce common stereotypes or inappropriate characterization" (p. 77).

At least two articles addressed the use of film to illustrate group theory. Armstrong and Berg (2005) presented a discussion based on their use of the film *12 Angry Men* to highlight issues related to group development and process illumination. They pointed to the value of this film for its demonstration of the intricacies of nonverbal behavior. Moe, Autry, Olson, and Johnson (2014) presented an experiential learning activity in which students were asked to identify and describe group work dynamics using the narrative of *The Great Debaters*. They noted that the film narrative illuminated the differences of group leadership styles and helped students with conceptualizing the process of group development.

Finally, and most relevant to the present article, authors have addressed the use of film in regard to multicultural counseling. Pierce and Wooloff (2012) offered a tripartite instructional approach for using movies, in conjunction with reading, self-assessments, and role-plays to teach identity development to graduate counseling students. Villalba and Redmond (2008) used the film *Crash* as an experiential learning activity in a multicultural counseling course. They used five questions to spur the discussion and five questions to evaluate the effectiveness of using *Crash* as a teaching tool to enhance multicultural understanding. Pieterse (2009) described the use of documentaries and films that addressed racism in a one-hour elective designed to educate graduate students in a counseling and development program about a variety of antiracism strategies. Sammons and Speight (2009) provided an interesting conclusion to this present discussion on the use of film. They described a study of the experiences of graduate students involved with multicultural counseling courses. They applied the open-ended critical incidents technique (CIT) by asking three questions via internet about graduate students' overall participation in a multicultural counseling class. The majority of 124 participants found that speakers, videos, and class discussions were the most helpful in learning the material (p. 817). These participants specifically noted that watching videos and films, as well as making class presentations, was an attribute of personal change (p. 829).

Most of the research presented above aligns with Hudock and Gallhager Warden's (2001) notation that the use of film-based assignments serves to "augment traditional methods and provides application and synthesis of knowledge" (p. 119). An added benefit of film-based activities is that various forms of media "can also aid in the retention of key concepts and bring interest, humor, and drama into the class" (Taub & Forney,

2004, p. 79). The extant literature clearly points to the usefulness of films in a variety of core CACREP areas of instruction. In the following pages, we offer a unique example of using four films as a mid-term evaluation point in a multicultural counseling course.

Using Film-Based Presentations as a Mid-Term Evaluation

The first author chose four films for this assignment based on their perceived potential to illuminate issues or constructs related to multicultural sensitivity. These films are described in detail below. Early in the semester, each student joined one of four groups based on the four films chosen for this project. A brief synopsis of each film follows. *Babel* (Iñárritu, Golin, Kilik, & Iñárritu, 2006) portrays the increasingly complex interactions that are unavoidable as our world transitions into a global community. Characters from the United States, Mexico, Japan, and Morocco become involved in a series of events based on misunderstanding and faulty communication that reflects some of the stereotypes, prejudices, and oppression that can impede our ability to interact with others in meaningful ways. *Crash* (Haggins et al., 2005) is set in contemporary Los Angeles and represents a portrayal of how Black, White, Latino, and Persian individuals interact with one another based on prejudices related to race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. *Defiance* (Zwick, Brugge, & Zwick, 2008) is based on the story of the Bielski brothers who assisted Jews in their escape from the Nazis in Eastern Europe during World War II. This film includes multiple opportunities to consider how race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, and class can impact human interaction. *Gran Torino* (Lorenz, Gerber, & Eastwood, 2008) depicts the story of a Korean War veteran's friendship with a Hmong teenage boy and his family. The movie portrays how Walt Kowalski's racist mentality is challenged by the growing relationship with the Hmong family offering opportunities to discuss stereotypes, sexism, violence, socioeconomic status, and ageism.

If students did not already have access to the films, they were directed to turn to any number of video-based businesses or local libraries. The class assignment required each student to watch all four films outside of class; however, small groups consisting of five students had to create a 40-minute presentation for one of the films. Specific requirements from the syllabus (Author, 2009) required each group to a) provide a meaningful summary of their film's plot, b) show evidence of collaboration in the presentation, and c) link the film to 15 specific constructs, models, or other information from the class text by Robinson-Wood (2009). Students were instructed to address the following points in preparing the presentations: a) ways in which your group members identified with the characters; b) ways in which your group members felt different than any of the characters; c) ways this film can help counselors understand people similar to the cultural/ethnic characters portrayed in the film; d) ways in which the characters experience prejudice or discrimination; and e) implications for counseling people from this cultural/ethnic group. Students were given 15 minutes at the end of each of five classes prior to the presentation to meet in small groups and discuss the presentations. Additional time outside of class was required for further group meetings and for viewing the films. Students were clearly informed that this assignment required a collaborative effort and that each member of the group would receive the same grade for this assessment point. Twenty-five percent of each student's grade was based on this mid-term evaluation. This assignment was concurrently utilized by the third author in a multicultural counseling

course taught in a CACREP-accredited program located in the Midwest.

Instructor and Student Reflections on Film-Based Mid-Term Evaluation

In the following paragraphs, we offer our synthesized reflections as educators using a film-based mid-term evaluation. Our thoughts are based on our in-class observations. As is evident in the following discussion, this assignment resulted in clear benefits to many students and it posed some challenges to both students and instructors.

Benefits of Film-based Mid-term Evaluation

Overall, each of the specific film groups in both classes offered a thoughtful summary of their chosen film including meaningful linkages to the assigned reading. We provide the following selected examples to illustrate the students' ability to relate the plot and characters of the four chosen films to contents discussed in class. Members of various film groups used their film to explain and review content such as A, B, and C dimensions of multiple-identity constructs; to comment upon and recognize examples of white privilege and white guilt; to acknowledge a heightened appreciation for the counseling implications with victims of trauma; to note glaring representations of both racism and racial micro-aggressions; and to explore film elements related to ethnocentrism, racial identity development, cultural racism, and cultural encapsulation. Students in each film group offered personal reflections of and reactions to the films including pointing to specific characters with whom they could or could not identify as well as identifying perceived stereotypical representations.

