



Individuals and communities transformed through human services

# 2012 NOHS National Conference Proceedings

Milwaukee, Wisconsin – October 2012

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## Table of Contents

### **Three Pronged Approach for Teaching a Mixed Mode Course**

Steve Kashdan and Stephany Hewitt . . . . . 3

### **HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Update from Botswana**

Shoshana D. Kerewsky . . . . . 9

### **Students in Jeopardy: Facilitating Student Success in Human Services Programs**

Shoshana D. Kerewsky and Lauren Lindstrom . . . . . 13

### **Understanding Today’s Human Services Student**

Brian Bagwell, Shawn Worthy, Antonio Ledesma, and Tara Tull . . . . . 16

### **Revising the Ethical Standards for Human Service Professionals: A Discussion**

Linda Wark and Shoshana D. Kerewsky . . . . . 20

### **Effective Teaching Methods to Engage Human Services Students: A Closer Look at Learner-Centered Teaching**

Lynann Butler . . . . . 23

### **An Update on New and Uncommon Drugs of Abuse**

Shoshana D. Kerewsky . . . . . 26

### **The Pre-Field Course: Mentoring Students to Successful Internships**

Kelly Felice and Tara Tull . . . . . 31

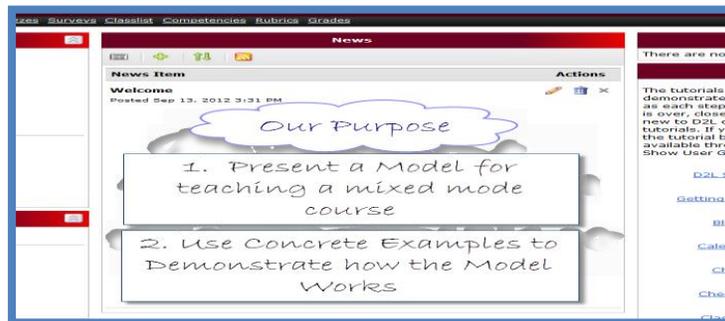
# 3 PRONGED APPROACH FOR TEACHING A MIXED MODE COURSE



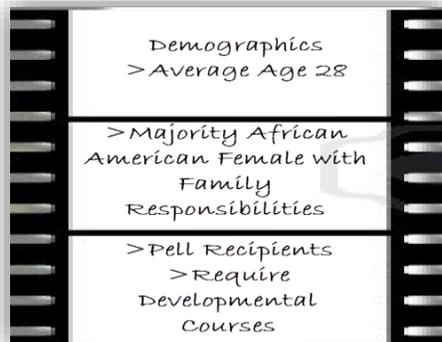
Steve Kashdan and Stephany Hewitt

## Abstract

This is an outline for a “3 pronged” approach to teaching a mixed mode or hybrid course. The method has been used in the Human Services department at Trident Technical College and continues to be a work in progress but has been relatively well received by students. It is designed to provide students with a clear understanding of how the online and in-class components work in a complimentary and integrative fashion. Students’ understanding of how the pieces fit together is part of the design, and we believe it supports their learning.



The purpose of our article is to present a unified model for the teaching of a mixed mode course – it will outline what goes online, what happens in class, and how the pieces work together to form a complete teaching unit. The idea is to create a unified whole that builds on itself as students go through the course. We will also show how we do it and how the components fit together.



This picture outlines the framework within we teach. Our student body serves an older population in general. Although the average age is 28, that by itself is misleading as the range is from 18 to the mid 50’s, and our students are typically those who are returning to school

after years out of school. The majority of our students are African American and women. The largest exception to this rule is in our addiction program where we typically have a higher proportion of men than in the other career paths. Many of our students start out in developmental courses and have to wind their way up through these to get to our Human Services courses. Many are also managing multiple responsibilities.

We have taken all of this into account as we have developed the model. We believe we need to teach in a way that allows for flexibility for our students but still provides them with an education experience that takes into account their needs and learning styles. We believe our students need a model that actively engages them in their learning and gives them a hands-on experience, so they can understand the information cognitively, emotionally, and personally.



This model works to promote engagement – engagement in the material, with each other, with the instructor, and a deeper engagement with themselves – hence the idea of having students learn at emotional, cognitive, and personal levels.



In developing this model, there were a couple of key goals we kept in mind:

1. We wanted to take the best features of in-class learning, that being the discussion, interaction, processing, explaining, and engagement aspects that can be done with the class to highlight, reinforce, and demonstrate the concepts needing to be learned. We wanted students to practice so that they could understand.
2. We also wanted to take what was best of online learning, a place for students to acquire information, to prepare for the classroom experience, and to come with some knowledge so that we could use the time in the classroom for the above referenced activities.
3. Finally, as alluded to earlier, we wanted to make sure that the components worked in unison, that they were complementary.



This is a key piece of the puzzle, if you will. We are working to design a course that works based on the principles laid out. Technology helps us do this, but the use of technology in-and-of-itself is not an end. It just helps us get there. Knowing how to use the technology, how to organize the technology, and when not to use various technologies are critical. The “cool” should never trump the utility of the tool you are using.



*Design is not just what it looks like; design is how it works. Steve Jobs*

Design leads to learning in our world, and if the students do not learn, then something did not work, and redesign is usually necessary. So, the model is a work in process.

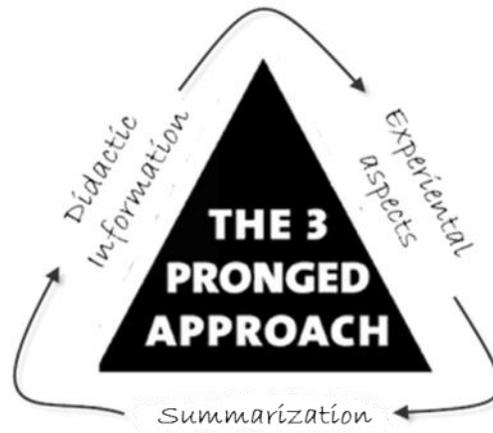


Before we get into the approach, we want to say a few words about the notion of Learning Support Mechanisms. We never make the assumption that students know what we want them to do or that they are always comfortable with technology. Our students are not digital natives; at least, a majority of them are not. Therefore, when confronted with an online course or component in a course that is delivered online, we never assume that they understand. We also never assume that students will be able to read the mind of the instructor and understand the order that the instructor wants them to proceed. Explaining what is wanted and including tutorials and instructions along the way are of critical importance. As a result, we feel that the inclusion of these Learning Support Mechanisms is critical in making the class successful.

