Teaching of Psychology: Ideas and Innovations

Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Conference

March 20 – 21, 2009

Drs. Marya Howell-Carter and Jennifer Gonder, Editors

Introduction

The 23rd Annual Conference on Undergraduate Teaching of Psychology held on March 20 – 21, 2009 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Tarrytown, New York. The conference was supported by the Psychology Department of the State University of New York at Farmingdale. The conference featured a keynote address by Dr. Jeffrey Nevid on *Reaching and teaching the millennials: Helping today's students become more effective learners*. Participants also had 24 presentations from which to choose and many colleagues, new and old, with whom to network. Seven of these presentations are included in these proceedings.

The success of the conference was due to the continuing efforts of many people, especially the enthusiastic participation of our presenters and attendees. The conference committee was co-chaired by Drs. Marya Howell-Carter and Jennifer Gonder with the support of Drs. Eugene Indenbaum, Judith Levine, Marilyn Blumenthal, Michael Goodstone, and Ms. Barbara Sarringer. We would like to extend our thanks to Cengage Learning for sponsoring a refreshment break as well as Farmingdale State College's Student Government for supporting student attendance at the conference.

Dr. Marya Howell-Carter

Dr. Jennifer Gonder

April, 2009

FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE 2009: CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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Iona College

PROGRAM

Friday, March 20, 2009

Registration and Continental Breakfast   9:30 -10:00 a.m.

SESSION 1   10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

RM 1 ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Finding Developmental Psychology on YouTube: A Class Project

  Lynn A. Elmore, Hartwick College, NY

YouTube is a video sharing service where people can upload, view, and share videos. In the summer of 2006, a 79-year-old British man posted his first video blog and became an overnight celebrity. In his blogs, he discusses old age, recounts his life experiences, and gives advice to young people. Developmental psychology students applied theory to these blogs and gave a PowerPoint presentation as a final project. I will present the assignment and provide an annotated blog list, sample videos, project instructions, a grading rubric, and examples of student work along with student and professor feedback.

Teaching Experimental Method with a Classroom Experiment

  William R. Balch*, Penn State, Altoona, PA

One class participated in a classroom experiment on the "pop-out," or feature-present/feature-absent, effect and then heard a debriefing in which I explained this activity in terms of the elements of experimental method. Another class heard only lecture material on the same subject matter. The classroom-experiment class performed significantly better than the lecture-only class on a posttest but not on a pretest, reflecting effectiveness of the classroom-experiment activity in teaching general experimental method.

Note: An * after a name denotes session chairperson.

RM 2   WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

Participatory Learning, Inventive Assessment

Joanne Walsh, Kean University, NJ

This is an interactive session describing and demonstrating techniques used in several introductory and advanced undergraduate classes. Techniques will be shared that encourage 100% student participation. Techniques will show how students can use experimental, physical, and creative methods to tackle difficult concepts and retain knowledge. Ways of demystifying assessment methods for students will also be considered. An outcome of the session includes concrete examples that the audience could use in their own classroom situations.

SESSION 2   11:15 – 12:15 p.m.

RM 1 ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Using a Wiki to Generate Collaborative Annotated Bibliographies

Tina Vazin, Alabama State University, AL

In an effort to 1) expose students to current literature in psychology, 2) develop students' skills in reviewing scientific articles, and 3) infuse technology into the classroom, the students enrolled in a Developmental Psychology class participated in collaboratively developing 18 annotated bibliographies using a wiki. The wiki allows students to work independently to create a collaboratively produced document. The topics of the annotated bibliographies included topics that integrated several topics presented in Developmental Psychology such as The Influence of Poverty on Cognitive Development in Children, How Being an Only Child Influences Social, Cognitve, and Emotional Development, and Factors that Impact the Development of Emotional Intelligence.

Using Oral Presentations as an Effective Teaching Tool

Katherine Zaromatidis & Patricia A. Oswald*, Iona College, NY

We will discuss the use of student oral presentations in our upper-level psychology major courses. An overview of the assignment format, assignment objective, and assignment grading rubric will be provided. The results of a student survey examining students' perspectives on oral presentations will be reported. Advantages and disadvantages of various oral presentation formats from both the instructor's perspective and the students' perspectives will be discussed. In addition, strategies for addressing the issues and concerns raised by students will be offered.

RM 2 ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Neighborhood Environments as Learning Laboratories for 21st Century Undergraduates

Joan F. Kuchner, Stony Brook University, NY

I will focus on course-based-use of community settings as educational resources for undergraduates, exploring the why, how, when, and where of employing campus destinations, public places, and community institutions as problem solving venues for undergraduates. The discussion will include class preparation and practical issues of selecting and cultivating destinations, staging class field trips, and managing team data gathering and analysis as viewed from the perspective of the primary stakeholders. Strategies for using shared experiences of places and spaces to guide students' understanding and application of concepts from environmental, ecological, and developmental psychology will be examined.

The Why and Hows of Service Learning

Joyce Hemphill*, University of Wisconsin, WI

Recent studies show that young adults have difficulties making the transition into the world of work. A partial reason is that formal education often fails to help the student see the connection between material learned in the classroom and its application in the real world. So what can a college instructor do? Provide opportunities for community involvement. Service-learning experiences aid in a student's understanding of course material, facilitates the development of work and life related skills, empowers, and results in positive self-worth. I will present examples of developmental and learning science service-learning experiences in both large and small classroom settings.

RM 3 PANEL PRESENTATION

Correlates of Undergraduate Egocentrism: Implications for College Teaching

Paul D. Schwartz, Amanda Maynard, & Sarah Uzelac, Mount Saint Mary College, NY

Dr. David Elkind's introduction of the Personal Fable and Imaginary Audience and concomitant behavioral correlates of Adolescent egocentrism are found in almost all textbooks used in Adolescent Psychology courses. In our previous research we have found that there is an increase in egocentrism among younger college students, rather than a decrease as Elkind found. This increase has potential implications for contemporary college teachers of psychology both in and out of the classroom as well as for teachers of other subjects. We are examining the specific hypothesis that egocentrism in adolescence increases when an individual encounters a new environment of experience. The formation of this panel is an attempt to discuss and learn from other professionals and students about the changing nature of today's college students and how it impacts those of us at the college level that teach them.

LUNCH 12:15-1:15 p.m.

SESSION 3   1:30 - 2:45 p.m.

RM 1   INVITED ADDRESS

Reaching and Teaching the Millenials: Helping Today's

Students Become More Effective Learners

Dr. Jeffrey S. Nevid

St. John's University, NY

SESSION 4   3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

RM 1   ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Do Clickers Click? A Classroom Experience with Student Response Systems

  Celia Reaves*, Monroe Community College, NY

Student Response Systems, better known as clickers, are touted as a great way to make students more active in the classroom and thereby improve learning.   I will describe an Introductory Psychology class in which clickers were integrated at every class, and compares student performance with those in a comparable class not using clickers every day, looking for effects on grades and attendance and at student opinions. Attendees will get to use clickers during the presentation just as the students did in the class, to see what the experience was like.

RM 2 WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

Teaching of Psychology in India: Some Useful Material

  V.K. Kool, SUNY Institute of Technology, Utica, NY; Rita Agrawal, H.C. PG Management

  College, India; and Manisha Sen, University of Mumbai, India

There is mounting criticism by European and Asian psychologists that while behavior is a universal phenomenon, American psychology textbooks offer, by and large, material limited to the Northern American perspective. Based on our experiences, we will present some material from the fields of aggression and nonviolence, health psychology/stress, and industrial and organizational psychology to show the relevance of studies used in India for our teaching.

COFFEE BREAK 4:00 -5:00 p.m.

SESSION 5: 4:15 – 5:15 p.m.

RM 1 ORAL PRESENTATIONS

The Essence of Delegating Exercise

Frederick Tesch & Stanley Bazan, Western Connecticut State University, CT

In teaching delegating as an applied motivational tool in organizational behavior classes, we found that students focused on the content of the tasks being delegated rather than the process of delegating, thus losing the lessons about motivation, communication, and influence. To overcome this barrier, we modified an exercise that required assembly of Noodles^{TM} pieces under highly constrained conditions. The delegator group plans how they will direct the assembler group, who are blindfolded, to connect Noddles^{TM} pieces according to a set pattern. In this session we conduct an abbreviated version of the exercise, debrief it, and discuss its utility.

RM 2 PANEL PRESENTATION

Teaching the Millennial Generation: A Unique Social Experiment

Christine Floether and Amy D'Olivo, Centerary College, NJ

This panel presentation includes students and professors who were engaged in a Social Psychology course and a simultaneously run Sociology course. The purpose is to share pedagogy as well as unique teaching approaches that enhance and broaden this generation's learning experience. The use of students on the panel will support with first-hand information, the excitement generated in this course by both students and faculty. We will share our data collected as well as any suggestions and support we can give.

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Breakfast 8:00-9:00 a.m.

SESSION 6: 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

RM 1 ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Use of Online Resources on Student Attendance and Academic Standing

  Linda L. Dunlap & Jeffrey D'Angelo, Marist College, NY

Frequent and varied assessment has been shown to enhance learning and class attendance. That is, when teachers have many class sessions that include some form of assessment activity, students are more likely to attend class, which should enhance both learning and the students' academic standing. Longitudinal data suggested that requiring or allowing students to submit assignments online increases class absences. In our most recent study, more than 400 surveys were distributed to students and more than 500 to faculty members. Student surveys asked questions regarding their attendance practices, utilization of online resources, GPA, and factors that affect their decision to attend class. The faculty surveys inquired about attendance policies, student attendance rate, and utilization of online resources. Survey results will be used to guide discussion on methods to enhance students' attendance and learning.