Students offered mostly positive reflections on this assignment. Although some indicated initial confusion about the assignment, many went on to describe how this activity helped them to view things differently. Invigorating in-class discussions focused on how movies can help one to see things in a new way. Students learned that films can be educational and not only for entertainment value. Each of the presenting groups appeared to be enthusiastically invested in helping the class at large to understand how they thought their film related to the material covered in the multicultural counseling course. Koch and Dollarhide (2000) offered a similar observation based on their use of *Good Will Hunting* to explore counseling theories. They reported that the incorporation of a film-based assignment was "energizing" and that the approach increased learning and rapport in the classroom (p. 204).

The use of films as an evaluative assignment provided a meaningful exercise that allowed students to examine different cultures in that the films presented specific situations, thoughts, events, and experiences. Students, as direct observers, experienced the events portrayed in each film as if it was happening in the present moment. Such immediate experience appeared to help facilitate the development of an emic perspective for most students. This experience provided students with a unique opportunity to understand or interpret the experiences of others through an insider's lens. The second author recalled being asked to read a novel during her master's-level multicultural counseling class and to reflect upon it in a similar manner to that described in the present assignment. Although that was a helpful experience, watching a film creates a more powerful connection because the ready-made images and the speed of interaction present a visual picture of the experience that is faster, richer, and deeper. On the other hand, the images and the experiences are so concretely prescribed that personal creative interpretation can be

limited. However, for the purpose of conveying a specific message or showing a unique plot, the particular images provided for the viewer of a film might be exactly what are required to help one comprehend a unique or novel situation. Thus, even though watching a film can limit a person's imagination, it offers a quick and easily comprehensible portrayal of multiple characters' experiences.

Challenges Inherent in Film-based Mid-term Evaluation

Although each of the film groups offered engaging and thoughtful presentations related to their specific films, this project also resulted in some challenges that merit attention. For example, the assignment required that each group include a minimum of 15 citations from the text to support their analysis of the film. All film groups used statistical data provided by Robinson-Wood (2009) that addressed demographical information about various ethnic and racial groups living in a specific area. One author wondered if this was because of the need to include this information or whether this type of information was simply easier to locate and integrate. Some of the film groups clearly used the class readings in their presentations to a greater advantage than did others; however, a few groups also used additional scholarly material and other resources to provide even more information for their classmates than was required by the assignment.

Another challenge occurred in both classes that related to logistical issues connected to time. Some students expressed concern about the amount of time required to complete this assignment even though students were allowed small portions of time in class to connect with group members. Additionally, each class throughout the semester ended approximately 30 minutes early to allow students extra time over the course of the semester to complete this assignment (and other required experiential activities). As the mid-term point for the film-based presentations approached, some group members worried that they would not be able to fill the 40-minute time slot designated for each group. However, during the presentations, it seemed difficult for most groups to complete their presentations within that time frame as they had much material they wished to share with the class. More than one student comment from the course evaluations noted that students wished there was more class time devoted to discussion of the presentations. This perspective is in accord with Villalba and Redmond's (2008) study of using *Crash* in a multicultural counseling course. All the participants of their study indicated the need for sufficient time to discuss the "exploratory and challenging nature" of the film (p. 272).

In addition to the more pragmatic issues such as the appropriate use of the text and time management, other concerns related to more individually personal situations. Villalba and Redmond (2008) noted that experiential learning activities, such as watching films, can challenge students' perceptions about themselves and others. Moreover, watching films can influence their current self-awareness and clinical skills. All these changes and challenges can sometimes evoke negative reactions and defensiveness. Arthur and Achenbach (2002) similarly posed that although experiential activities provide an opportunity for a transformational process, they also can involve some psychological risks (p. 4). We saw this come into play when a student approached the first author outside of class and expressed deep concern regarding the manner in which a particular character was portrayed in the film her group reviewed. She emphasized that the film represented this character and the character's culture in a stereotypical manner. Although the author met with this student

multiple times to discuss the student's reactions to the film and to her experience in her film group, the student remained troubled by her involvement with her group and was not able to experience the film in an objective manner. We concur with others (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Villalba & Redmond, 2008) who noted that careful attention should be given to the process of using films as an experiential teaching tool.

Suggestions for Using Film-Based Presentations for Evaluation

Malott (2010) stressed the need for incorporating video into multicultural counseling courses to provide a variety of pedagogical practices and to expose students to diverse populations. We have described a mid-term evaluation for a multicultural counseling course that uses four contemporary films as the basis for group presentations in which students are required to demonstrate familiarity with contents from the class readings as well as to offer personal reflections of and reactions to the films. As the authors considered their own reflections upon this assignment, it was apparent that this experience was both beneficial as well as challenging. We would like to offer the following suggestions for practice to counselor educators who may choose to use a similar assignment in an effort to enhance the benefits and reduce the challenges related to this project.

Which films are selected and how they are watched merits attention. The safest path would be to encourage educators to select films that are non-controversial or that avoid stereotypical representations of characters. However, it is just these controversial films that question stereotypes or illuminate prejudicial behaviors that offer rich material for personal reflections and discussions related to multicultural competency. The four films chosen for this mid-term evaluation offered multiple opportunities for discussing complex multicultural concerns; however, many other films could also be utilized. Please see the *Appendix A* for a list of potential films and their associated themes. In an effort to facilitate student interest in this project, educators could include an open class discussion in which students offer suggestions for films to be viewed. The main point is that the films represent a range of diverse cultures and a variety of interactions. We also believe that the use of multiple films within a single course increases the richness and depth of diverse experiences and more accurately represents the complexity of experience in the 21st century. Exposure to such varied scenes, settings, and interactions can help counselors-in-training to comprehend the concepts inherent in a multicultural counseling course and as Tyler and Guth (1999) suggested, to develop a "better understanding of the limits of their own experiences and the far-reaching impact of their own cultural biases on their interpretation of the world" (p. 157).

Consideration for how films are watched is also important. None of the student groups watched the movies together; rather, each member watched the designated film alone and then group members met and discussed reactions to the films. Although it would be challenging to arrange multiple schedules to allow the entire film group to watch the film at the same time, we are curious if the benefits might outweigh the challenges. For instance, here-and-now remarks and impromptu thoughts offered aloud might spark meaningful conversations about the film while it is still fresh in students' minds. This immediacy could yield a deeper layer of interaction among group members.