A list of these mechanisms may include:

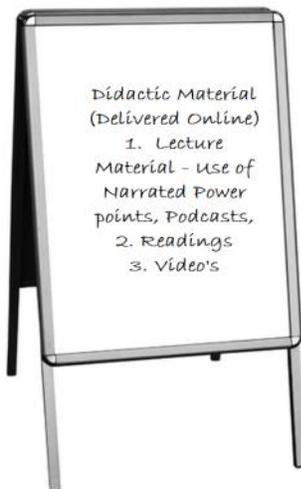
1. An explanation of how the course is designed so students understand how the pieces are complimentary or integrative.
2. Audio or video tutorials that explain what the instructor means when asking the student to do something.
3. Clear instructions – we use a Step 1, Step 2 . . . approach.
4. Instructions delivered and available at the time the student has to use them, not just at the beginning of the course.
5. Clearly laying out expectations for what the instructor is requiring.

6. Feedback to correct misunderstandings, mistakes, or poor performance by the students.



This is an outline of the 3 prongs of the approach. They are labeled as:

1. Didactic Information – This being the delivery of concepts, theory, definitions, labels, etc. that the students need to learn.
2. Experiential Aspects – This being things that the students are actively engaged in doing. All of this should be in support of the didactic learning.
3. Summarization – This being the combining of the experience and the information, and allowing students a mechanism to process the two which ideally leads to a real understanding of the material.



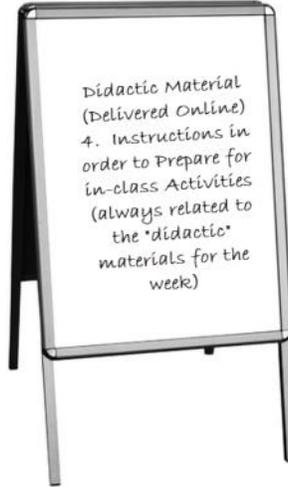
### **Didactic Material – Delivered online**

There are many ways that you can deliver this information:

1. We make extensive use of Narrated PowerPoint presentations, using primarily Adobe Presenter as the Technological Tool as the creative device to produce the “Online Lectures.” There are other ways to do this, but how the instructor does this is not that important, as long as the instructor does it.

2. Reading assignments are, of course, important.
3. Videos, whether they are self-videos that explain ideas,
4. Instructions are a critical aspect all of this to work as designed, the to do.

Posting instructions that are know that if they do not do the class, the classroom experience will not should be for the student is critical. On explain the model and the way the class to know what to do and what they need successful in the class.



produced or acquired concepts, etc. of the model. In order for students must know what

clear and letting students preparation work for be as productive as it the first day of class, I will work. Students need to prepare to be



## Experiential Learning

In this model, the focus of the classroom experience is on completing exercises, activities, or practicing skills. All of these activities should be, or must be, related to the reading, lectures, etc. that were delivered online. The idea is to make the concepts that students are learning about come to life. Also, the idea is that when we practice the skill or are involved in learning about a concept, we will remember it better. It is why we have students be active in the classroom.

The classroom is also the place to get direct feedback from the students, asking them:

1. Did you do the preparation work required to benefit from what we are doing in the classroom?

2. Are there any concepts or ideas that you (students) have questions about, need a further explanation of, are unclear about, etc.?

The classroom section serves as the check-in point for the students and the laboratory as a place to practice, to put into use what they have learned, and to get clarity about what they are learning.



## **Summarization**

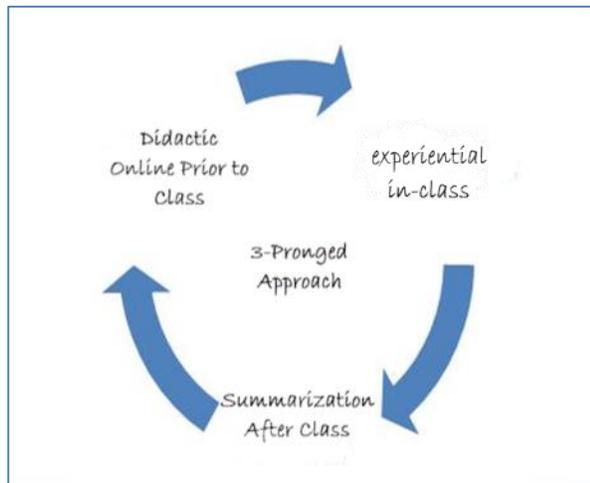
Once the students have gone through the first two prongs, they have learned about a topic, been exposed to the theory and concept, and have had the opportunity to practice or experience these concepts directly. Now it is time for the students to step away and process what they have learned. All of us know that in order to really understand something, we must look back at what happened and *process* the information. We debrief, we think it through; once outside the experience, we can look from the outside in and learn. So, there must be some mechanism to allow students to do this.

### **Methods**

There are multiple ways to do this, but it is important to include this in the cycle. We have used:

1. Reflective Journals (I never make the assumption that students know how to write reflectively so I include a Learner Support Mechanism, delivered online as I am teaching the students how to do something) – I ask some open-ended questions for the student to answer. I keep these to one page, and I make sure that the student is reflecting upon the learning experience.
2. Pseudo-Quizzes (where I ask open-ended questions to help guide them) – These look like a short answer quiz, but I do not grade them on the answers specifically, only on completion of the assignment.
3. Follow-up Activities – These might include interviewing a family member. There is a lot that you can do here.

Often times, I learn a great deal about what the students are learning or not learning and it helps me guide my teaching and make adjustments along the way.



This is again a look at the 3-Pronged Approach. A few key points:

1. Always start by explaining to the students what you are doing. In essence, explain the model. This is best done in class (It breaks the rule a little as it is somewhat of a didactic discussion but should be accompanied by some classroom activity to give the students the feel of the class).
2. The online session is the beginning of the cycle as it leads to the in-class session and then summarization.
3. This all requires some flexibility but flexibility within a structure that should make sense to you as an instructor and to your students.

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## HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Update from Botswana

Shoshana D. Kerewsky

### Abstract

HIV/AIDS continues to devastate many countries. Botswana has been especially hard-hit, with the world's second highest prevalence rate for adolescents and adults. This article provides information about the problem, effective and ineffective interventions, and future directions for HIV/AIDS work in Botswana, as well as implications for decreasing HIV infection in other countries.

### Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges the Council on International Educational Exchange's Ping Award and University of Oregon's Office of International Affairs Grant, which supported participation in CIEE's International Faculty Development Seminar in Gabarone, Botswana.

## **Introduction**

HIV/AIDS continues to be a major health care and economic problem in sub-Saharan Africa. While recent theories of the origin of HIV are more sophisticated than earlier ones, and point to potential social interventions, rates of infection remain very high in Botswana and other countries in the region. Intervention programs based on our contemporary understanding of HIV's transmission vectors may prove to be more effective than efforts thus far.

Unless otherwise noted, information about HIV in Botswana was obtained from the health department, ministry, agency representatives, and other officials in Gaborone, Botswana during the Council on International Educational Exchange's June, 2012 International Faculty Development Seminar in Gaborone, Botswana.