Moving Classroom Discussions Online

  Jeffrey S. Baker, Rochester Institute of Technology, NY

In teaching a humanistic psychology course at a technologically oriented university, it became a challenge to sustain classroom discussions between a group of students, many of whom are introverted, and including international students with limited vocabulary in spoken English, plus deaf and hard of hearing students. Moving the discussions online resulted in nearly total participation and the sharing of personal experiences that would never be discussed in the classroom. A separate project for improving communication between deaf and hearing students was similarly successful and produced a high level of student satisfaction.

Using Pre-quizzes to Enhance Learning: Comparing In-class and On-line Formats

  Jackie Braun*, Ramapo College, NJ

Empirical evidence suggests that testing facilitates learning more so than does repeated study: however, it is not clear how to implement this testing effect in a real classroom. I will present evidence comparing in-class and online pre-quizzing. Two sections of the same course were given in-class pre-quizzes. The two sections

performed equivalently on Midterm 1. One section was switched to online pre-quizzes. That section later performed significantly better on Midterm 2.

However, I will also present survey data which suggests that students place more value on in-class quizzing. Finally, I will discuss important pragmatic differences between the two formats.

RM 2   ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Internationalizing the Psychology Curriculum: Changing the Millienials' World View

  Patricia C. Heindel, Herm Huber, & Thomas Barrett, College of Saint Elizabeth, NJ

We will first describe the recent effort on the part of the APA to internationalize the psychology curriculum and the history behind this effort. We will also share our ideas for revising the undergraduate introductory course and the capstone seminar to include learning experiences that expose students to what the profession of psychology is like in different countries, research interests of psychologists in these countries, dominant issues in the field around the globe, indigenous treatment approaches, and more. We will also discuss characteristics of millennial learners that impact the success of these efforts.

Understanding Psychology Within the Context of the Other Academic Disciplines

  William E. Herman*, SUNY College at Potsdam, NY

Students taking psychology courses frequently complain they have difficulty organizing a massive array of new terms and ideas, understanding different viewpoints within the field, and grasping how the course instructor perceives the field. This course supplement helps students in organizing psychological terms, concepts, and ideas and connecting psychological constructs to existing schemas from previous academic courses. Students are first introduced to how psychology is related to the social sciences, humanities and natural sciences. The field of psychology is understood by examining four current viewpoints (psychoanalytic, behavioristic, humanistic, and cognitive) that can be employed to critically compare and contrast theoretical perspectives.

COFFEE BREAK 10:30 -11:00 a.m.

SESSION 7 11:00 - 12:00 a.m.

RM 1 ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Simulation of Initial Assessments in Classroom Settings Via Role-Play

John L. Theodore, Iona College, NY

Clinical skills in initial assessments can be taught in the classroom via role-play. Benefits of role-play include helping students become versed in assessing manifestations of mental illness in a controlled setting prior to actual clinical exposure. During the role-play, the instructor simulates a patient while the student conducts the initial assessment. Other students may observe the role-play for edification. Following the exercise, student reflection is encouraged. Components for discussion include assessment style, clinical interaction and rapport, transference and counter-transference, data gathering skills, and diagnostic indications.

Acting Out and Playing Games in Class

Diana Milillo, Nassau Community College, NY

Current college students are more in need of novel, engaging, action, and even technologically based learning. I will give several examples of active teaching methods that build on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence and learning styles. I will highlight highly interactive demonstrations for learning, such as a psychodrama to teach Milgram's obedience study, a tactile demonstration for learning about the parts of a neuron, and a website critique that shows the effect of drugs on the (mouse) brain. Differentiated instruction helps more students engage with content on a deeper level and elicits fun and excitement in the room.

RM 2   PANEL PRESENTATION

Collaborative and Original Research in 21st Century Experimental Psychology

Christina J. Taylor, Rachel Bowman, & Nina Tarner, Sacred Heart University, CT

Sacred Heart University emphasizes active and engaged learning in its educational mission. This is a philosophy that meshes well with the types of research conducted in undergraduate research courses in psychology—whether the content of the course is in biopsychology, learning or social psychology. The learning objectives for our courses in experimental psychology include gaining understanding of the scientific method, becoming knowledgeable about ethical guidelines for research, and learning about a particular content area in psychology. Our panel will focus on the advantages and disadvantages of engaging students in different types of creative experimental psychology projects.

RM 3 WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

Curriculum to Enhance Learning in the Millennial Generation

Christine Floether, Centenary College, NJ

In this presentation I shall describe the changing of a curriculum in Psychology for the sole purpose of increasing the learning opportunities for the Milennial Generation. The focus of the program was explored with an eye to broaden the undergraduate's opportunity to be exposed to the concepts and theory of psychological research and statistics in a sequential manner. The material is infused throughout the curriculum with supportive activities and materials shared to enhance their learning and to increase their sills in this area of psychology. My focus in this presentation will be on the efficacy of this program.

LUNCH 12:00 -1:00 p.m.

SESSION 8 1:15 - 2:15 p.m.

RM 1   ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century Students through Blended Instruction

Mary D. McVey, San Jose State University, CA

As students become increasingly more diverse and technologically savvy, technology-based forms of instruction such as blended coursework (the integration of both in-class and online formats) can provide high-quality options for meeting student needs. Theoretical bases, potential benefits, and important issues to consider when developing a blended course will be discussed. I will conclude with a review of a research study that I conducted on using a blended course format for teaching undergraduate research methods.

Evaluation of Library and Field Research Experiences in Introductory Psychology as

Motivating and Learning Activities

Carol Campbell*, Maki Maksumoto, & Emily Walsh, CW Post Campus of Long Island

University, NY

I will address the issue of how to engage undergraduates in Introductory Psychology by encouraging some form of "hands on" research (library or empirical) as a component of the course. Involving students more in

field research is a rising trend in the sciences and this study is an exploration of how to integrate a research component into an introductory course. I will also discuss the data that I've collected.

RM 2 PANEL PRESENTATION

Student-Led Seminars: Teaching the 21st Century Student

  Mark A Casteel, Penn State York, PA; K. Robert Bridges & Richard J. Harnish, Penn

  State New Kensington, PA

We will describe a seminar approach for teaching small classes of undergraduates modeled on graduate seminar-style courses. Each student acts as a discussion leader for an assigned reading, while the instructor acts as a facilitator. Based upon their active discussion and written assignments, students receive evaluations for the course. Students indicated through course evaluation assessments that they were highly satisfied with the course format and with the instructors, as well as the perceived amount of new information learned. We will discuss our experiences and offer suggestions for others to adopt this innovative teaching technique.

Conference Committee:
Gene Indenbaum, Department Chairperson
Marilyn Blumenthal, Conference Program Editor & Keynote Speaker Liaison
Marya Carter, Co-Chairperson
Jennifer Gonder Co-Chairperson
Judith Levine, Program Subcommittee Chairperson
Barbara Sarringer, Executive Assistant

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A Student Perspective on Traditional, Hybrid and Distance Learning Courses

Katherine Zaromatidis, Ph.D. and Patricia A. Oswald, Ph.D.

Iona College

Many instructors include oral presentations as part of their course requirements. This assignment is easily tailored for a wide variety of audiences including both traditional and non-traditional students. At Iona College, oral presentations have been used in core, elective, and major courses catering to the freshman through senior levels. Decisions regarding assignment specifications can include whether or not oral presentations are performed individually or in a group; are topics self-selected or assigned, are grades based on individual or group performance; and are there other components to the presentation such as the requirement to use technology (i.e. PowerPoint slides) or the inclusion of a written component.

Regardless of the exact specifications, oral presentations are considered an effective teaching tool for many reasons. Specifically, oral presentations offer students an alternative method to gain course credit. Students often report that they are not good test-takers and/or writers. The oral presentation does not require the same skill set as exams or papers, and therefore offers students an opportunity to do well despite any difficulties they may have with exams and/or papers. In addition, many departments like the Iona College Psychology Department expect students to develop effective communication skills, both written and aural. This assignment offers students the opportunity to practice public speaking skills, and thus to become effective aural speakers. Despite the popularity of oral presentations among course instructors, little is known about how students regard this type of

assignment. This paper will report on the results of a survey conducted with students who had completed oral presentations.

Method

Fifty-four students enrolled in three psychology classes were surveyed. The classes included two traditional lecture courses and one hybrid course (two sections of introductory statistics and one section of social psychology). Informed consent was obtained; students voluntarily participated and no course credit was offered. The survey was completed during class time and took approximately 15 minutes.

Survey of Attitudes Regarding Oral Presentations

The survey included four demographic items: age, gender, year in college, and college major. Questions regarding the specifications of oral presentations included:

1. *Have you ever done an oral presentation in any class?*

    a. *If yes, how many?*

    b. *Which courses?*

2. *Were presentations group, individual, or both?*

    a. *If group, were members assigned, self-selected, or both?*

    b. *If group, were grades based on individual or group performance or both?*

3. *Were topics assigned, self-selected, or both?*

4. *What was the length of the presentation?* (response options: 5-10 min, 10-15 min, 15-20 min, 20-25 min, 25-30 min, other)

5. *Were handouts required?*

6. *Was written report required?*

7. *Was technology required?*

      a. *If yes, what technology?* (response options: PowerPoint, internet, audio/video, data, other)

8. *What % of course grade was presentation?*

      a. *Was it too much, too little, or just right?*

9. *Advantages of oral presentations?* (response options: enhance public speaking, enhance knowledge of technology, alternative way to earn credit, enjoy working with others, enjoy using technology, other)

10. *Disadvantages of oral presentations?* (response options: fear of public speaking, difficult using technology, difficult working with others, prefer grade based on exams/papers only, other)

11. *Which type of oral presentation do you prefer?* (response options: individual, group, either one, neither one)

12. *Why do you prefer this type of presentation?*

13. *On a scale from 1 (hate it) to 10 (love it), how do you rate an individual oral presentation assignment?*

14. *On a scale from 1 (hate it) to 10 (love it), how do you rate a group oral presentation assignment?*

Respondents

The respondents' mean age = 20.28 years (*SD* = 0.98). The sample was comprised of 47 females (87%) and 6 males (13%). Fifteen percent were Sophomores (*n* = 8), 57% were Juniors (*n* = 30), and 28% were Seniors (*n* = 15). Sixty nine percent of the respondents were Psychology majors (*n* = 37), 13% Speech Pathology majors (*n* = 7), 8% Mass Communication majors (*n* = 4), and 10% Other majors (*n* = 5).