Including everything an educator deems important and relevant to multicultural competence within the contents of a one-semester course is a daunting task to. Although multicultural content is supposed to be infused throughout a program's

curriculum, there are still multiple key elements that students would benefit from discussing within the context of a multicultural class. Asking educators to cut back on some content in order to allow more time for experiential activities might seem counter-intuitive; yet, for activities such as the one described in this article to be as successful as possible, it is essential that there is ample time to fully discuss each film and its corresponding group members' reactions to it. There must also be time allowed for the class as a whole to discuss each film presentation. The value of this dialogical process is worth the investment of time on the part of educators and students. Another issue related to time concerns the format of the semester in which this type of project is assigned. In this instance, the use of films described here served as a mid-semester evaluation during a 15-week semester. For classes offered within a shorter time, educators must carefully consider when students would have enough of an introduction to basic multicultural concepts to form a meaningful frame from which to examine the films. Using films as final semester evaluation might be a more relevant approach in this instance.

Counselor educators would benefit from clearly explaining the purpose of the assignment and the ways in which students might respond as they watch films that can include, at times, disturbing elements. As mentioned earlier, some students were troubled by the particular film viewed by their group as well as their group members' and class members' reactions to it. Although the syllabi for both classes described in this article noted that the course would cover challenging topics to which students might have intense personal reactions, it is advisable to include a more detailed caveat and offer suggestions for students in distress prior to engaging in experiential activities such as the one described here. There is a likelihood that some students either will not like or will be emotionally upset by certain aspects of any film selected for such an assignment. This occurrence could be an excellent opportunity for a trainee to become aware of his or her need to address difficult personal issues. Hudock and Warden (2001) also noted this tendency and suggested that countertransference issues in movie analysis is not so much a disadvantage to the modality as a factor that must be taken into consideration by instructors who wish to use this emotionally stimulating approach to training. The emotional involvement fostered by the viewing of films is an opportunity for trainees to become aware of affect, experience empathy, and label personal feelings that might otherwise show up as countertransference issues in the therapy setting. Stinchfield (2006) made a similar point noting that because "films present emotionally charged scenes" educators should be mindful that films could trigger memories of past personal life experiences (p. 124).

The purpose of this assignment was twofold: first, to serve as an indication that students understood core concepts from the assigned readings, and second, to allow students to reflect upon and examine their personal values and beliefs in relation to the stories presented in the films. Both aspects of this assignment should be equally valued. Although students offered meaningful personal reflections, at times, it seemed that some of the student groups were more focused on including the required number of citations rather than focusing on the deeper meaning of the material that was being cited. Educators should take care to provide a means of evaluating whether or not students have sufficiently addressed the requirement of relating the films to the class readings without focusing on the number of citations. If a specific number of citations are required, the assignment should clearly explain that

students must use each citation in a meaningful way to demonstrate sufficient understanding.

Finally, educators might look at other creative means of utilizing films. For instance, students could be encouraged to develop a treatment plan for a chosen movie character or population. Students could also be asked to compile a local referral guide that would include information relevant for the characters in their group's film. We agree with Hudock and Warden (2001) that "movie assignments are challenging, versatile, and often fun; they motivate trainees to learn and enable instructors to be creative" (p. 118). Perhaps we would choose to emphasize that the need for creativity on the part of the educator using this approach is paramount. Careful planning and attention to detail, as well as a mindful sense of respect for immediacy and the reflective elements of learning, are essential.

Final Thoughts

Based on the literature cited throughout this article, as well as the reflections of the authors and students involved in this activity, we believe that the use of films as a means of evaluating content comprehension of multicultural concepts and enhancing opportunities for personal reflection is worthy of further investigation. It would be challenging to isolate the development of multicultural competency in relationship to an assignment such as the one described here from exposure to a multicultural counseling class as a whole. Therefore, qualitative investigations of student experiences related to a film-based mid-term evaluation could provide the most meaningful information about the usefulness of this approach. Future research could be directed at an exploratory qualitative investigation of how counselor educators make choices about which activities to include in a multicultural course. Perhaps meaningful perspectives would emerge that could inform counselor educators how to allot time for creative reflective practices that can increase the multicultural competency of counselors-in-training. Films and other visual media are an integral element of our 21st century culture. They often include complex and thought-provoking material that lends itself to discussions that are highly relevant to multicultural counseling competency. Ongoing exploration into the usefulness of films in this respect is a worthy of continued investigation.

Appendix

	Appendix A	
	Cinematic Films	
Film Title (Year)	**Summary**	**Key Issues**
12 Years a Slave (2013)	Solomon Northup, a free Black man from New York, is kidnapped and sold into slavery in the pre-Civil War era.	Racism, Historical Oppression

	Appendix A	
American History X (1999)	Story of a neo-Nazi who goes to prison after killing two Black youths who tried to steal his car. He struggles with his own prejudices but hopes to change his ways.	Racism, White Identity Development, Biases, Poverty, Criminality
Boys Don't Cry (2000)	Dramatic film that depicts the life and tragedy of Brandon Teena, a murdered trans male from Humboldt, Nebraska.	Gender, Sexuality, Transgenderism, Transphobia, Discrimination
Brokeback Mountain (2005)	An American neo-western romantic drama film that details the strained romantic relationship of two mountaineer men.	Gender, Sexuality, Heterosexism, Internalized Homophobia,
Circumstance (2011)	A wealthy Iranian family struggles to contain a teenager's growing sexual rebellion and her brother's dangerous obsession.	Iranian Culture, Sexuality, Gender, Islamophobia, Religion, LGBTQ, Intersectionality
Dear White People (2014)	A social satire that follows the stories of four Black students at an Ivy League college where controversy breaks out over a popular but offensive black-face party thrown by White students.	Racism, Biracialism, White Privilege, Intersectionality, Prejudices
District 9 (2009)	An extraterrestrial race forced to live in slum-like conditions on Earth suddenly finds a kindred spirit in a government agent who is exposed to their biotechnology.	Exclusion, Refugees, Equality, Displacement, Biases, Discrimination, Privilege
For Colored Girls (2010)	Based on Ntozake Shange's play "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf." Characters depict poems that provide a thought-provoking commentary on what it means	African American Culture, Gender, Feminism, Intersectionality, Colorism