## **Contemporary Theory of the Origin of HIV**

Evidence exists for earlier strains that did not cause major person-to-person outbreaks. Butchering of simians transmitted the virus (two major strains from two primate species). Rapid infection, possibly due in part to the use of unsterilized needles for polio vaccine injections, caused "passaging" (transferring cells into new growth medium, thus strengthening the virus). Multiple sexual partners (which does not explain why some countries are still harder hit than others) and concurrency, or more than one current partner, may be part of the explanation (Epstein, 2007; Timberg & Halperin, 2012).

## **Botswana in Context**

HIV/AIDS is an ongoing and sometimes catastrophic pandemic, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the world's estimated current 34,000,000 HIV cases, 22,900,000 live in sub-Saharan Africa and 320,000 live in Botswana. Botswana has the world's second highest HIV prevalence rate among 15-44 year olds, despite many available programs and interventions. While this might be more expected of a poor, unstable country, Botswana is prosperous and peaceful compared with many of its neighbors (Avert, n.d.a; Avert, n.d.b).

## **Background**

Botswana has a relatively war-free history. It was never a colony but instead was a British protectorate. Most Botswana people are of Bantu ethnic origin. Some are San or other Bushman ethnic groups. The country has non-conflict diamond wealth. The population is low, about 2,000,000 (Central Intelligence Agency, n.d.).

## **Possible Major Vectors for HIV Transmission in Botswana**

Ministry officials and others believe that the current major vectors for HIV transmission in Botswana are concurrent sexual partnerships, transactional sex (including prostitution; trading sex for money, goods, and favors; and cross-generational transactional sex), and a low rate of male circumcision. In addition, improved roads create mobility, social disruption, and opportunities to trade sex for money.

## **Church Response to HIV/AIDS**

About 70% of Batswana identify as Christian. Churches were initially fairly condemning of people with HIV. Some churches have shifted their stance (Togarasei & Mmolai, 2011).

## **Treatment in Botswana**

The government of Botswana provides universal access to antiretroviral medications, by university-trained staff and medical practitioners, plus paraprofessionals. There is reasonable infrastructure for service delivery in more urbanized areas. However, many Batswana still utilize traditional healers instead of, or in addition to, allopathic medicine.

## **Youth with HIV**

HIV is generally well-controlled in children and teens. Services are provided through Botswana-Baylor Children's Clinical Centre of Excellence and other organizations. Childhood mortality is low thanks to ready access to antiretroviral medications.

## **What Accounts for Botswana's High Infection Rate?**

It is worth considering whether Botswana's high infection rate actually reflects better HIV monitoring. Botswana's monitoring is more effective than in many nearby countries, which may be at war or have highly ineffective or corrupt governments. HIV may not be routinely tested for in poor countries or those at war, in which case HIV-related deaths may be attributed to starvation, diarrhea, malaria, or other causes, if documented at all. Affluent countries may be vulnerable to higher transmission rates due to the availability of extra money for transactional sex, a longer lifespan in which to become infected and symptomatic, better overall health to keep a person alive and transmitting the disease, and better roads and mobility.

## **Stigma and Beliefs that Decrease Utilization of Treatment**

In Botswana, a person's life is considered private. People don't talk about HIV. People don't reveal that they have HIV. HIV is still considered a sign of promiscuity, evidence of witchcraft, or evidence of an offense to supernatural beings. In addition, homosexuality is illegal and carries a jail sentence.

## **Current Campaigns**

Current campaigns to combat new infections and the spread of HIV include education, condom distribution, and adult male circumcision. It is not clear if education and information is offered in languages other than English and Setswana. See Watanabe (2008) for further discussion of ethnic marginalization. In addition, education may not include "zero grazing"-style messages, which were eliminated under PEPFAR in favor of the condom promotion. See Timberg and Halperin (2012) for extensive discussion of these campaigns, particularly adult

male circumcision. It is worth noting that donor interest, rather than a community's needs, may shape programs.

### **Is it Working?**

Officials of the government of Botswana assert that it is. They state that we will not be able to see the results of current intervention (e.g., increased life expectancy) until the next big census (which occurs every 10 years). Presumably, HIV testing statistics will also show the anticipated progress. Botswana has a lower rate of diversion of aid for personal gain than some countries.

### **Challenges for Botswana**

When Botswana is no longer eligible for external funding that supports medication, who will shoulder this economic burden? What will happen to people who require medication?

A substantial number of people do not believe that HIV causes AIDS. Traditional healing practices may cause the exchange of blood or delay allopathic treatment. Botswana has a tradition of polygamy, which probably contributes to concurrency and some forms of transactional sex. It is possible that both men having sex with men and drug use will increase over time, creating additional potential vectors.

### **Implications for Human Services**

Information about risk factors, cultural beliefs, and local practices may provide direction for human services practitioners working with clients living with HIV whose heritage or country of origin is in sub-Saharan Africa. Interventions must be meaningful to the client and adjusted to the clients' cultural context. Statistics may not be accurate, up-to-date, or collected. In the absence of good data, simultaneous and complementary prevention and intervention approaches may be most effective. Human services practitioners must be reasonably conversant with the current literature on the benefits and problems associated with foreign aid.

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# **Students in Jeopardy: Facilitating Student Success in Human Services Programs**

Shoshana D. Kerewsky and Lauren Lindstrom

## **Abstract**

While most students manage their academic programs easily, there are always a few students who require extra guidance. This article provides a basic framework for identifying, understanding, and intervening with students who are having difficulty maintaining academic, emotional, and professional equilibrium. We use scenarios to highlight areas for faculty and staff to consider as they admit, work with, and graduate students.

## **Students in Jeopardy: Our Context**

Many schools are experiencing rising enrollments without commensurate increases in staff, faculty, or other supports. Some schools have an open admissions process and are not permitted to exclude any student from entering the major. Nonetheless, Human Services programs have a gatekeeping role and responsibility to protect the public. Programs must also meet CSHSE standards.

## **Working with Scenarios**

Use the scenarios and questions below as conversational prompts for your faculty/staff group. Use your responses to help you evaluate your program's processes. Build in student (and faculty/staff) checkpoints and supports to increase the opportunities to identify potential needs and problems before they worsen.

## **Scenario 1: During the Admissions Process**

Consider this composite, fictional scenario:

Kevin is a 22-year-old student in his first quarter of classes in the Mountain Valley Community College Human Services program. Kevin dropped out of high school at the age of 17 and was homeless for several years. Five months ago, he enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program and has been attending counseling and aftercare sessions faithfully. His case manager from the drug/alcohol program recommended that he attend community college to complete his GED. Although he reads very slowly, he was successful. After completing his GED, he enrolled in a few general education classes. His academic performance thus far has been fairly poor, with three Incompletes in his first two quarters at MVCC, but he is very passionate about working with high risk youth and now wants to major in Human Services. Kevin believes he can be a positive role model for these youth and inspire them with his insights on the value of education.