Results

The following is a summary of responses to the survey items.

1. *Have you ever done an oral presentation in any class?* 100% of respondents have completed
   oral presentations.

   a. *If yes, how many? M = 9.27, SD = 7.58*

   b. *Which courses?* 31% English, 26% Psychology, 14% Speech, 8% Mass
      Communication, and 5% Religion

2. *Were presentations group, individual, or both?* 6% Individual, 9% Group, and 85% both

   a. *If group, were members assigned, self-selected, or both?* 22% assigned, 15% self-
      selected, 63% both

   b. *If group, were grades based on individual or group performance or both?* 2%
      individual performance, 24% group performance, and 74% both

3. *Were topics assigned, self-selected, or both?* 13% assigned, 19% self-selected, 68% both

4. *What was the length of the presentation?* 33% 5-10 min, 35% 10-15 min, 24% 15-20 min,
   39% more than 20 min

5. *Were handouts required?* 43% yes, 57% no

6. *Was written report required?* 74% yes, 26% no

7. *Was technology required?* 100% yes

   c. *If yes, what technology?* 94% PowerPoint, 33% internet, 20% data, 15% audio/video

8. *What % of course grade was presentation?* 42% 20 or less, 35% between 21-40, 23% other

   d. *Was it too much, too little, or just right?* 17% too much, 8% too little, 75% just right

9. *Advantages of oral presentations?* 94% enhance public speaking, 57% enhance knowledge of technology, 83% alternative way to earn credit, 45% enjoy working with others, 40% enjoy using technology

10. *Disadvantages of oral presentations?* 77% fear of public speaking, 80% difficult working with others, 82% prefer grade based on exams/papers only

11. *Which type of oral presentation do you prefer?* 34% individual, 38% group, 18% either one, 10% neither one

12. *Why do you prefer this type of presentation?* For individual presentations, 67% cited social loafing in group format, 29% too difficult to schedule meetings with group members, 4% prefer working at own pace. For group presentations, 57% fear public speaking alone, 33% less work for each group member, 10% better presentation

13. *On a scale from 1 (hate it) to 10 (love it), how do you rate an individual oral presentation assignment?* Mean rating 4.77

14. *On a scale from 1 (hate it) to 10 (love it), how do you rate a group oral presentation assignment?* Mean rating 5.40

Conclusion

Data indicate most students are familiar with oral presentations. Furthermore, students endorsed having a variety of formats and requirements as part of the oral presentation assignment. Students endorse liking individual and group presentation formats equally, as both are seen offering advantages and disadvantages. As course instructors it is likely that we continue to include oral presentations as part of the course requirements. Not only are oral presentations flexible in terms of the type of course and audience they can be used with, oral presentations also fit in nicely with a multi-

method assessment plan. Instructors can make advantages of oral presentations more salient for students and decrease disadvantages as much as possible in order to increase student comfort levels with this type of assignment.

Neighborhood Environments as Learning Laboratories for 21st Century Undergraduates

Joan F. Kuchner, Ph.D., Stony Brook University

Educational experiences come in many forms. Textbooks, lectures and reading scholarly documents are the forms most closely associated with formal undergraduate education. In the classical example, next on the list would be campus based laboratories, places where first and second year students can repeat well established experiments or more advanced students can begin to design pilot variations. If community or neighborhood environments come to mind at all, they are generally thought of as places for service learning where students provide additional assistance within an established work place, while simultaneously exploring career options. This presentation focuses on an alternative perspective, one that emphasizes the neighborhood as its own learning laboratory where 21st century students can objectively observe encounters with the three dimensional world of places and objects, peopled by individuals engaged in everyday face to face interactions. The report explores the why, how, when, and where of employing on and off campus destinations, public places and community institutions as academic problem solving venues for undergraduates.

Neighborhood environments offer unique learning opportunities. Given the appropriate tools, students can objectively observe the patterns of behavior that flow around them. They can gather new data on social behavior and the impact of the physical realities on these exchanges. Developmental

psychology students can observe how different ages, young children, parents, and even the elderly experience and use the same physical site. Observing this type of interaction offers students an opportunity to see how children learn throughout the community. Meeting with practitioners who specialize in working with children in settings other than the school room, for example, children's librarians, pediatricians, child life therapists or museum educators are an added bonus but not necessarily the main focus. However, students are positioned to observe a range of individuals in action within their own career and professional milieus. This type of experience has opened the eyes of some students to the general realities of alternative career options while at the same time allowing them to place the specific view within the context of current professional commentary.

Neighborhood settings are evolving places. Students who conduct a detailed case study of a clothing store, a restaurant, a library, a playground or an emergency room waiting area, begin to realize that they have something to offer, that they can image a way to make the setting a better educational and social learning experience for young children and a place that is more likely to encourage positive interactions between parents and children and staff and families. They realize that they can accomplish this goal without sacrificing the main mission of the institution. Indeed, their suggestions could help further the goals of the setting.

The undergraduate student engaged in a team project is also learning how to communicate orally and in writing with the other members of the group; they are learning the need for planning and coordination of effort; they are practicing time management strategies that adjust to personalities and a range of individual preferences and skills. The team case study term project and the individual papers based on field trips require critical thinking not only to analyze the setting but also to make recommendations for improvements and provide supporting argumentation for their implementation.

Early Childhood Environments, an upper division elective course introducing students to environmental psychology from the perspective of young children and their families, currently provides a structural and administrative framework for using neighborhood environments as learning laboratories. Using ecological psychology as an overarching organizing framework, *Early Childhood Environments* draws on environmental psychology for analytic tools, educational psychology to clarify philosophies of learning that influence institutional setting design and structure, and developmental psychology as a basis for appreciating the age appropriate abilities of young children and the challenges faced by parents and other care givers. Each of these perspectives influences the design and use of both early childhood classrooms and public spaces. For example, a Montessori classroom and one organized by a Constructivists educational philosophy will not only sound different from each other, they will also look different. A museum that espouses a hands on approach to exploration will have a different layout and exhibits than one that uses both rewards and punishments to keep visitors visually engaged but physically distant from art and artifacts.

Students are often surprised by the way in which children explore public places and the structures that they are interested in investigating. The experience of observing young children in a range of real life settings gives undergraduates a clearer understanding of what it means to be a young child in an adult world. These different microsystems are analyzed in terms of their physical array, the available roles and the specific behaviors of participants both adults and children who are involved or have the potential to be involved in face to face interactions. Issues of lines of sight, scale, and affordances for communication, for privacy, for play and for learning are part of the analysis, as are floor plan design and its implication for adjacencies, restorative locations, autonomy and the ability to exercise choice, noise levels, lighting and issues of safety. Even appropriateness of signage and the potential for crowding become part of the discussion.

The exosystem and macrosystem are investigated as undergraduates are asked to reflect on the potential connections between each microsystem that they observe, as well as the collaborations or partnerships with other agencies or institutions that are revealed in pamphlets, bulletins, advertisements and web pages. This leads to a fuller appreciation of the composition of the mesosystems. As students are guided to envision a more collaborative community, they are asked to suggest ways that these interconnections can be enhanced or extended. Students are expected to observe the surrounding community of each neighborhood setting to better understand how children and adults travel to these destinations. Similarly, they are expected to research relevant administrative, oversight or government agencies. In answering these questions, students gain a greater appreciation for the influence of the exosystem on the safety, availability, access, and actual use of any neighborhood resources. Reflecting on the overarching belief system, the macrosystem, opens a window onto national and cultural priorities.

The classroom based aspects of the course provides summaries of theories, key facts and concepts as well as an opportunity to practice observational strategies. At each class meeting, the classroom is arranged to encourage a communication pattern designed to fit the topic. These changes in the arrangement or grouping of seats and tables become additional fodder for discussion of the interplay between the physical and social environments. While some topics are lecture style most of the material is first discussed in small groups by the students before the class as a whole combines their insights.   Students begin their experiential learning by analyzing their own classroom and its place on campus. A classroom is more than a gathering place. Each specific room has its own unique features that enhance or create challenges for the students and the teacher. Everything from the walls, lighting, temperature, furnishings and their arrangements to the implication for social exchange and power structures are explored as are the location of the classroom within the building and on the campus. Connections of this microsystem to others inhabited by the students, the exosystem that supports them

and the macrosystem that led the students into higher education complete the analysis. Other class exercises introduce students to strategies for systematic natural observation including, the development of operational definitions for use in check lists and running narratives, the alternatives of time sampling and event sampling, and the basics of mapping and tracking for recording way finding and the use of space. Before sending students out into the community, the class explores issues surrounding the ethics of conducting observations in public places. Other small group discussions focus on analyzing examples of material culture or popular images to better understand cultural messages about childhood. Students complete content analysis of children's picture books and advertisements. They can then use this approach to deconstruct visual messages about children that they collect in their case study. With these analytical tools in hand, students are asked to apply them to common destinations for young children such as libraries, hospitals, train stations, playgrounds, stores, museums, and child care centers. Each of the exercises and the field trips provides opportunities for discussing significant issues in psychology both from the perspective of the observer and the observed.