	Appendix A	
	to be a female of color in the world.	
Fruitvale Station (2013)	The film provides a dramatic depiction of the Oscar Grant's last day alive before being killed by a BART Metro officer in 2009.	Police Brutality, Racism, Discrimination, African American Culture, Poverty
McFardlan, USA (2015)	A struggling coach and teacher who has had to move around for different incidents in his career finally comes to one of the poorest cities in America: McFarland, California. There he discovers buried potential in several high school boys and slowly turns them into championship runners and brings them closer than even he could ever imagine.	African American Culture, Poverty, Educational Disparity
Milk (2008)	The story of Harvey Milk, California's first openly gay elected official, and his struggles as an American gay activist.	LGBTQ Issues, Gender, Sexuality, Equality, Discrimination
North Country (2005)	A fictionalized account of the Jenson vs. Eleventh Mines case, where a woman who endured a range of abuse while working as a miner filed and won the landmark 1984 lawsuit.	Gender, Feminism, Equality, Discrimination
The Other Sister (1999)	The story of a young woman with an intellectual disability as she seeks independence by procuring her own apartment and attending college.	Intellectual Disabilities, Feminism, Equity,

	Appendix A	
Pariah (2011)	An American art drama film that depicts a 17-year-old African American embracing her identity as a lesbian.	African American Culture, LGBTQ Issues, Feminism, Gender Roles, Intersectionality
Precious (2009)	In New York City's Harlem circa 1987, an overweight, abused, illiterate teen who is pregnant with her second child is invited to enroll in an alternative school in hopes that her life can head in a new direction.	African American Culture, Race Relations, Educational Disparity, Abuse, Feminism
Selma (2014)	This film chronicles Martin Luther King's campaign to secure equal voting rights via a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in 1965.	African American Culture, Racism, Civil Rights, Discrimination, Equality
Slumdog Millionaire (2009)	A British dramatic film that depicts a Mumbai teen reflecting on his upbringing in the slums.	Indian Culture, Poverty
Something New (2006)	The story of a successful African-American CPA and her relationship with a White architectural landscaper.	African American Culture, Race Relations, Interracial Relationships, Intersectionality
Steel Toes (2006)	The story of a Jewish lawyer who represents a neo-Nazi on trial for the racially motivated murder of an East Indian immigrant.	Race Relations, Racism, Religious Intolerance, Discrimination, Criminality
TransAmerica (2005)	A pre-operative male-to-female transgender takes an unexpected journey when she learns that she fathered a son, now a teenage runaway hustling on the streets of New York.	LBTQ Issues, Transgenderism, Gender Roles, Coming Out
The Visitor (2007)	The story of a widowed Professor who finds a Syrian	Immigration, Economic Injustice, Race, Class

	Appendix A	
	and Senegalese immigrant living in his apartment.	
	Documentary Films	
Dark Girls (2011)	Documentary exploring the deep-seated biases and attitudes about skin color---particularly dark skinned women, outside of and within the Black American culture.	African American Culture, Feminism, Gender, Colorism, Intersectionality
Harvest of Empire (2012)	A powerful documentary that exposes the direct connection between the long history of U.S. intervention in Latin America and the current immigration crisis.	Latino Culture, Immigration
Out in the Night (2014)	In a gay-friendly neighborhood of New York City, four young African-American lesbians are violently and sexually threatened by a man on the street. They defend themselves against him and are charged and convicted in the courts and in the media as a 'Gang of Killer Lesbians'.	LGBTQ Issues, Feminism, African American Culture, Intersectionality, Criminality, Minority Stress
Southern Comfort (2001)	The film documents the experiences of Robert Eads, a transgender man diagnosed with ovarian cancer.	Gender, Transgenderism, Sexuality, Poverty, Regionalism, Intersectionality
The Year We Thought about Love (2015)	Members of a Boston-based, LGBTQ youth theater troupe use their personal struggles as a basis to create theater for social change.	Gender, Sexuality, Minority Stress, LGBTQ Issues, Transgenderism, Intersectionality

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Carol Sommer is a Professor and Doctoral Program Director for the Educational Leadership & Counselor Education Department, Eastern Kentucky University.

Josh Elliott is a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership & Counselor Education Department, Eastern Kentucky University.

Multiple Modalities: Renovating the Basic Course Through an Enhanced Blended Redesign *PRACTICE*

Michael G. Strawser · Bellarmine University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Michael G. Strawser, School of Communication, Bellarmine University, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205.E-mail: mstrawser@bellarmine.edu

Abstract

This essay presents a general overview of a blended basic course at a large Southeastern university and discusses rationale, course design, and lessons learned. Ultimately, this essay should serve as an encouragement to instructors to creatively reach unreached students and create an atmosphere of accessible communication instruction in the basic course.

Keywords: course design, blended courses, basic communication course, communication

College instructors face a challenging task today in making curricula both accessible and relevant to 21st century learners. For example, learners face significant time and space constraints as they attempt to balance jobs, families, and classes (Allen & Seaman, 2014; Reed & Sork, 2009). In addition, the rising costs of higher education deter some students from pursuing a degree (Barber, Donnelly, & Rizvi, 2013). Accessibility and financial limitations are not our only challenges. Students today also expect andragogy to be relevant and practical (Moore, 2007). To remain viable, universities must identify new ways to instruct students through innovative pedagogy and course modality.

Blended learning, which includes courses that strategically integrate online with face-to-face instruction, is uniquely suited to combine the benefits of the traditional classroom with the flexibility reserved for online courses. As students become increasingly inaccessible in terms of time and financial flexibility, blended learning can reach students with unique learning styles through experiential learning and purposeful activities, capturing the strengths of both traditional and online learning environments. As a means of debriefing a blended experience for other basic course instructors, this essay will explore a blended renovation of the basic course.

Today, in a world where learners want to go beyond content comprehension, blended learning offers several instructional benefits. For example, blended learning presents an opportunity for unique content application that combines the strengths of online and onsite modalities (Jones, 2012; Stein & Graham, 2014). The unique capabilities of blended course design can address pedagogical challenges of the basic course, which like most general education, the basic course is transitioning to address the needs of the 21st century student.

Distance modalities are firmly situated in general education as well as the discipline of communication. The modalities for basic courses include traditional, interactive via cable, online, and blended learning (Morreale, Myers, Backlund, & Simonds, 2016). Currently, only 28.7% of four-year schools (57.1% of two-year schools) use a blended/hybrid format for basic course instruction (Morreale et al., 2016). While blended instruction in the basic course is more wide spread than fully online courses, it has yet to break through fully.