## **Scenario 1: Questions**

- What warning signs, red flags, or concerns do you identify in this vignette?
- What does your program’s “informed consent for being a student” consist of? What do students know about your program, your admissions process (including any required background checks for your school, program, or field study sites), and their responsibilities as students?
- What criteria does your application process attempt to identify, either to select students or screen them out?
- How can your program incorporate more strength-based assessment of potential students?

## **Scenario 2: During the Program**

Consider this composite, fictional scenario:

Pamela is a 37-year-old single mother of three children. She works part-time at a grocery store and attends college full-time. Her career goal is to provide counseling and support for victims of domestic violence. Pamela’s field study supervisors at the local women’s shelter really appreciate her work ethic and her positive interactions with the clients. Generally, Pamela is a good student, with strong writing and communication skills. However, her assignments are often turned in late, and all of her instructors are concerned about her sporadic attendance in classes. Lately, her grades seem to be slipping and she looks extremely tired.

## **Scenario 2: Questions**

- What are your observations and concerns?
- How would your program become aware of these issues?
- What could your program put in place to become aware of the issues raised in this vignette earlier than you do now?
- How would your program work with Pamela?
- What are Pamela’s strengths and how would your program include them in any intervention with her?
- How do you decide when to dismiss a student?
- When your program admits a student, what commitments do you make to support and retain that student?
- How does your program understand students’ responsibilities and accountability? How are these expectations conveyed to students? How are they evaluated and what are the consequences when students meet or do not meet these expectations?
- What has your program done in the past to build supports for students, and in what other areas can your program build additional supports?
- What referrals does your program tend to give to students, and how can you expand your referral base?
- When a student is overcommitted, has a medical issue, is pregnant, or cannot afford to attend school full-time, how can your program provide flexibility and alternatives?

### **Scenario 3: Preparing to Finish the Program**

Consider this composite, fictional scenario:

Kim is a 21-year-old international student in the Human Services program at AllState University. Kim grew up in South Korea and is attending the university with the financial support of her parents. She is highly committed to succeeding in the program so she can return to her home country and provide early intervention services to young children with disabilities. Kim has intermediate English skills and struggles with written communication and public speaking. With individual tutoring and assignment modifications from her instructors, Kim has completed her course work and field study requirements successfully. Partway through the final term of her senior year, one of Kim's classmates tells you that Kim's father is very ill and Kim has returned to South Korea. She only has one required class and her final oral capstone project presentation to complete in order to graduate.

### **Scenario 3: Questions**

- What privacy/FERPA issues may be present in this vignette and how would your program attend to these?
- How does Kim's status as a near-completer influence your decision-making?
- Is Kim meeting program competencies?
- Given the interplay between Kim's status in the program, real-world demands, and the program's competencies, make the case for speeding up her progress through the program.
  - Make the case for slowing it down.
- What are Kim's strengths and how could they be incorporated into the program's response to her current circumstances?
- Were the program's earlier interventions and supports for Kim adequate, or could they have been improved or changed? Where can your program be flexible and where does it seem important to hold the line?
- What are your program's "deal breakers" for advancement through your program or graduation?

### **Some Lessons Learned**

We have found the following to be very useful for preventing or decreasing academic turmoil for our students:

- Having a mechanism for faculty/staff to identify potential student issues early. In our program this includes weekly discussion with our undergraduates' on-campus supervision group leaders, faculty, staff, and student cohort representatives.
- Having an ongoing process for monitoring student success.
- Involving students in solution-based planning.
- Using transparent interventions.
- Engaging in program solidarity with faculty/staff commitment to avoiding triangulation and not undermining interventions.

## **Suggestions for Monitoring and Intervening**

- Develop standardized forms for documenting observations, interventions, recommended resources, and potential positive and negative outcomes for students.
- For example, create a confidential “watch list” to guide faculty/staff discussion and to be sure that student issues are not overlooked or lost at busy times of the year.
- Create a form for an assistance plan that identifies the problems or issues, requirements and deadlines for addressing these concerns, and resources (including the student’s strengths) that will help the student to be successful. Use this form as a transparent structure for a staff/faculty and student meeting, and include the student in its completion and as a signer.

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# Understanding Today's Human Services Student

Brian Bagwell, Shawn Worthy, Antonio Ledesma, and Tara Tull

## Abstract

Engaging in the advising process is a critical component of student success. A group of four faculty members in the Human Services Department at Metropolitan State University of Denver designed a survey to identify our students' obstacles to graduation in order to improve graduation and retention rates in the Human Services Department. Both quantitative and qualitative information were obtained and the results of the survey specific to academic advising were presented at the 2012 NOHS Conference in Baltimore, MD. While the findings confirmed some of the common beliefs about our students, others were surprising, and some information provided insight regarding programmatic changes that might improve academic success.

## Introduction

It is known that academic advising plays a critical role in connecting students with learning opportunities that will enhance their engagement in academia and the timely attainment of educational goals, both of which greatly influence the student's potential to succeed (Campbell and Nutt, 2008). The earlier students engage in the advising process has also been linked to higher probabilities of academic success, particularly for first-year college students (Graunke and Wosley, 2005). Studies that focused solely on the perspective of the student advisee also speak to the importance of the advising relationship in terms of the student's self-assessment as to the role a positive advisor/advisee relationship played in their academic success. A study by Scholsser, Knox, Moskovitz, and Hill (2003) indicated that students who reported high levels of satisfaction with their advising relationships added that those relationships became even more positive over time, while students reporting unsatisfying relationships with their advising relationships reported that their advising relationships worsened and became more distant over time. It becomes evident that engaging in the advising process is a critical component of student success and for this reason information in the presentation was focused in the area of academic advising.

## Method

Four faculty members and one student from the department participated in the design of the questionnaire used in this study. The completed survey had 57 questions. There were three primary categories of questions: a) demographic, b) personal/family, and c) academic success. The demographics questions selected were similar to those typically used in this type of investigation (i.e., age, sex, ethnicity, etc.). The academic success questions asked students about advising, their perception of what was important for them to be successful academically as Human Services majors, and these responses were used in eliciting the information that was selected for the NOHS presentation.

Students were recruited for the study by two emails from the Department Chair. The first email explained the rationale for the study. The second email reiterated points made in the first and also contained an internet link to the questionnaire. Students were not provided with any incentive to participate in the study and participation was completely voluntary. Students had approximately one month to participate in the study, but had no time limit when taking the questionnaire. Because participation was completely anonymous and online, there was no control for extraneous participants.