Individual field based exercises are planned and completed outside of the classroom following instructions specified in course assignments. They are graded as part of a student port folio that also includes assignments based on class field trips occurring during scheduled course hours. The latter require careful planning, as well as student and teacher flexibility. Realistic field trip options are influenced by the season of the year, the timing and length of the class, the availability of transportation and the availability of appropriate destinations. Campus based or adjacent sites are often the most suitable. At Stony Brook University, the University Hospital, and the nationally accredited child care center, Stony Brook Child Care Services, Inc. are natural destinations. We are also fortunate in being located next to a Smithsonian related regional museum, Stony Brook Museum of Art, History and Carriages and a model Family Place Library, Middle Country Public Library.   However, making transparent the significance of the range and availability of destinations or the difficulty in locating

appropriate sites is all a part of the educational process as it provides insights into the community, its financial and population resources, as well as its priorities. The impact of philosophies of education and philosophies of parenting on access to available community resources can by extension include a discussion of the gate keeping role of adults in monitoring microsystem access to children, as well as the way in which adults structure the physical environments that children inhabit.

Planning for class field trips often begins as a process of professional networking starting a semester or even a year ahead of time. It involves contacting kindred spirits within the community who share an interest in the well being of young children and families yet have their professional lives and identities outside of academia. Seeking out neighborhood based cross disciplinary networks and coalitions has proven to be an excellent first step.

Confronting logistical hurdles is one part of the challenge of using neighborhood environments as learning laboratories for 21st century undergraduate students. Today's undergraduate college student is overextended. Many have committed to an overload of course credits to either save money on tuition directly or to graduate early in order to get a head start on graduate education or to leave an extra year to study for qualifying exams. Others are working in full time or three quarter time jobs along with enrollment in a full course load. Some students are scholar athletes with obligations for sport practice even on the off season. Another cohort of students is juggling parenting along with their academic courses or they have taken on other family responsibilities such as caring for an elderly grandparent or translating for their parents' doctors appointments. This makes it difficult for them to take time to complete field observations or to meet with team members to plan and carry out case study responsibilities. On the other hand, their diverse ethnic and language backgrounds and the extraordinary range of their early childhood experiences and family constellations provide rich resources for discussion and cross cultural comparisons. Each year over the past 25 years since I first created *Early*

Childhood Environments and began offering it as an upper division elective, there have been students in the class who have never been to a museum or whose trips to a community library outside of their public school can barely be remembered. Scaffolding their reconnection with these community resources can in and of it self make these field trips worthwhile.

The 21st century undergraduates that I teach have grown into young adulthood in the computer age. They are use to instant two dimensional messages and a virtual world of contrived environments. This course asks them to take a close look at their physical world and the messages embedded in the use of space and the presence or absence of physical objects. At each destination, students are confronted with the task of viewing the world through the eyes of a preschool age child and her family as well as from the perspective of the specific institution, its mission and needs. The culminating project for the students occurs when they select a public space from within their own community. The challenge for the students is to analyze the space and then propose a redesign plan that will maximize the learning experience for young children and increase the likelihood of positive social interactions between the children and adults in the environment. They are encouraged to share the resulting report with the supervisors, administrators or managers of their location and to view this assignment as an opportunity to provide genuine insights that can assist their community. Approximately 60% of students act on this suggestion, showing me letters acknowledging receipt of the report by responsible individuals at their neighborhood environment observation site. Student realization that they have a vision to share and that they can make a difference is an "ah ha" moment. It is a strong motivator. Scaffolding undergraduate students to this moment takes time, patience, flexibility, and a passion for embracing the "teachable moment" both inside and outside of the classroom. This investment in energy and enthusiasm is returned twofold to the faculty member who embraces "educator" as a professional identity.

Do Clickers Click? A Classroom Experience with Student Response Systems
Celia Reaves, Ph.D.
Monroe Community College, Rochester, NY

Some History
  -- Audience Response Systems are not new
  -- Today's systems have two advantages:
    o Portability
    o Display
Literature
  -- Students like clickers
  -- Clickers often improve attendance
  -- Clickers may improve grades slightly
    o Combining clickers with group work, problem solving, or participation
      might be the critical factor
My Classroom
  -- Introductory Psychology
  -- Departmental standard curriculum
  -- Lecture-oriented (40-50 students)
  -- Grades by objective testing only
  -- Nonselective admission, urban campus
My Clicker System
  -- iClicker: visit iClicker.com
  -- Radio frequencies, not IR
  -- Independent of the application and the computer
  -- Questions and results automatically saved
Direct comparisons
  -- Similar Classes
    o Fall 2007 versus Fall 2008
    o Same time of day, same room
    o Same book & learning objectives
    o Same test bank and grading system
    o Same PowerPoint lectures (except a small amount of information
      was removed to make room for the clicker questions)
  -- Differences
    o Fall 2007: Clickers for test review only

- o Fall 2008: Clickers in every class
- o Fall 2007: Smaller class (38 students completed class)
- o Fall 2008: Larger class (47 students completed class)

Attendance Comparison
- -- Fall 2007 (occasional clickers):
  - o 77% overall
  - o 90% of students who completed class
- -- Fall 2008 (clickers every class):
  - o 73% overall
  - o 92% of students who completed class
- -- No difference in attendance

Grade Comparison
- -- Fall 2007 (occasional clickers) A:3, B:9, C:8, D:8, F/W: 10
- -- Fall 2008 (clickers every class) A:3, B:9, C:14, D:6, F/W: 17
- -- No significant difference ($x2 (4) = 2.4$)

Student Opinions: Survey administered Fall 2008
- -- How difficult was it to learn to use the clickers in class?
  - Very easy   21
  - Not too difficult   1
  - Somewhat difficult   0
  - Quite confusing   0
- -- About how often did you participate in answering clicker questions in class?
  - Every time or almost every time   13
  - Most of the time   9
  - Occasionally   0
  - Never or almost never   0
- -- Did you feel you were given enough time to answer the questions?
  - Plenty of time   4
  - Generally enough time   13
  - Not quite enough time   4
  - Not nearly enough time   1
- -- Were the questions related clearly to the material being covered?
  - Always clearly related   19
  - Related most of the time   0
  - Sometimes related   3
  - Hardly ever related   0
- -- What do you think about the number of questions asked in each class?
  - About right most of the time   17
  - Generally too many questions   0
  - Generally not enough questions   4
  - Sometimes too many, sometimes not enough   1
- -- Do you think that answering the questions helped you focus during the class?
  - Definitely helped me   17
  - Helped me somewhat   3
  - Didn't help me much   2

Distracted me   0
    -- Do you think that answering the questions during class helped you on the tests?
        Definitely helped me   15
        Sometimes helped me   7
        Didn't help me much   0
        Interfered with my performance 0
Conclusions
    -- What Happened
        o Didn't make any difference to grades or attendance
        o But students love clickers!
    -- What will I do next?
        o Continue using clickers in each class
        o Add more opinion questions
        o Add more pair-and-share or group questions
        o Test again to see if it helps!

Literature Review

        Hamilton Holt, a college president, in 1931 said something like, "A lecture is a process whereby information is passed from the notebook of the lecturer to the notebook of the student without necessarily passing through the minds of either" (quoted in Honan, 2002). The devices commonly called "clickers" were developed in part to allow information to travel in the other direction: from the student to the lecturer. They go by many names: Student Response Systems, Audience Response Systems, Individual Response Systems. Though these systems are all the rage in education today, the concept itself is not new. Lecture halls were hard-wired for student responses, readable at a teacher's station, as far back as the 1960s, particularly in science classes (Judson & Sawada, 2002). Today's systems have two significant advantages over the originals. First, the systems today are portable, so teachers can use them even where classrooms have not been previously set up for them. Second, today's systems allow for immediate feedback to students, showing the responses of their classmates. For a review of student feedback systems, including their advantages and disadvantages in higher education, see Herreid (2006) or Kelly (2009).
        Although there are many articles in the popular press that provide examples of the use of these systems in classrooms from middle school through college (for example, Brickman, 2006; O'Hanlon, 2007), it is more difficult to find good research showing clear benefits. Furthermore, the research paints a somewhat inconsistent picture, though in almost all cases students have a positive opinion of student response systems (Cleary, 2008; Herreid, 2006; Judson & Sawada, 2002; MacGeorge et al., 2008; Poirier & Feldman, 2007; Stowell & Nelson, 2007). With regard to actual performance improvements, though, the evidence is more mixed.
        In general, attendance is improved when response systems are added to a class (Herreid, 2006; Judson & Sawada, 2002). However, in most cases the introduction of clickers also introduced a more effective system of tracking and rewarding student attendance, and these factors might have accounted for the improvement in attendance independently of the actual technology used.
        With respect to test performance or grades, the picture is murky. Some researchers (Morling, McAuliffe, Cohen, & DiLorenzo, 2008; Poirier & Feldman, 2007) find small but significant improvements. Others (Judson & Sawada, 2002; Kelly, 2009; MacGeorge et al., 2008; Stowell & Nelson, 2007) report mixed results or no difference. Some people (Brickman, 2006; Judson & Sawada, 2002) suggest that the use of response systems improves learning only when they are incorporated into activities involving group work or problem-solving, rather

than having students answer questions individually. However, these suggestions are speculation, not backed by data.