As such, the 21st century classroom presents an opportunity for purposeful reevaluation of basic course content and

modality. Basic course delivery, like other delivery of formal education, has consistently transitioned to fit the times. As a result of administrative and instructional recommendations, the basic course offered via distance modalities is expanding. Distance delivery of the basic course is expected to continue to grow as administrative and economic pressures increase. Therefore, basic course instructors need to design distance-learning sections that are comparable to face-to-face offerings.

Regardless of the modality used, the discipline of communication and communication instruction are both critical components of student development (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). Because communication education is so important to general education and student success, research should be conducted that positions the basic course as a pedagogical model, an exemplar for distance learning and overall communication instruction. Additionally, the basic course should be adapted because of new student demographics and the growth of online communication (Kirkwood, Gutgold, & Manley, 2011). Students are not one-dimensional communicators and scholars should continue to explore distance delivery systems for the basic course (Goodnight & Wallace, 2005; Valenzano, Wallace, & Morreale, 2014).

Description

In Fall 2011, a large Southeastern university renovated the basic course. Specifically, the basic oral communication course and basic writing course were combined to create the basic composition and communication two-course sequence for general education. Within this two-course sequence, the first course became known as Composition and Communication I (CIS/WRD 110) and focused on the fundamentals of integrated oral, written, and visual skills. Composition and Communication II (CIS/WRD 111) is the second course in the sequence. The course is designed to engage students in composing and communicating ideas using all facets of multimodal communication. Students work in small groups to explore issues of public concern. In Fall 2015, faculty members received internal funding to develop a blended version of Composition and Communication II. The course was redesigned because the revision aligned with university goals and presented an opportunity to increase student retention and overall student success.

There were three goals for redesign: increase blended-learning options for university students, provide quality instruction utilizing tools that manage human and physical space resources more efficiently, and create a pedagogically sound blended model that is generalizable to other high volume multi-section courses across the university and similar institutions. The blended modality challenges instructors to maximize face-to-face meetings through experiential learning and encourages students to take ownership of their learning during online components. The hope was that through the redesign of the basic course instructors could use technological resources to provide quality and cost-effective instruction to a large number of students.

Composition and Communication II (i.e., CIS 111) is designed to highlight multimodal communication. In this course, students work in small groups to explore issues of public concern using rhetorical analysis, engage in deliberation, compose conscientious and well-developed arguments, and propose viable solutions to different audiences. Ultimately, students sharpen their ability to conduct research; compose and communicate in spoken, written, and visual forms; and work effectively in teams through sustained interrogation of an issue. A significant

component of the class involves learning to use visual and digital resources to enhance written and oral presentations and to communicate with public audiences. Such a course seemed ideal for a pilot redesign towards a blended model.

Innovative course design was accomplished through various measures. For instance, one important learning outcome of CIS 111 is to teach students to work effectively in high performance teams. One recurring challenge in the face-to-face modality is providing students adequate time to engage in meaningful group work that affords instructors the opportunity to provide feedback and allows for the time necessary to cover course content. A blended version of this course provided opportunities to integrate technology for online monitored group work and content delivery.

Every week students met online during one course session, one day students met face-to-face and, finally, one day students met through a virtual meeting space. Assignments were explained online and student questions were answered during face-to-face meetings. Additionally, the face-to-face class time was largely focused on experiential learning and hands-on activities. By removing content delivery from the face-to-face setting, in-person class time focused on practicing oral communication, presenting speeches, and peer review for written communication.

Students engaged with each other, and the content, virtually and in face-to-face settings. The course and institution had already relied on Blackboard as its preferred Learning Management System, providing a means for online management familiar to instructors and students. Blackboard provided a contained, online interface for document delivery, assignment submission, discussion, and grade recording. However, a blended course design should go beyond purely online and offline environments. To accomplish a virtual, synchronous experience, instructors used Adobe Connect to create group meeting rooms where students could control the layout and function of their learning space. Students were able to videoconference with other group members as well as the instructor and IT support. The class could meet as a whole or split into smaller, separate rooms for group work.

Adobe Connect, a web-based conferencing software, allowed for textual, chat-based interaction as well as live visual and voice interaction amongst students and the instructor. The use of the Adobe Connect software also presented an opportunity for students to collaborate virtually. Connect, which is entirely Adobe Flash based, allows for desktop sharing and substantial synchronous online interaction (however, there is also asynchronous presentation opportunity). Instructors can use Adobe Connect to deliver engaging video, audio, and substantial interactive content. Connect is commonly used, at other institutions as well, to host interactive online lectures, supervised and unsupervised group activity, virtual office hours and as well as online tutoring. If institutions are so inclined, guest hosts can also join and engage via Adobe Connect. Students can also use persistent rooms independently as an informal meeting space or for group projects. Google Docs was also used to promote peer review and simultaneous collaboration, many times alongside Adobe Connect meetings, while the journal feature in Blackboard provided a platform for capturing student-faculty engagement.

After completing various assessment measures (including a pre and post-test comparison, grade norming of student speech and essay deliverables, etc.), we did find that student learning was equitable across blended and face-to-face formats. In terms of student engagement, Adobe Connect allowed for several opportunities. As the semester

progressed, Adobe Connect was used extensively for synchronous meeting sessions. Although there were challenges, the level of student engagement while using Adobe Connect during the synchronous meeting time was a success as students were present and active in class discussion. After the first 6 weeks of the course, Adobe Connect largely became a technical "non-issue" for most of the students. Additionally, students used Adobe Connect for virtual meetings with each other and with their instructors in some cases.

Actual retention numbers have yet to be reported. While none of the instructors who piloted the program reported greater than normal attrition in these classes (and in fact, lower than what would be expected in a straight online class), day-to-day attendance was an issue in many of the sections. We know that if students do not come to class, their overall success in the class may be lower. We hypothesize that part of the reason for lower attendance is that students felt like the F2F or synchronous sections were not crucial to course information.

Debrief

The blended course redesign was not without challenges. For many of the purposes of the blended redesign Adobe Connect functioned effectively. Instructors and students used features including *Share My Screen, Breakout Rooms,* and the *Chat Pod*. Instructors used *Share My Screen* specifically to share PowerPoint files and their desktop. Because of the large group component in CIS 111, *Breakout Rooms* were extremely helpful in creating a space for collaboration. The majority of student-to-student conferencing was conducted within the *Breakout Rooms*. The *Chat Pod* functioned as a reliable method of communication if technical problems occurred.