The survey designed to identify students' obstacles to graduation was sent to 484 Human Services majors at Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) in order to improve graduation and retention rates in the Department. Of those, 202 students responded (42% response rate) with the following demographics: 76% of the respondents were female, 37% were students of color, the mean age of respondents was 33 years old, and 58% of them qualified to receive PELL grants. Additionally, it was found that just under half were the first generation in their family to go to college.

While this is not the first study to explore some of the obstacles that stand in the way of student success, it is unique in that the population of students surveyed was limited to only undergraduate Human Service majors. The current study contributes to our understanding of this specific group of students and the issues they face in an effort to foster an environment that promotes academic success. Information specific to academic advising was chosen for the NOHS presentation.

## **Results**

As part of the survey, students were asked if they had any issues or concerns with departmental advising. Written responses revealed that most students *did not* have concerns. Of the 202 respondents to the qualitative question, 136 wrote an answer to this question. Of those, 71 stated "no" issue or concern, or some variation such as "n/a" or "not at this time;" 20 wrote positive comments about their advising experience; and 45 discussed concerns or provided suggestions.

Based on a content analysis of the written responses, the results revealed a number of patterns in the answers that emerged from both the positive and negative comments. This information was insightful for the department and will serve as a baseline for improving advising interactions with our students. Three specific themes emerged:

- Concerns for consistency of information or knowledge from advisor to advisor
- Access to advising
- Relationship with advisor

Some of the students reported specific concerns that included finding an appropriate agency for practicum and internship experiences, facing certain issues by students transferring to MSU Denver from another institution, and wanting more information about graduate programs. Multiple respondents shared another suggestion which was to assign a department advisor that would be available throughout the day/week.

## **The Department's Response and Where do we go From Here?**

The focus of this study was for the use and experience of advising for Human Services majors at MSU Denver and examining the relationships between a number of variables and academic advising. It is believed that these findings accurately reflect the students' advising experience in the Department. While the findings confirmed some of the common beliefs about our students, others were surprising, and some information provided insight regarding programmatic changes that might improve academic success. Clearly, there are findings in this study that will guide the Department's development of procedures and policies relative to advising. Specifically, the Human Services Department at MSU Denver is now working on the following:

- Delivering clear and consistent advising and educating students to better understand the advising process.
- Connecting students with resources on campus including scholarships and financial assistance.
- Creating an effective class schedule to meet student needs.
- Examining ways to modify class instruction to create more effective learning environments.

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# **Revising the Ethical Standards for Human Service Professionals: A Discussion**

Linda Wark and Shoshana D. Kerewsky

## **Abstract**

Nearly 30 members of the National Organization for Human Services gathered at the annual 2012 conference to discuss the revision to the Ethical Standards for Human Services Professionals. Presented here is a summary of their discussion.

Members of the Ethics Committee of the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) provided a workshop at the 2012 annual conference. The purpose of the workshop was to solicit member views on the revision to the Ethical Standards for Human Service Professionals (Wark, 2010). Rather than the attendee-guided discussion format used previously, members were asked to specifically address four domains selected by the authors.

The first area was which new material to include in the ethical code. This was an obvious theme in past discussions with members, but the authors chose to highlight three other areas which would provide more concentrated information than had been gained in the past: format, aspirational ethics, and adjudication. Thus, the second area was the format of the ethical code. Format could have included structural issues such as organization of subject areas, length of the code, and sections addressing particular groups of NOHS members.

The third area was the role of aspirational ethics in our ethical code. Aspirational ethics are principles-based versus compliance-based and are not an enforceable part of an ethical code. They serve to encourage members of a professional organization to strive for ideal or exemplary behavior (Fisher, 2007). Some judge the current NOHS ethical code to have aspirational ethics embedded in some of its standards while others do not. Finally, the last area, adjudication was given attention in the discussion. Adjudication is related to the processing of ethical complaints with consequences for members against whom the complaint has been filed. At this time, NOHS has no adjudication process.

## **New material**

Ethical codes tend to reflect changes in society (Neukrug, 2010). Not surprisingly then, attendees wanted guidance on the use of social media through the ethical code. Clear-cut standards would be useful to those members brought up in the social media age. Electronic communication, such as email, followed closely behind as a concern which the ethical code would hopefully address. Participants also suggested that standards to maintain expertise in using electronic communication be named.

Some attendees wanted expanded clarification on dual relationships and the multiple roles in human relationships. Becoming friends with ex-clients was an example of an ambiguous multiple role relationship.

Due attention was paid to diversity. There was discussion of whether or not the code should have separate standards for cultural competence or embed such standards within the code. One attendee sought to decrease confusion for users by not having a separate code. Other attendees agreed and submitted protests against separation of the primary ethical code and standards on diversity and cultural competence. One attendee suggested that a separation could make these standards seem less important or open separate standards to being ignored. On the other hand, some ethical codes in social sciences professions have separate documents for practice standards and cultural competence. An alternate opinion was offered to highlight those parts of the code and make them more obvious. Likewise, a strong discussion of social justice and related issues highlighted the need to examine this topic for inclusion in the revised code.

Several new topics came to light. One was related to a section in the ethical code on consequences for non-adherence. Another topic was concerned a way to define terms used in the code. Guidance for resolving ethical conflicts led to a suggestion for an ethical decision-making model. Further guidance was desired to resolve any potential conflicts between the NOHS ethical code and the HS-BCP ethical code. A description of the scope of practice for Human Service professionals was also proposed, and one attendee urged the group to make certain that there be an expansion of community practice guidelines.

With regard to the process of implementing the ethical code, attendees wondered about the gatekeeping functions of faculty and supervisors at internship sites. A member of the Council for Standards in Human Services Education was present and asserted the possibility that CSHSE could be helpful in communicating the use of the ethical code to accredited programs. Another attendee advised NOHS to help non-accredited programs understand they have a responsibility to encourage faculty and students to adhere to the ethical code.

Another thread of discussion emerged on the revision process itself. It was proposed that teams of reviewers could give feedback on drafts of the ethical code. Using NOHS members who are professionals in other professions' codes to help evaluate harmony and conflicts among codes was also suggested. NOHS members would vote on final drafts.

### **Aspirational Ethics**

The topic of aspirational ethics was pursued as a possible section in the code on the principles behind the ethical code. NOHS members' commitment to social justice and advocacy were two main areas of discussion.

### **Format**

Participants proposed that the revised code include thematically-organized subsections that would make the code easier to use. Technology-related suggestions included tying sections of the code to practice competencies using hyperlinks. In addition, key terms would be

hyperlinked. It could also be useful to college and university instructors if the organization allowed them to pull out sections for teaching purposes. Organizations could also organize standards around different users, including students. A final suggestion was to have a section that clarified the relationship between ethics and laws or policies.