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Title: *Use of Online Resources on Student Attendance and Academic Standing*

Linda L. Dunlap and Jeffrey D'Angelo, Marist College

This study surveyed faculty and students to investigate what factors affect students' class attendance with a focus on the impact of instructors use of online resources. We hypothesized that: 1) Handing in assignments serves as a strong motivation to attend class, 2) Ability to submit assignments electronically eliminates this motivation; and 3) electronic submission of assignment may reduce attendance. These hypotheses were supported by longitudinal data collected prior to this investigation.

Data from the 405 students' surveys included demographic questions, information on students' grade point average, number of student absences, factors that contributed to students' absences, the impact of online submission of assignments on student absences, and whether having an assignment due affects students' absences. Surveys collected were approximately 58% female and 42% male, which is the approximate ration of females to males at Marist College.

Results from students' surveys indicated that males tend to miss class more often (significant Chi-Square and T-Test) and males were more likely to miss class if turning in assignments online (significant Chi-Square). Students reported most frequently missing class due to death of family/friend, personal emergency, sport event, and sickness/injury.

Data indicated a significant negative correlation between number of classes missed and GPA (R = -.367) and a significant negative correlation between classes missed and how often students skip class on days that an assignment is due (R = .167).

Data from the 94 faculty's surveys included demographic questions, faculty attendance policy, method faculty use to collect student assignments, use of online resources, opinions regarding use of online resources, number of student absences per semester, and whether or not various methods for

turning in assignments affected students' class attendance. The responses were comprised of approximately 46% males and 54% females, which is representative of the proportion of male and female faculty at Marist College.

Results from faculty's surveys indicated that faculty gender had no significant effect on strictness of attendance policy. The six faculty who indicated they noticed a negative effect on attendance when online submission was allowed were female all female (five were psychology; one was philosophy).

It should be noted that class attendance rates are very high at Marist College (i.e., students rarely miss class), classes are small (average = approximately 25 students per class), there are no large lecture classes, faculty are mandated to state an attendance policy on the course syllabus, and faculty are encourage to take attendance and report excessive absences to a central office.

Future research possibilities include:

- Add to the student survey question: factors that affect your attendance
- Ask faculty to rate strictness of attendance policy
    - Objectively defining it is too challenging
- Ask faculty how they run the class
- Rewrite faculty question: how many absences/semester
- Add options to use of online based on "other" response
- Objectively measure attendance rates

Student and faculty joint research is valuable because students learn a great deal more than merely learned on class required research project, student reported high levels of personal accomplishment and as being more competent regarding research skill as compared to peers, enhances resume, and reduces faculty/student barriers.

Student Survey

The following are questions regarding class attendance. Circle or write in the answer that best describes you personally and your class attendance habits.

1. What is your gender?   Male   Female
2. What is your major?   _____

3. What year are you?

    A.   Freshman

    B. Sophomore

    C. Junior

    D.   Senior

4. What is your GPA?

    A.   3.7-4.0

    B.   3.3-3.69

    C.   3.0.-3.29

    D.   2.7-2.99

    E.   2.3-2.69

    F.   2.0-2.29

    G.   Below 2.0

5. For your typical course (a 3 credit course that meets twice a week for 15 weeks; 30 classes), how many times do you miss class in a semester?

    A.   Never

    B.1-2

    C.3-4

    D.   5-6

    E. More than 6

6. If you have been allowed to hand in assignments online, how has this affected your attendance?

    A.   It does not affect my attendance to class

    B. I am somewhat less likely to come to class when I am allowed to submit assignments in online

    C. I am much less likely to come to class, if I can hand assignments in online

7. For each circumstance below please indicate how often it causes you to miss class. Circle the number that corresponds to the likelihood of it causing you to miss class (1 being very unlikely to cause you to skip, 5 being very likely)

	Very unlikely				Very likely
No assignment to turn in or no quiz or test that day	1	2	3	4	5
Bad weather (assuming class is not cancelled)	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling tired after staying up late.	1	2	3	4	5
Being sick or injured	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of interest in the course	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of attendance policy	1	2	3	4	5
Personal emergencies	1	2	3	4	5
Death of a family member/close friend	1	2	3	4	5
Required to attend an event (sports, class trip, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Boring teacher	1	2	3	4	5
Work at a job or tired from working a job	1	2	3	4	5
You have to complete another class assignment	1	2	3	4	5
The teacher is callous or unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please list any other factors not listed above that could result in skipping class and indicate how often it causes you to skip. (Leave blank if you can't think of additional items).

Cause of skipping class

Very rare

Very often

_____   1   2   3   4   5

_____   1   2   3   4   5

_____   1   2   3   4   5

9. How often do you skip class on days that assignments are due?

Very rare   Very often

1   2   3   4   5

Thank you for your assistance!

Faculty Survey

The following survey collects data regarding your personal policies, beliefs, and experiences regarding student attendance. Please answer the questions by circling a letter or writing in the spaces provided.   After you complete the survey please return it via mail to the address on the back of the survey.

1. What is your gender?   _____Male   _____Female

2. Within what major field do you teach (ex. psychology, business)?____   _____

3. How many years have you been teaching (include any prior institutions)?   ____(Years)

4. What percentage of the students' final grade is attendance?

    a. Attendance does not affect grade

    b. 1-5%

    c. 6-10%

    d. 11-15%

    e. 15-20%

    f. More then 20%

5. How many unexcused classes (without documentation or emergency reasons) do you allow students to miss before an absence adversely affects their grade?

    a. 1

    b. 2

    c. 3

    d. 4

    e. 5

    f. More then 5

 Please answer the following in regard to a standard 15 week course that meets two days a week (30 sessions in total)

6. How often do you give (during class hours) quizzes, tests, or assignments due by the end of class that students are **not** allowed to make up at a later date?

    a. Every class

b. Every other class

c. Every 3-5 classes (About 10 times a semester)

d. Every 6-8 classes (About 5 times a semester)

e. Every 9-11 classes (About 3 times a semester)

f. Fewer than once every 11 classes (Fewer than 3 times a semester)

g. Never

7. How often do you announce assignments during class that will be due the next class (date due not **indicated on the syllabus)?**

a. Every class

b. Every other class

c. Every 3-5 classes (About 10 times a semester)

d. Every 6-8 classes (About 5 times a semester)

e. Every 9-11 classes (About 3 times a semester)

f. Fewer than once every 11 classes (Fewer than 3 times a semester)

g. Never

8. How often do you test or quiz students solely on the material that was covered in the previous class?

a. Every class

b. Every other class

c. Every 3-5 classes (About 10 times a semester)

d. Every 6-8 classes (About 5 times a semester)

e. Every 9-11 classes (About 3 times a semester)

f. Fewer than once every 11 classes (Fewer than 3 times a semester)

g. Never

9. How often do students turn in assignments in a form (i.e., e-mail, e-learning, mailbox, your office) other than directly to you in class?

a. Every class

b. Every other class

c. Every 3-5 classes (About 10 times a semester)

d. Every 6-8 classes (About 5 times a semester)

e. Every 9-11 classes (About 3 times a semester)

f. Fewer than once every 11 classes (Fewer than 3 times a semester)

g. Never

Please answer the following in regard to your typical course:

10. On the average, how many students are enrolled in your typical course?

   a. 5-10
   b. 10-15
   c. 15-20
   d. 20-25
   e. 25-30
   f. 30-35
   g. More then 35

11. On the average, what is the total number of absences in one of your typical courses (totaled for the semester)? Note: please answer total absences, not per student. _____

12. Do you use online services to enhance your course? ____ yes ____ no If yes indicate which of the following you use.

____ llearn/elearning   ___emailing students   course readings   lecture outlines

____ lecture transcripts   ___discussion groups   submitting homework

____ online graded tests   other (please specify)   _____

11. What have you found to be beneficial and/or disadvantageous of allowing to students to turn in assignments outside of class (e-mail, e-learning, or mailbox)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Have you noticed a change in student attendance when you allowed assignments to be handed in outside of class? If yes, how significant and in what direction was this change?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Impact of Online Resources on Student Attendance and Academic Standing

Linda L. Dunlap Ph.D.

Jeffrey D'Angelo

Purpose/Hypothesis

- Handing in assignments serves as a strong motivation to attend class

- Ability to submit assignments electronically eliminates this motivation

- Electronic submission may reduce attendance
  - Supported by longitudinal data

- Explores other factors affecting student attendance

- Surveyed students and faculty

Student Surveys	Faculty Surveys
• Basic demographic questions	• Basic demographic questions
• How often students miss class?	• Attendance policy
• What factors contribute to students missing class?	• Outside submission for assignments?
• Does online submission affect class attendance?	• Use of online resources
• Do students miss class on days assignments are due?	• Absentee rate

Participants: Students

- 405 Marist College Students (10% of population)
- Gender
  - Representative sample of 58.5% Female 41.0% Male
- Class year
  - 32% Freshman; 27% Sophomores; 23% Juniors; 13% Seniors
- School of study
  - 30% School of Social and Behavioral Sciences
  - 28% Management
  - 8% Liberal Arts
  - 6% Mathematics/Computer Science
  - 4.4% Science
 - 21.7% Communications

Participants: Faculty

- 94 Marist College Faculty

- Gender
  - Representative sample 45.7% female, 54.3% male

- Years Teaching: = 16.2; SD = 11.53

- School
  - 33% School of Social and Behavioral Sciences;
  - 12.8% Management; 22.3% Liberal Arts;
  - 13.8% Mathematics/Computer Science; 9.6% Science
  - 8.5% Communications

Submission Outside of Class

- 73% of faculty allow submission outside of class (electronic, mailbox, etc.)
  - 10% allow it every class or every other class
  - 12% allow it 10 times a semester
  - 12% allow it 3 times a semester
  - 30% allow it fewer than 3 times a semester
  - 27% don't allow it