Despite success with many of the Adobe Connect features, the main technical limitation occurred in *Breakout Rooms*. Students were often "booted" from their *Breakout Room* and then automatically reassigned. Our in house instructional technology team met with students to problem solve, but unfortunately, many students were still impacted. Additionally, the performance in the Adobe Connect room slowed down if the entire class was using video and audio conferencing within *Breakout Rooms*. Finally, the instructor's computer would occasionally force Adobe Connect to shut down if the screen sharing mechanism was used for a long period.

Adobe Connect *Breakout Rooms* did present some issues but we also noticed challenges with the technology infrastructure and bandwidth. For example, when multiple students shared their webcams at the same time, the bandwidth was used up quickly, resulting in a poor connection. The poor connection caused some students to be booted from the course. With the right technological infrastructure, this could be overcome. These issues highlight the importance and necessity of tech support.

Beyond technological hurdles, the blended course, especially the Adobe Connect sessions, revealed the differing understandings of appropriate online decorum. Students tried various locations for Adobe Connect sessions, recognizing some locations worked better than others did. Libraries, coffee shops, dorm rooms, common rooms, to name a few provided varied settings within which students would attend class. Background noise, poor Wi-Fi, or distracting environmental elements introduced an unexpected learning curve into Adobe Connect sessions.

Technology use presented issues, but faculty and faculty development also presented consistent problems. Some instructors, despite training efforts, struggled

to define clearly what a "blended" course should include. In the future, training sessions to address course outcomes, best practices, meeting sessions, and class structure may be helpful. Additionally, some students, despite communication from advisors, did not know they were enrolling in a blended course. This misconception obviously causes confusion for both the faculty member and student. Upon registration, students should be informed of classroom delivery expectations and requirements. While such scheduling proved problematic for students unaware of the blended design, other students praised such a design, allowing for labs or off-campus jobs on online class days, or for off-campus attendance during Adobe Connect sessions.

Appraisal

The hybrid/blended model of CIS 111 was beneficial. First, instructors were able to utilize technology in a manner that provided quality cost-effective instruction to a large number of students. Second, although the retention numbers have not been analyzed, retention rates of our first and second year students may improve and time to degree to decrease. Third, this new modality provided our institution with an opportunity to serve more students using fewer resources and provide a model of effective hybrid delivery of large-volume multi-section courses.

Originally, the goal was to make all of our sections for the second basic course sequence blended, however, after completing this redesign we have found 1) not all instructors do well teaching in this format and 2) more importantly, not all students do well learning in this environment. With the ultimate goal of reaching as many students as possible – having a variety of formats is key. However, programs and departments looking to implement blended learning should remain focused on student learning outcomes and course goals, as well as clear and consistent course delivery. Not only do students need to know at the outset that they are registered in a blended (or online) course, but also expectations including meeting times, days, and formats should be clear. Further, while the instructors became more comfortable with course technologies as the semester progressed, they benefited from the involvement of Instructional Technology support in the planning and delivery of the course redesign. Such a redesign, whether to a blended or online format, should not require instructors to become or replace instructional technology's role.

When referencing the hybrid modality in evaluations, students had positive responses. For example, one student said, "*I've really enjoyed that we do a lot of online activities and have a diverse meeting style. I think learning how to communicate equally in person as well as online is so useful for the world today."* Another student indicated that he/she *"wasn't sure if I would like/enjoy having a hybrid [blended] course, however I love the freedom of class time and that I only have to meet in a classroom once a week."* Many students discussed the fact that they "*really enjoyed the flexibility of the class*." Others who participated in the blended basic course redesign echoed these sentiments.

Conclusion

The 21st century educational environment is ripe with opportunities for innovative pedagogy. The basic communication course, referred to by Beebe (2013) as the front porch of the communication discipline, is no exception. Instructors can use blended and online modalities as a Launchpad to explain communication content, build communication affect, and boost student acumen for communication skills. As a pillar of general education and the communication

discipline, basic course blended design may serve as a pioneer for 21st century communication education. It is imperative that flexible modalities are used and assessed in the basic course as a means to propel our discipline and reach a unique segment of the student body.

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Michael G. Strawser is an Assistant Professor and Director of Graduate Programs, School of Communication, Bellarmine University.

Finding Opportunities Outside the Academy to Enhance Student Learning: A Paper on Practice *PRACTICE*

Rebecca Fredrickson · Texas Woman's University
Karen Dunlap · Texas Woman's University
Sarah K. McMahan · Texas Woman's University
Amanda Hurlbut · Texas Woman's University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Rebecca Fredrickson, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX, 76204. E-mail: rfredrickson@twu.edu

Abstract

A recent trend in higher education is the concept of giving authentic experiences to students. A report in the Washington Post found that college graduates were greatly lacking necessary career readiness skills including decision-making, prioritization, time management, and problem solving (Selingo, 2015) needed for entry into the professional job market. Additional research noted students often have difficulty bridging theory to practice and transferring skills from one situation to another (Gordon, 2007). This paper highlights the work of one southwestern university Teacher Education program as they addressed such concerns. Program faculty looked for opportunities to utilize pedagogical expertise outside the academy walls as they guide preservice teacher educational skill development during the transition from collegiate classroom to their own K-12 classrooms. This resulted in faculty implementation of experiential learning activities within the standard teacher education curriculum. At this university, experiential learning activities have fallen into three primary focus areas: service learning, post-graduation continuing education, and opportunities for faculty research mentoring.

Keywords: experiential learning, theory to practice, problem solving

The literature targeting the need for university students to have "real world" work experiences is plentiful. A report by High Fliers Research in 2013 cited it was exceptionally important for college graduates to have additional experience outside the university classroom (Baker, 2013). Teaching at the collegiate level has often been done only in a lecture type format (Hanford, 2018), which is contrary to the way many people learn due to its passive nature. One of the most recent trends in higher education is the concept of facilitating authentic experiences for students. Collegiate students often may do well in a university setting but have trouble bridging theory to practice when asked to implement skills in the workplace. A 2015 report in the *Washington Post* found that college graduates were greatly lacking necessary skills for the workplace including decision-making, prioritization, time management, and problem solving (Selingo, 2015). Additionally, many college graduates were found to be missing the vital socio-emotional skills that are necessary for success in the workplace (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

This paper on practice highlights the work of a southern university's Teacher Education program in seeking methods to combat some of these concerns. Program faculty have looked for opportunities to utilize pedagogical expertise outside the academy walls as they guide preservice teacher development in 21st century pedagogy, career readiness, and socio-emotional skills during the transition from collegiate classroom to their own K-12 classrooms. In seeking these opportunists, the faculty implemented experiential learning activities within the standard teacher education curriculum.