## **Adjudication**

When asked about adjudication, a comment was made that an ethics code without a means to process complaints for violations is an ethics code with no teeth, so attendees pursued this topic also. Questions were raised about the purpose of the code and whether or not it should have educational, aspirational, or adjudicatory functions. Is it a measure of professionalism that could be used in educational and employment settings? Should NOHS have a gatekeeping function for the profession?

## **Suggestions**

Finally, a request was made for suggestions that had not been covered in the conversation so far. First, the National Organization for Human Services should ensure that both the national and regional conferences should have programming on ethics. A second suggestion was to make the NOHS ethical code more accessible on the NOHS website. Third, an investigation should be made into the absence of the NOHS ethical code in textbooks. Advocacy for inclusion, and not just in appendices, was urged. Last, it was suggested to the Ethics Committee that there should be readers for a draft of the revised ethical code who are students or persons early in their career for usability of the code. One attendee noted that a preface that would clarify values and principles, ethical decision making, and highlights in the code.

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# Effective Teaching Methods to Engage Human Services Students: A Closer Look at Learner-Centered Teaching

Lynann Butler

## Abstract

There are a number of strategies faculty can employ to engage students in the learning process, including creating a welcoming syllabus and having learners co-create test questions and choose assignments. The benefits and challenges of these and other learning activities will be explored throughout the paper.

How many of us remember staring out the window of our classrooms, daydreaming, while the teacher lulled us nearly to sleep with a boring lecture? How different it could have been for us as students – and how much better we can make it for the Human Services students we instruct. This paper will examine Learner-Centered Teaching strategies, including the benefits and challenges an instructor may face when implementing these methods.

Traditional teaching “covers” content, hoping much of it sticks. Instructors tend to make classes content-heavy, lecturing for hours and hoping students will remember the majority of the information for the test. Learner-Centered Teaching, on the other hand, encourages engagement on the part of students. There are a number of strategies instructors can employ to include students in the learning process, including having students choose their assignment. For example, students may decide to visit a community organization and complete a write up *or* take an exam. Perhaps students will decide whether to do an article review or conduct an in-depth interview with a professional in the field.

Regardless of the choices, the instructor has the ultimate say in the percentage of the grade either assignment may earn, as well as the basic guidelines. If the student chooses the interview in the example above, the professor chooses the minimum page requirements and perhaps the addition of a business card or contact information of the professional. The teacher chooses the due date, and the student feels more of an investment in the assignment because it was a choice, which encourages them to be active participants in their education.

Other methods to engage students include having them write their goals for the class on a piece of paper then crinkle the paper into a ball and toss the ball across the room. Another student then reads someone else’s goal. This is a fun, pressure-free way to get students to consider what they want to take away from the course. A midterm informal assessment is a helpful way for the instructor to receive feedback as well. The professor can ask students to anonymously write what’s working for them (in the class) and what’s not. Valuable feedback can be gained about the choice of textbooks, pace of the course, workload, relevancy of videos and guest speakers, etc.

Instructors may choose to implement such games as Jeopardy to review material before an exam or to play devil's advocate when debating the grey areas inherent in an ethics course. Perhaps writing a Minute Paper or doing a verbal review of what was learned before the end of each class would be helpful for students. Some professors allow students to do class-relevant, appropriate extra credit assignments, rewrite papers, or even retake exams, with the ultimate goal of student learning superseding a bit of extra work for the instructor. It may also be helpful to have specific questions outlined for students as they read their chapters in the textbook, so they have some guidance as to what to focus on as they read.

As faculty decide which of these strategies to employ, it is important to be mindful of where students are in the learning process. For example, it may be appropriate to assign something in an introduction level course that would be too simple for an advanced class. Some instructors have students in beginning level courses write sample exam questions. This serves several purposes: it assists students in reviewing material and encourages critical thinking ("Would this be a good test question?"). It also provides incentive to go through the process of creating test questions (and therefore studying), as there is always the possibility that the student's question may actually be used on the exam!

Some instructors are also rethinking the way their syllabus reflects their course and teaching style. Does the syllabus list a lot of rules, consequences, and policies? Or does it reveal a semester of growth, exploration, and wonder? In other words, is the initial snapshot of you as an instructor and the course as a whole the first impression you'd like to leave your students? Many faculty use a variety of techniques to make their syllabi welcoming. Some use cartoons, others links to articles or websites. Others use the syllabus as the foray into student choice, as discussed above, and still others use a "syllabus quiz" on the first day to ensure students have read and understand what is expected of them. Whichever strategies the instructor uses, the syllabus can be a powerful place to send the message that students have ownership in their learning.

Another key principle in Learner-Centered Teaching is allowing room for discussion, questions, activities, and exploration of the material. This takes time and what is sacrificed to some degree is straight lecture. By moving from the model of the instructor imparting knowledge, to students participating in their learning, means shifting the dynamics in the classroom. This may be challenging for some faculty who are expected to cover a certain amount of content and may struggle with deciding what gets sacrificed in order to encourage the depth of discussion and exploration that is desired.

Instructors are encouraged to make one or two changes per semester; not all strategies should be implemented at once. For example, an instructor may choose to change a syllabus one semester and give students a choice in their assignments the next.

In short, students learn more in-depth when they feel a sense of ownership in the learning process. This ownership may come from having more class discussion (and less straight lecture) or more choice in assignments or structure. Other strategies, such as a welcoming syllabus, may also contribute to a more learner-centered environment.

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# **An Update on New and Uncommon Drugs of Abuse**

Shoshana D. Kerewsky

## **Abstract**

This article describes several new and uncommon drugs present in the United States, including their appearance, reported and observable effects, treatment considerations, and other useful information.

## **Introduction**

“Drugs of abuse” does not refer to an unchanging list of substances. Communities experience the introduction of new drugs, new forms of drugs, and drugs from other cultures and countries, as well as shifts in users’ preferences. This article describes several newer and less-familiar drugs. Except where noted, information is from Rosenbaum (2012), *The New Face of Abused Drugs* or the author’s general knowledge.

## **A Note about Poisons**

Many inhalants (glue, paint, industrial solvents, etc.) are intoxicating but not, strictly speaking, “drugs.” They do not include a primary biochemical component that affects endogenous receptors to generate their effect. In other words, they may not primarily alter the mechanism of action of a neurotransmitter, but they do destroy physical structures. Some drugs, such as the mushroom *Amanita muscaria*, may do both.

## **Groups at Higher Risk**

Some drugs, especially native, plant-derived substances, pose a risk to broader groups of people in their areas of origin and, thus, greater availability. Regardless of their pharmacology and abuse appeal, many plant-derived drugs “imported” to the U.S., and “legal” synthetics, pose a higher risk to:

- Adolescents and young adults who are experimenting with intoxicants.
- People with Internet access, since many legal and quasi-legal substances can be purchased online from other jurisdictions.