- 26% of faculty allow submission online

Faculty Response Rates Across Schools
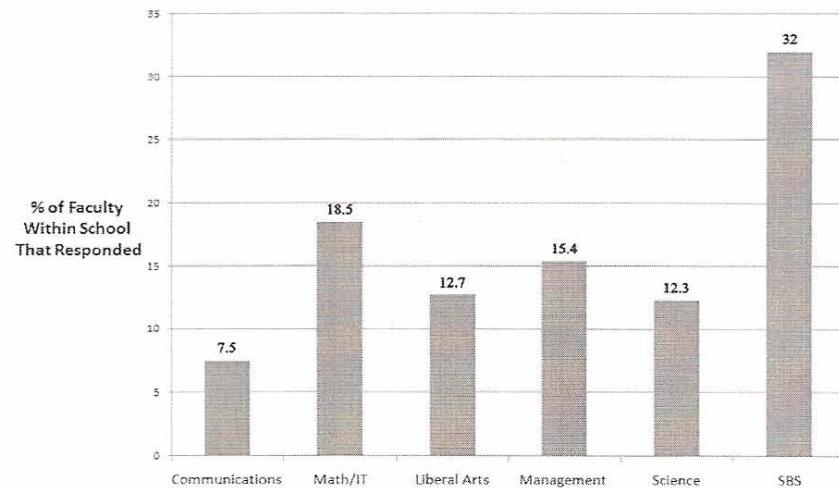
Student Responses Across Schools

Online Services Faculty Use
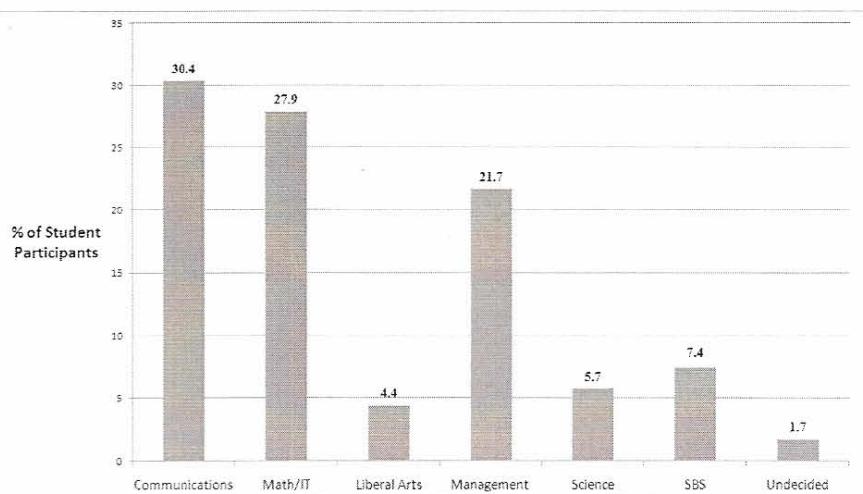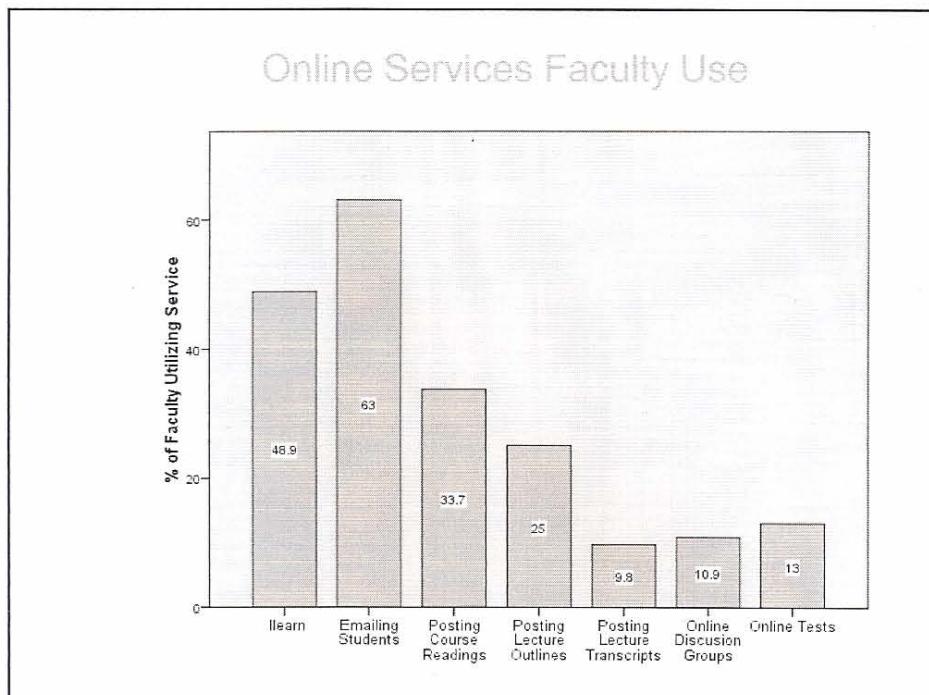
Faculty Responses To "Other Online Activity"

Faculty: Other Electronic Sources	Count
Links	6
Personal website	3
Blogging	2
Articles	2
Videos	2
Syllabus	1
Special software	1
Assistance	1
Total	18

| Students: Other Response Factors Effecting Attendance	Count
Trip/going home	22
Good weather	18
Irrelevant class	17
Oversleep	12
Alcohol related	11
Laziness	10
Friends/peer pressure	10
Movie/video games	7
Mood reasons	7
Transportation issues	7
Didn't do hw	7
Events (concerts etc.)	6
Morning class	4
Nap	3
Teacher incompetent	3
Forgot	2
Below max. absences/good grades	2
Subject matter irrelevant	1
No work due/already turned in	1
Temperature in classroom	1
Night class	1
Poor grades	1
Tired from sport	1
Total	154

Demographic Effects

Students

- Males: tend to miss class more often
  - Chi-Square and T-Test

- Males: more likely to miss class if turning in assignments online
  - Chi-Square

- Males: more likely to miss class if teacher is unpleasant and if teacher is boring
 - Contradicts research

Faculty

- Gender: No significant effects on attendance policy

- Males tend to allow more absences
  - $r = .202$ (significance = .07)

- Years Teaching had no significant effect on strictness

- The 6 that noticed a negative effect on attendance when online submission was allowed were female
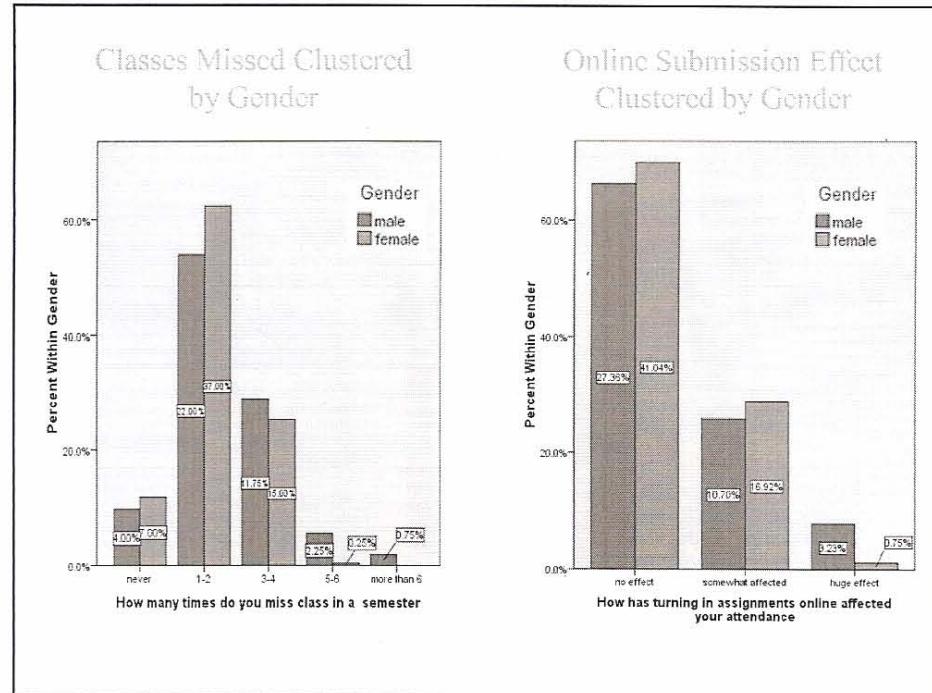
Attendance Trends

- Students who tend to miss class on days that assignments are due
  - Tend to miss class if online submission is allowed
  - Tend to miss class if there is no assignment due, quiz or test that day

- Students with lower GPAs tend to miss class more often
  - $R_s = -.367$

- Students with lower GPAs are more likely to miss class on days that assignments are due
  - $R_s = .167$