The concept of experiential learning draws upon the work of John Dewey in the context of human development. Dewey (1987) noted that "Education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience" (p. 76). According to scholars, experiential learning has been

demonstrated to be effective in helping learners make authentic connections and improvement in the quality of their work after leaving the university program (Kolb et al., 2000). Experiential learning involves invested learning experiences on behalf of the student. In addition, an experiential focus has been shown to help students develop socio-emotional skills necessary for success in the workplace (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

Necessary Skills for Teaching

Career Readiness Skills

When people think about the necessary skills for effective teaching, career readiness is not necessarily the first category that comes to mind. However, it is just as important for teachers to be prepared for their career as it is for any other profession if a "skills gap" is to be avoided. Often a mismatch occurs between skills novice teachers acquire during their training and those specifically required to be successful on the job (Meyer, 2014). Furthermore, Darling-Hammond (2010) found a direct relationship between teachers' initial effectiveness and job retention to the quality of experiences in their teacher preparation programs. Most certainly, experiential learning opportunities that facilitate meaningful interactions with students in a teaching and learning process are necessary to ensure that teachers are ready for their future education careers.

Socio-Emotional Skills

The Florida Department of Education (2018) compiled a list of the most important skills and characteristics needed by students to be successful in the workforce once they leave the university. Some of these skills include skills that could be considered socio-emotional skills; however, many of them are personal qualities such as being dependable, responsible, polite, appropriately dressed, punctual, and having self-confidence. Additional skills deemed important include conflict resolution, common sense, and the ability to actively listen to others.

Understanding and being able to use socio-emotional skills are necessary for being a teacher in the 21st century classroom (Zakrzewski, 2013). Having these aspects not only helps facilitate quality teaching, but also allows teachers to pass these skills on to their students. There are five basic principles to not only understanding but also having and applying socio-emotional skills (Lifecho, 2012). These principles include:

- Empathy: the ability to understand and identify with others' feelings
- Internal motivation: the personal desire to achieve a desired result
- Self-regulation: the ability to control ourselves physically and emotionally
- Relatability: to identify with others and have them be responsive to you
- Personal understanding: to have a personal understanding of our own emotions

By exhibiting these socio-emotional skills, teachers are able to find inventive ways to assist students in their own personal understandings. This assistance can impact multiple aspects of the classroom from instruction, assessment, and classroom management (Zakrzewski, 2013).

Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Skills

In the past, having the content knowledge of the subject that they were teaching is all that was expected of teachers. Shulman (1987) focused on the importance of the content knowledge possessed by teachers. Pedagogical content knowledge is "the manner in which teachers relate

their subject matter knowledge (what they know about what they teach) to their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching) and how subject matter knowledge is part of the process of pedagogical reasoning" (Cochran, DeRuiter, & King, 1993, p. 263). This belief was wholly different from previous research in education where the foci were mostly on the external factors of teaching such as classroom planning, grading, and time usage. Ball, Thames, and Phelps (2008) expanded this theory of content knowledge to the idea of pedagogical content skills. Teachers need to not only personally master and understand the content, teachers must have the pedagogical knowledge to know also how to teach and reach students. This knowledge includes all aspects within the art of teaching such as instructional design for all learners, diversity of assessment and instructional practices, classroom management that enhances the learning environment, and meeting the needs of all learners. Hence, this marriage of content intelligence and enactment of pedagogy then transforms into the philosophy of pedagogical content knowledge.

In order to provide these necessary skills, the university has implemented experiential learning activities both inside and outside the classroom. This implementation was done to assist preservice teachers in being prepared to enter their own classrooms. Experiential learning activities have fallen into three primary focus areas: service learning, post-graduation continuing education, and opportunities for faculty research mentoring.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning, or learning that happens in a hands-on manner, outside the traditional confines of the classroom, is becoming more common as universities try to find ways to assist students in gaining valuable information through a meaningful, authentic environment. Although experiential learning has been shown to provide necessary skills for students, it is difficult to change the paradigm of the university classroom and culture. Especially in the K-12 to K-16 pipeline, the disconnect between K-12 and higher education has resulted in many high school graduates not being prepared for academic success in college (Perna & Armijos, 2014). The lack of cohesiveness between K-12 and higher education has caused many university degree programs to restructure and revise pedagogical coursework to embed learning activities that promote academic growth and academic maturity. To accomplish this task, a systemic approach that allows for failure, facilitates change in structure, pedagogy, and assessment, and provides for resource allocation is required (Meyer, 2014). The faculty implemented three experiential learning activities for students to supplement the already robust teacher preparation curriculum at the university. These opportunities include service learning, continued education after graduation, and faculty mentoring in student research. Below is a discussion and example of how teacher candidates implemented and used all of these activities.

Service Learning Opportunity: Barnes and Noble Reading Program

Activity

In 2010, the teacher education program implemented a service learning opportunity within the surrounding community. They worked with a community partner, a local bookstore, to establish a community reading program. The program involved the university's preservice teachers (university students in the Teacher Education program) planning thematic reading units and creating corresponding activities or projects to support the readings. This program was presented at the local bookstore on a weekly basis through the summer months and was free of charge to children who participated.

Participating preservice teachers then had the opportunity to serve in multiple roles: as an instructional planner, an instructional leader, an instructional presenter (reader or activity leader), or as an instructional helper. This structure was developed as a way for preservice teachers to not only work with community children, but also for them to learn from one another in a developed lab environment.

These roles were clearly defined and developed to assist in creating a simulated classroom environment where children and preservice teachers learn together. The instructional planner worked each week with faculty and the manager of the bookstore to develop a thematic plan and find literature to support the theme. There were usually two to three books read each week, depending upon the length of the books. Sometimes the themes were requested by the bookstore but most often, it was left up to the instructional planner to make this determination. The instructional leader for the week worked with faculty to assign roles to each of the members present. That person could assist the instructional planner in finding literature that correlated with the selected weekly theme. The leader also introduced the group and readers each week while providing transitions between books. This later evolved into teaching participating children transitional songs or movement activities in between each reading. The instructional presenter read the chosen books to children. The instructional presenter, or activity leader, worked with the planner to create an activity or project that the children would complete. This experience could take on multiple forms such as having a parade around the bookstore or facilitating an art project that the children would each create. Finally, all remaining preservice teachers acted as instructional helpers. These preservice teachers sat with children, helped them engage and focus in the activities, and assisted with the projects.