### **Khat (*Catha edulis*)**

Also known as gat, qat, or miraa, khat is a plant chewed to produce energy and euphoria. The active component is cathinone. The range of distribution and manufacture stretches from Yemen, Somalia, and Ethiopia, with spreading circulation. Signs of use include amphetamine-like symptoms: agitation, tachycardia, hypertension, and psychosis. Benzodiazepines can be used as an intervention to manage agitation. Photo source: google images.



### **Kava (*Piper methysticum*)**

Also known as kava-kava, the extract of this plant is usually prepared for ceremonial and medicinal use as a mild sedative or anesthetic. The active component is kavalactones. It has a wide distribution in Pacific Ocean communities, including Hawaii, and is used in the U.S. as an herbal supplement (Wikipedia, n.d.c). Signs and symptoms of use and overdose include: somnolence, relaxation, anesthesia, potential for hepatotoxicity (may be associated with non-traditional formulations that include leaves and stem, not just roots), and possible potential for addiction. It is depicted in personal narratives as potentially highly intoxicating (e.g., Troost, 2006 and Frater, 2007). Photo source: Wikipedia, n.d.c.



### **Salvia divinorum**

Ingestion of this plant causes alterations of consciousness, including dissociation and hallucination. The active component is salvinorin A ( $\kappa$ -opioid and D2 receptor agonist), which may have medical uses. The range of distribution or manufacture is well-documented in Oaxaca, Mexico, and legal in many U.S. states. It is easy to grow and sold in garden centers (Wikipedia, n.d.e). Signs and symptoms of use and overdose include “. . . sedation, analgesia, gastrointestinal hypomotility, aversion, and depression” in addition to main effects (Rosenbaum, 2012). Potential for addiction appears low due to the nature of its opioid (Wikipedia, n.d.e; also, photo source).



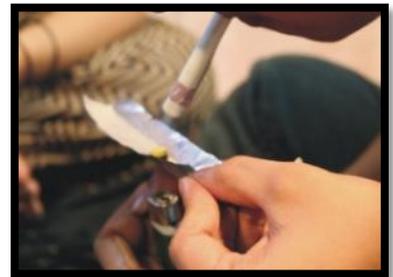
## Ibogaine

The plant extract or synthetic is used as a hallucinogen and dissociative. The active component is tryptamine, which also acts as an antagonist for some addictive substances. Ibogaine originated in Africa. Signs and symptoms of use include altered consciousness, vivid dreaming, and introspection. It may have some therapeutic effects in reducing addictions (Wikipedia, n.d.b). Photo source: [www.ibogaine.co.uk](http://www.ibogaine.co.uk).



## Ya ba

Also known as ya ma, this plant can be ingested or smoked and “chased” with a pill. The active component is methamphetamine. Ya ba has a wide distribution in Southeast Asian, Burma/Myanmar, and Laos, although it is illegal in Thailand. The symptoms of use and interventions are the same as for methamphetamine (Lintner & Black, 2009). Photo source: google images.



## “Bath Salts”

Also known as bubbles, meow-meow, MCAT, Ivory Wave, Vanilla Sky, Cloud 9, Red Dove, and White Rush, the ingredients consist of synthetic amphetamines and cathinones used as a stimulant. Bath Salts are variably illegal and have a widespread range of distribution. Signs and symptoms of use include “. . . elevated pulse and blood pressure; diaphoresis; agitation; and, with long-term use, psychotic features” (Rosenbaum, 2012). Benzodiazepines can be used for intervention if needed for managing agitation. Photo source: google images.



## “Smiles” (2C-I; phenethylamine)

A synthetic, white, crystalline powder or white tablet, it is frequently confused with other substances, including “bath salts” and mescaline. Sources are often unclear on whether this or other synthetics are “smiles.” The active component is phenethylamine. It was first available in the Netherlands, although it is now banned there. It remains available online, although illegal. Signs and symptoms of use include “. . . seizures, kidney failure [*sic*] and fatally high blood pressure,” painful insufflations (snorting), and death



(Weiss, 2012; Wikipedia, n.d.a). Effects last 4 to 12 hours, and are often described as “. . . a combination of MDMA and LSD, only far more potent. Users have reported a speedy charge along with intense visual and aural hallucinations that can last anywhere from hours to days” (Weiss, 2012; Wikipedia, n.d.a). Photo source: shine.yahoo.com.

## **Synthetic Cannabinoids**

Also known as Spice, K2, Chill Zone, Sensation, Chaos, Aztec Thunder, Red Merkury, and Zen, synthetic cannabinoids contain “herbal plant matter adulterated with synthetic cannabinoids” and are usually smoked (Rosenbaum, 2012). The active component is synthetic cannabinoids. It is illegal in some U.S. states, but widely available at gas stations and head shops as well as online. Signs and symptoms of use include “hypertension, tachycardia, nausea, vomiting, agitation, anxiety, paranoia, seizures, and suicidal ideation” (Rosenbaum, 2012). Interventions are tricky. Synthetic cannabinoids are “undetectable using standard DOA immunoassays directed at tetrahydrocannabinol” (Rosenbaum, 2012). During intervention, “. . . some cases have required bilevel positive airway pressure and admission to the intensive care unit for respiratory distress” (Rosenbaum, 2012).

## **Questionable Substances**

Some substances are alleged to have psychoactive effects, though this assertion is not well-supported clinically.

### **SSRI antidepressants.**

Some people are chopping and snorting SSRIs because they believe that this will delay orgasm. There is no evidence to suggest that this works.

### **Whoonga.**

Alleged, but not clearly demonstrated to exist, whoonga is smoked as a joint. Active components may include marijuana and antiretrovirals. It is primarily distributed in South Africa. It is reportedly “. . . described as highly addictive . . . [h]eavy cravings even on the first day of use . . . reduces both heart and lung function. In overdose, heart and lung function reduction becomes fatal. Withdrawal symptoms reportedly involve both craving and pain . . .”

(Wikipedia, n.d.f). This description may argue for heroin and toxins as key components. It is claimed that people with HIV are being robbed of their ARVs; however, investigators have found no substantiation. No ARVs were found in at least one chemical assessment. Photo source: www.mnn.com.



## **Unusual Deliveries**

Some unusual deliveries include hallucinogenic mushroom, or marijuana-topped pizza, found in Cambodia; opium milkshake found in Laos, and cane toad licking found in Australia and the U.S. Southwest. This latter is unlikely to work, as the secreted bufotoxin needs to be dried, however, deaths may be linked to the practice (Wikipedia, n.d.d).