Reasons Students Miss Class
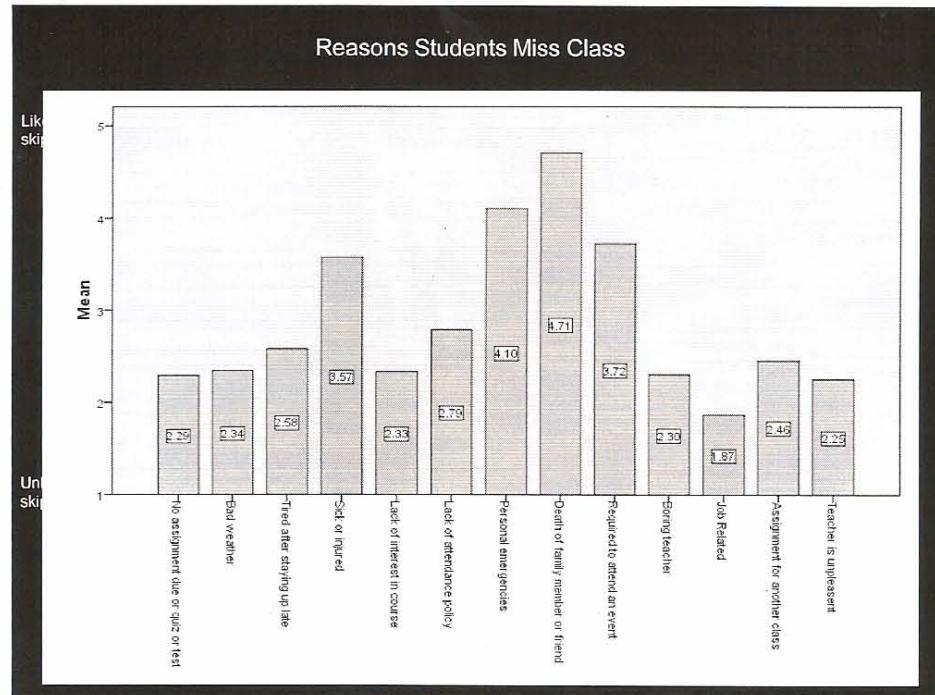
Faculty Comments: Online Submission

- 64% were positive, 36% were negative

- Notable comments:
  - Its an easy excuse to blame not having homework on technology errors (10 comments)
  - Too much work to print and grade (9 comments)
    - Not necessary
  - Computer reading is difficult
  - Increased communication between student and faculty

Student Reported Effects of Online Submission

- 31% are less likely to attend class if allowed to submit online

- 81% very rarely skip class on days that assignments are due.

- Having no assignment to turn in and no quiz or test is a slight motivation not to go to class
  - Mean likelihood of skipping class as a result: 2.3 out of 5

- 7 commented in "other" response they if they

Faculty Reported Effects of Online Submission

- 93.6% indicated submission method has no effect on attendance
  - Of the 6 faculty (6.4%) who saw a negative change, 5 were psychology professors
    - May have been influenced by researchers
  - One faculty member verbally stated that online submission would increase attendance

- Discrepancies between student and faculty reports

Conclusion

- Students report being motivated to attend class by in class submission

- Students less likely to attend class if no assignment is due or if online submission
  - Supported by longitudinal data
  - Contrary to faculty beliefs

- Avoid Online Submission?
  - Probably not
  - Many advantages

Validity Concerns

- Students were recruited via classes
  - Those not attending class could not fill out surveys
  - High attendance records
  - Limited to specific majors depending on the class we were invited to

- Many variables effecting attendance
  - Difficult to isolate any one variable

- Question regarding number of absences on faculty survey was unclear

Future Research

- Rewrite question on faculty survey: number of absences in your typical course

- Add options to the student survey question "factors that affect your attendance"
  - Based on "other" responses

- Add options to faculty question use of online resources
  - based on "other" response

- Ask faculty to rate strictness of attendance policy

Students: Other Response Factors Effecting Attendance	Count
Trip/going home	22
Good weather	18
Irrelevant class	17
Oversleep	12
Alcohol related	11
Laziness	10
Friends/peer pressure	10
Movie/video games	7
Mood reasons	7
Transportation issues	7
Didn't do hw	7
Events (concerts etc.)	6
Morning class	4
Nap	3
Teacher incompetent	3
Forgot	2
Below max. absences/good grades	2
Subject matter irrelevant	1
No work due/already turned in	1
Temperature in classroom	1
Night class	1
Poor grades	1
Tired from sport	1
Total	154

Marist: High Attendance Rates

- Marist is unique
- High attendance rates
  - Faculty are mandated to state an attendance policy
  - Small classes
  - Faculty: absence/student
    - $\overline{x}$ = 1.0 SD=.82
  - Student: 69.2% miss class less than 3 times/semester
  - Lowered the chance of finding significant differences

Faculty Reported Class Size
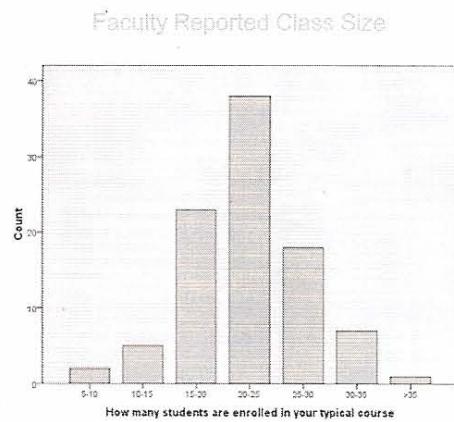
Value of Student-Faculty Research

- Never learned so much from any one project
  - Complexity of research
  - SPSS
  - Making Surveys
  - Statistics

- Sense of reality and accomplishment
  - One of the first "real" projects I have worked on in academia

- Far ahead of peers

Moving Classroom Discussions Online

Jeffrey S. Baker, Ph.D.

Rochester Institute of Technology

Students at a large technologically oriented university present a number of challenges in teaching a course in humanistic psychology. The institution attracts students who tend to be introverted and thus less likely to discuss personal issues with others. The university includes a fairly large population of international students with varying degrees of ability to communicate in the English language. Many are better versed in written rather than spoken English. A further complication is that many of the upper level undergraduate classes include students who are deaf or hard of hearing who need to communicate with hearing students through an interpreter or the use of electronic devices. Relatively large class sizes and the physical layout of classrooms also form barriers to participation. This makes it very difficult to start and sustain a classroom discussion in a psychology course that deals with personal issues.

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) is a specialized university with approximately 16,000 students. The majority of its students have technical majors, although they are also required to take a core of liberal arts courses and many have liberal arts minors or concentrations. Many technical fields seem to attract students who are at least somewhat introverted and who are reluctant to discuss feelings and personal issues. This proved to be a challenge for this author who was assigned to teach a course in humanistic psychology. This turned out to be only one challenge of many.

One of the eight colleges at RIT is the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) which attracts both deaf and hard-of-hearing students from the United States and other countries. NTID students typically communicate either through American Sign Language (ASL), or for some hard-of-hearing students, with the aid of electronic devices. Students who are hard-of-hearing may request that their classes have C-Print captionists who provide real-time transcripts of classroom proceedings displayed as text on a computer screen and also stored as notes for review. These communication differences lead to difficulties with interaction between students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and others in the class.

As a well regarded institution, RIT also attracts students from quite a few other countries, many of whom do not have English as a first language. While most of these students have a high level of skill in reading and writing in English, most are less skilled in verbal communication. This can make it difficult to follow a class discussion, especially when primarily English speaking students are using contractions and colloquialisms.

As enrollments have increased, the amount of classroom space has remained relatively static. At times, this has resulted in small classes being held in large lecture halls or other spaces with immovable furnishings. In many of the regular classrooms, tables seating 4 or more students are placed in tight configurations that make it difficult to move them to facilitate small group discussions. In the last classroom in which the course was taught, thirty five students, an instructor, 2 ASL interpreters, and a captionist (with computer stand) were crammed into a just adequate space. Once a projector cart was added to the mix, it was more or less impossible for everyone to see each other, let alone move around.

The main source of the challenges was the nature of the course. In this class in humanistic psychology, class discussion was nearly essential to blend all of the elements of the course. There were many themes inherent in humanistic psychology that should have been integrated. Comparisons between the free-will orientation of humanistic thought and the determinism of psychodynamic and behavioral theorists need to be made. Assigned readings, such as Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning,* needed to be explored. Reactions to video presentations also required dialog.

With these constraints, a better method of communication between students was badly needed. Fortunately, a solution was readily at hand. Rather than try to have students interact in real time under difficult conditions, they could be allowed to communicate asynchronously using written English, a language that they all had in common, at least to a usable degree.

Fortunately, at RIT all classroom courses are provided an online course shell in the 'MyCourses' system which is a customized version of the course management system called Desire2Learn. This shell is typically used to post syllabi, assignments, and grades. However, it also includes all

of the features needed to conduct a fully online course, including discussion boards, and it is used in this way in fully online classes.

For this course, four asynchronous discussions were set up in the course management system. These corresponded to major reading assignments in the course (students were assigned a series of books and papers to read, rather than a textbook). Students were given a week to participate in each discussion. Original postings on the topic were due on Wednesday, and reply comments to at least two other students were due by Saturday. To give students something to think about before participating, a brief summary of the material to be explored was given in class before each discussion.

The initial posting for each student involved some scholarship. Students were expected to have read the assigned material and refer to it specifically in their posting. They were required to include additional information from other sources where available and to cite and list the sources in APA format.

Reply comments were allowed to be informal in order to encourage responding. Students were instructed that their replies needed to be substantial which meant that they should be at least a paragraph or two and should add new information, criticism (of the assigned material) or commentary.

The results were very encouraging. Taciturn students became 'talkative' and were able to reveal their feelings in the relative anonymity of the online environment. For example, some students were able to communicate their frustration at the feeling of impersonality and isolation on the campus. This was quite a surprise because there had been so many efforts to bring students together and involve them in the campus and community.