The Necessary Skills for Teaching

By participating in this experiential learning activity, preservice teachers gained several necessary career readiness skills for teaching including socio-emotional skills and pedagogical content knowledge skills. They had the opportunity to practice their instructional skills in an unstructured environment. They also worked with parents in the community and engaged with children as the "teacher." Preservice teachers learned how to plan thematic instruction with appropriate transition activities and apply these in a real world setting. Finally, preservice teachers experimented with classroom management strategies in a somewhat representative setting to that of an authentic classroom. These opportunities gave preservice teachers practice at implementing these skills for teaching in an authentic environment where they could bridge theory to practice.

Continued Education after Graduation: New Teacher Academy

Activity

Research over the last 30 years suggests that teacher attrition continues to be a problem for school districts (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Specifically, mentoring and induction programs have been created to provide professional development and support for new teachers (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). A wealth of research has been conducted to suggest that mentoring and induction programs for new teachers are imperative for the professional growth and sustainability of the beginning teacher (Smith, 2011). These initiatives usually fall to the responsibility of the school district and campus. In an attempt to facilitate successful preservice teacher entry into the first few years of teaching, our Teacher Education program developed a New Teacher Academy (NTA).

The NTA was developed to provide a summer bridge between graduation and the first year of teaching. NTA's purpose is to facilitate the transition from preservice to inservice teacher. Moreover, NTA allows university faculty to provide continued support to beginning teachers beyond the walls of academia and acts as supportive mechanism in the holistic induction process. NTA further supports the pipeline for teacher growth and development by providing tailored professional learning opportunities that strengthen pedagogical content knowledge beyond the university coursework.

The NTA was developed in 2014 to provide a one day (6 hour) targeted professional learning development on topics first year teachers struggle with the most (i.e., classroom management, technology integration that enhances learning, navigating the political infrastructure of the campus, working with English Language Learners (ELLs) and other special populations). NTA has grown significantly in size since its beginning, but also in quality of sessions. The sessions are facilitated with university partners (school practitioners and leaders) and they conclude with an overarching session at the end that allows participants to ask questions to a panel of practitioners. Furthermore, the last session also encourages participants to consider furthering their education by pursuing graduate education. Survey data is collected following the event to gauge overall session effectiveness and perceptions of participants learning experiences.

Necessary Skills for Teaching

Data collected from several years of NTA suggest that the hands-on, interactive sessions assisted new teachers in continuing to develop their knowledge of effective pedagogical practices as well as strengthen content knowledge. The breakout sessions provide additional learning opportunities and resources to assist beginning teachers in the transition to their first year of teaching.

The NTA not only provides opportunities to strengthen knowledge, it also provides opportunities for faculty members to serve as mentors outside the traditional confines of the academic classroom in a non-supervisory role. Klein et al. (2015) suggested that faculty members' responsibilities post-graduation are to continue supporting and mentoring beginning teachers. This coaching approach allows for beginning teachers to enter the classroom, more confident in their ability to teach and in their ability to engage students in authentic learning experiences that strengthen students' depth of knowledge. Andrews, Gilbert, and Martin (2006) and Smith (2011) further suggested that new teachers want supportive feedback especially from those in non-supervisory roles. NTA allows just for that - opportunities for continued support, feedback, and enhance learning without the performance evaluations or grades attached to it. These additional opportunities after graduation allow for beginning teachers to strengthen their overall knowledge of teaching and learning.

Faculty Mentoring in Research: Opportunities for Leadership

Activity

Smith (2011) noted that only a few studies have looked into the role university faculty play in beginning teacher mentoring. By engaging in collaborative research endeavors, faculty can help students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels develop writing, public speaking, and presentation skills they will need later in their career (Palmer, 2017). An additional benefit of being mentored by faculty on research projects is the understanding students gain about the value of research and its place in the improvement of professional practice. In many cases, after working

with faculty mentors, students actively transform their perception of academia, and as a result, seek postgraduate degrees (Kehler, Verwoord, & Smith, 2017).

Student Creative Arts and Research Symposium

At this university, graduate and undergraduate students are given opportunities to work with faculty on research, scholarly activities, and creative art projects. The Creative Arts and Research Symposium gives students and their faculty sponsors a forum for showcasing their collaborative work in platform, poster, or virtual formats. Faculty, staff, and students from all campus disciplines gather to view, question, and dialogue in a professional setting. In addition, the university's Chancellor highlights work completed by Student Research Scholars. The symposium permits student scholars to build leadership and other professional skills as they celebrate the student-mentor achievement.

Quality Enhancement Plan. Part of the university's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), is the Experiential Student Scholars Program, which permits graduate and undergraduate students to partner with a faculty mentor in an experiential project or creative arts endeavor. Selection to this group of scholar/mentors is a competitive application process. Once student/faculty dyads complete their projects, QEP supports the teams as they present research data at local, state, regional, national, or international conferences related to their discipline.

Conference presentations. Students at the university also have opportunities to present at conferences in their own right as researchers. Classroom projects that help close the gap between theory and practice are often transformed into poster presentations or joint faculty advisor/student information sessions.

The Necessary Skills for Teaching

By engaging with faculty in collaborative research projects, students develop skills that will enhance their professional careers. Speaking to an audience in presentations, learning to clearly articulate an idea and document the rationale leading up to it, engaging in critical thinking process with a mentor, are only a few of the positive impacts and insights garnered through participation in a faculty mentor relationship.

Concluding Thoughts

Experiential learning activities that occur outside the walls of the academy contribute to additional student understanding of concepts through lived experiences in authentic ways. The learning that occurs outside the classroom allows students to reflect upon new knowledge and apply this understanding to transform their own teaching. Smith (2011) suggested that "extending the role of teacher education beyond graduation can help ease the transition between preservice and inservice education and help new teachers enact practices learned during their teaching preparation program" (p. 316). Moreover, these authentic experiences that happen outside the walls of the academic classroom are correlated with students' positive experiences in preparation programs and their likelihood to remain in the teaching profession after the first few years (DeAngelis, Wall, & Che, 2013).

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All authors are Faculty members in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Texas Woman's University.