Students often expressed very deep connection with the material they had read. For example, in commenting on Frankl's book, dealing with his experiences in Nazi concentration camps, one international student wrote: 'I have heard several stories about holocaust during my schooling. However, I took your course and it was my first time to realize how much my life was taken for granted. I felt terrible to see what Frankl (1964) had faced through during the Concentration camp. After I read the book, I felt as if I was in the Concentration Camp…' In response, another

student contributed: 'I agree with your point on how we take life for granted, it's not every day that we slow down as individuals and realize what is going on around us…'

Some students even managed a bit of good-natured disagreement. In Martin Seligman's book, *Authentic Happiness*, the author discusses the idea that certain pleasures diminish with time, including the eating of ice cream. In disagreement, one student stated: 'I'm happiest when I'm eating ice cream. Of course, finding constant comfort in food is in no way healthy, but relying on sweets for happiness is not what I'm talking about. I merely wish to point out that I've never seen someone eat ice cream and frown at the same time.'

Other disagreements were more serious in tone. Again, about Seligman's book: 'I have some real issues with what I've read from the Seligman book so far…. For example, on page 56 Seligman has a whole section on the social life of very happy people…Viewpoints such as this have turned the word 'introvert' into something negative, as if it's some debilitating confliction that needs healing (Seligman, 2004, p .56) .'

Overall, moving classroom discussions online was successful. Communication was much improved and contributions were more substantial. Having time to think and do some research before responding contributed to higher quality responses. Allowing time to respond resulted in everyone being able to contribute. Providing a common language framework permitted interaction within a diverse group of students, allowing for them to engage each other in a much more meaningful way.

Collaborative and Original Research in 21ˢᵗ Century Undergraduate Experimental Psychology
Rachel E. Bowman, Ph.D., **Nina Tarner, Ph.D.**, & **Christina J. Taylor, Ph.D.**
Sacred heart University
Fairfield, CT

Overview

- Sacred Heart University places a strong emphasis on active and engaged learning.

- The College of Arts & Sciences houses the flagship Undergraduate Research Program.

- The Psychology major's core curriculum culminates in a series of experimental design and advanced psychology research courses.

Involving Students in Research

Helps students meet curricular based learning objectives including:

- Understanding and using the scientific method

- Putting ethical considerations into practice

- Applying content area knowledge to research design principles

- Over the years, research has evolved from a shoe-string budget, field-based approach to a Flagship Undergraduate Research Program with lab space and a yearly budget.

How Do We Involve Students in Research?

- All majors take 3 foundational courses in Research Design & Analysis

- Select students are invited to participate in a Psychology Capstone Research Course.

  o Research capstone courses are small, invitation only, upper level courses.

  o Focused on projects in a Faculty Member's area of expertise such as Social, Learning, I-O, Psychopharmacology, or Behavioral Neuroendocrinology.

  o Provide unique opportunity for transference of knowledge from content based classes to applied settings.

Social Psychology Advanced Research

- A Personal Perspective on Social Psychology: An Affair of the Heart

- The Influence of Physical Attractiveness on the Therapeutic Process

- Factors Affecting Behavior Toward People with Disabilities

- The Effects of Disability and Politeness on Compliance to a Request

- Stereotyping The Mentally Ill: Perceptions of Depressed vs. Nondepressed Males and Females

- A Replication of a Field Experiment with Unconventional Job Inquiries

- Bargaining for a New Car: The Knowledgeable Versus the Naïve Consumer

- Thinking of Accessorizing? The Effects of Eyeglasses and Nose Rings on the Perceptions of College Students

- Personal Regrets: Adolescence Through Old Age

- The Double Standard of Aging: Perceptions of Similarity and Dissimilarity Aged Couples

- Homophobia in The Town and The City: A Field Experiment on Responses to *Gays vs. Straights*

Research Capstone – Learning

- The effects of repeated testing on the spontaneous recovery of extinguished flavor preferences.

- Can retention intervals effect the spontaneous recovery of an extinguished flavor preference?

- Context effects and spontaneous recovery of extinguished flavor preferences.

- Acute and chronic stress and the consumption of high calorie vs. sweet foods.

Research Capstone – Biopsychology

- Chronic Stress: Is Flight or Fight Theory Relevant to Females?

- Examination of acute stress effects on spatial memory consolidation processes in male and female rats.

- Stress effects on anxiety and cognitive functioning in male and female rats are dependent on type of stress exposure.

- Short term restraint stress effects on cognitive function are temporally constrained.

- Acute stress, 1-hr restraint, does not alter standard sex differences in spatial memory, but may influence anxiety levels.

- Effects of restraint stress on anxiety and cognitive functioning are sexually dimorphic and task-specific

Why this work is important

- Many of these projects have been funded through internal grant mechanisms.

- Students have the opportunity to present research findings at the annual Sacred Heart University Research Poster Session, as well as regional conferences.

- Students have been included as co-authors on peer-reviewed published articles.

- Invaluable experience for academic growth and applications to graduate school.

Conclusions

- These research projects establish connections across the major curriculum content.

- Instills a greater appreciation for research across multiple domains by making research fun and accessible.

- This pedagogical approach is embodies a way of thinking beyond simple 'research principles'
    - Critical
    - Analytical
    - Synthesizing
    - Educated Consumerism

Simulation of Initial Assessments in Classroom Settings via Role-Play
John L. Theodore, Ph.D.
Iona College

An initial assessment is the first meeting between a mental health practitioner and a client. Initial assessments are varied, and rely largely on the type of professional conducting the interview, the needs of the person being interviewed, and the setting in which the interview takes place. When an initial assessment occurs in a mental health setting, most often a client's needs are assessed, diagnoses are given, and recommendations for future directions are suggested. Undergraduate, graduate, and other professional students in psychology and related mental health fields can benefit from learning how to conduct initial assessments. Benefits of teaching initial assessments in the classroom setting include helping students learn how to document a client's symptoms and needs. Initial assessments also teach students how to codify diagnostic and behavioral client presentations, build rapport with individuals, and sharpen critical thinking.

Though there are many ways to teach a student the methods of conducting an initial assessment, some common instructional techniques and tools include preparatory books, videographic media, role-play with peers, direct observation at training sites, and directly conducting initial assessments with clients at training sites. While these training methods offer many benefits, they also have specific drawbacks. For instance, written and videographic media do not allow students to experience initial assessments in real time. Though observation of initial assessments at training sites is an improved method of learning, this technique often does not give a student an opportunity to actually practice initial assessment techniques. To assist with the mastery of initial assessment techniques, some classrooms include role-play between peers. However, role-play in this manner can compromise the learning experience due to lack of guidance during the assessment and/or unrealistic portrayal of actual clients. Practicing initial assessments on clients in real treatment settings can be an ideal learning experience, yet trainees often report uncertainty or anxiety when doing so.

Role-play in a classroom setting designed specifically with the teacher as the client and the student as the practitioner is possibly a superior method of instruction for initial assessments. This model enables student learners to build personal experience as a practitioner of initial assessments in a supportive classroom environment. It also allows students to see realistic simulations of mental illness, experience what it is like to be the initial assessment interviewer in real-time, and sample varied assessment techniques prior to meeting actual clients. Finally, this method of teaching initial assessments allows students to receive real-time feedback and correction from the instructor in a controlled setting.

Preparing to conduct a simulation of an initial assessment in a classroom setting requires mindfulness and careful consideration on the instructor's part. The instructor should have prior clinical experience, experience with conducting initial assessments, ability to provide varied methods of initial assessment to students, and ability to role-

play a client with mental illness and related behavioral sequelae in a realistic manner. In addition, the instructor should role-play a client who is relevant to the students' program and anticipated degree, academic progress, level of training, previous coursework, and special needs. Ethical issues must be considered when doing this exercise. For instance, simulation of initial assessments might be ethical for clinical graduate or professional students in psychology. However, this activity at the undergraduate level might require modification and be limited to students in clinical internship classes, abnormal psychology classes, or psychological testing classes.

Students conducting the initial assessment may use pre-existing templates. These templates should be provided by the instructor, and many can be found in the literature and other instructional manuals. Students may be placed into treatment teams and divide the different tasks of the assessment among team members. The time length of the role-play may be determined ahead of time by the instructor, and should be based on the needs and types of students in the class.

To simulate an initial assessment via role-play, the instructor playing the client should sit in front of the class and face the students. During the role-play, the students in the treatment team should directly face the instructor. The other students in the class who are observing the role-play may sit directly behind the student treatment team conducting the initial assessment. Video display devices and projectors may be used to enhance the experience by showing the behaviors of the instructor and the students in the role play to the entire class in real-time.

At the end of the simulation, a group discussion among all class members is important. During this discussion, the students and the instructor should address aspects of the client presentation, student assessment style, clinical indications, diagnostic hypothesizing, and recommendations. As part of grading student achievement during the activity, the instructor might consider examining the following components: data-gathering skills, assessment style, clinical interaction, rapport, ethical behaviors, counter-transference issues, and difficulty of patient presentation. If grading for the assessment project also includes a written component, some factors of interest might include writing style, accuracy of observations and diagnoses, and construction of meaningful recommendations.

The instructor should be aware of challenges when simulating initial assessments via role-play in classroom settings. First, despite all efforts of the instructor, it might be difficult to accurately role-play nuanced psychiatric symptoms. Second, the limited scope and setting of the simulation may dictate the extent to which the instructor can realistically role-play a diagnostic manifestation. For instance, role-playing a patient with violent behavior might not be practical or ethical in a classroom setting. Finally, it might be unethical to have some students engage in a mental health-related role-play. Providing students with an equivalent alternate project in lieu of the initial assessment role-play is suggested.

In closing, simulated initial assessments via role play in a classroom setting with the instructor as client and student as practitioner may enable students to become more skilled in diagnostic questioning and heighten their awareness of clinical factors. The role-play activity also can bolster students' practice confidence prior to clinical site placement. Finally, students generally enjoy this type of experiential learning activity.

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THANK YOU FOR COMING

HOPE TO SEE YOU IN 2010