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# **The Pre-Field Course: Mentoring Students to Successful Internships**

Kelly Felice and Tara Tull

## **Abstract**

Adult students confront many challenges in preparing to enter the fieldwork phase of their learning: many already juggle coursework, jobs, and families while needing to find a suitable practicum or internship placement. Students at this university historically were expected to make a choice of field agency, largely on their own, which would develop their skills, support their academic learning, and lead to a professional position. Many times students are unprepared to make the choice, either through lack of work experience or because of undeveloped life skills. Simultaneously, faculty may have uneven expectations of a student's ability to act independently or be unprepared to help students with unique needs. This paper discusses the creation of a pre-field course in a bachelor level Human Services program, the issues presented by students, the identification of new skills and content including résumé design and interviewing, and the building of professional attitudes needed in human services work. It addresses faculty concerns around student behaviors in the field and provides some preliminary outcomes from the course, viewed over five semesters, which demonstrate changes in preparedness for field work, in both students and faculty.

## **Background**

This urban university supports a current enrollment of 24,450 students. The median student age is 27 and most balance working at least part-time with obligations to family. The median age of Human Service majors is 31, revealing that the program attracts a higher percentage of non-traditional students. The Human Services program has 500-plus majors who choose an area of concentration from addiction studies, high-risk youth studies, domestic violence, mental health counseling, and nonprofit studies. All students must complete the 300-hour, 8-credit practicum and the 450-hour, 12-credit internship to complete the bachelor's degree in Human Services. Students studying addictions complete a second practicum to meet state licensing requirements. The course includes bi-weekly seminars with the faculty member supervising the practicum and internship, and where various topics, including supervision, cultural competency, and conflict, are discussed.

Because of the life circumstances of the older student, completing field work is inherently difficult, especially when the need for a placement must be balanced with other full-time work, other needed courses, and the demands of family life. While some students will have identified a goal for their fieldwork, such as working with addicts, the elderly, or high-risk teens, many others just beginning to explore may find practicum to be an eye-opening experience. For example, some students easily found their appropriate position and clientele. Others, however, realized they were unprepared for the work, the position, or the constituency. Although prepared in the classroom for work geared to assisting people in all walks of life, students are often taken back by the rigors and reality of working with addicts, young people in gang life, or the seriously

mentally ill. Financial considerations play a part, i.e., will the placement be paid or voluntary? The ideal placement could become a full-time future position and may pay a stipend as an intern. While an overview of the fieldwork courses was provided at the start of the program in the Introduction to Human Services course, it became evident that students did not retain the details of finding a placement after that semester. It was realized that a gap of as long as two years might exist between the introductory course and the placement while students completed other core courses, contributing to this non-retention. Students were either unable or unwilling to seek out placement information on their own, by phone, in-person, or online. Agencies were identified primarily through another student or a faculty reference.

At the core of the problem was an unprepared student, who not only had not secured a placement, but who had no idea how to get one. Faculty only saw the end result, a class of practicum students where nearly 50 percent were unprepared to work in the field. Department faculty realized that students must have better preparation and guidance for a situation which would determine their ultimate success.

### **Initial Steps**

In 2004, a mandatory orientation was established for students who registered for practicum. The orientation allowed the department to reach out to every student in the pipeline to communicate what would be necessary for this course. While the intention of the orientation was to inform students of requirements, these orientations provided previously unknown information to the department which could lead to solutions, including:

- There existed a lack of organization around curriculum, particularly where prerequisites for practicum were unenforced.
- The advising process was not geared to field courses, and faculty did not recommend the course at a specific time.
- Non-traditional students did not move through the curriculum in any organized way, but were accustomed to taking what was available that semester.
- Faculty assignments to teach practicum changed every semester; most did not know the students they would supervise in their placements.
- The department had a culture of not helping students find a placement. Faculty did not often see the need to connect students into the community.
- Resource material offered to students was difficult to locate and often out of date. The material prepared as a handbook was weak and distributed as unattractive photocopies. It was assumed students read the material; they didn't.
- Administratively, department planning did not account for the number of students eligible to take practicum in any semester. Often there were too few or too many sections, creating crises in scheduling, faculty load, and student course planning.

While faculty realized that most issues would be resolved through minor curriculum adjustments and some cross-training, this initial process raised a more important issue. What was the responsibility of faculty to mentor students through the fieldwork process? Was there only an obligation to teach the seminars, connect with the agency, and oversee the student in the field, or to more fully support students through career decisions that fieldwork would identify?

In Fall 2008, a full-time tenure track faculty member with a track record of successful administrative experience was hired to coordinate the field program. The faculty member was assigned several sections of both practicum and internship to teach in order to get an in-depth view of the student and the faculty experience of the course. The field coordinator initiated meetings with the faculty who taught the field classes to explore faculty concerns and discuss solutions. Based on research of other human service programs, the field coordinator, with the support of field faculty, developed a one-credit class titled Pre-Field Seminar that became a required course in Fall 2010.

## **Course Content**

The course was designed to provide more in-depth information than the mandatory one-hour orientation session as well as to help students develop critical job searching skills and be intentional about selecting an agency for their field placement. By requiring the course and providing even one hour of academic credit, the department communicated the critical need to prepare for fieldwork. The goals for the class were:

- Think of yourself as a professional.
- Learn the logistics of the field placement.
- Learn about helpful campus resources.
- Be intentional about selecting a field agency.
- Learn specific job search skills including résumé development, cover letter writing, and interviewing skills.

The class included discussions about professionalism, what to expect in the field, and research methods to find the agency that would meet student learning goals and career path. Guest speakers from various campus resource offices were invited as well as a panel of students who had successfully completed the practicum provided counsel based on their experiences. The assignments included developing a professional résumé and a cover letter, assessing the student's own strengths and challenges in the transition from being in the class to being in the field, and participating in a mock interview conducted by department faculty.

## **Observations**

Initially, there was some resistance among students to the new requirement. Students expressed that they did not need the class and several requested that the class be waived as a requirement. Unlike other human services courses which are rich with content, this course focused on practical knowledge and skills that are not specific to either counseling or nonprofit administration. Given the initial resistance to the requirement, there was some concern about the student response to the course. We now have five semesters of student evaluations of the class and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. On a six point scale, the class always scores above a five and the written comments support the high numerical evaluations. The following comments were offered anonymously in student course evaluations. They typify the student response.

Before taking the class, I did not feel like I need[ed] to. After being presented with tools, I am glad I took the class. Everything presented in class is very useful!

Tons of relevant and inspiring information! I feel that this course will definitely prepare me for a practicum/internship as well as finding a paid position after graduation.

I was going into the Practicum without any professional experience and I felt this course has prepared me well. I feel much more confident about cover letters, resumes, and interviews and am much more aware of the resources available to me.

I came into this class feeling overwhelmed about the work required and the types of assignments. I feel completely at ease with the material and am much more confident about the Practicum and Internships coming up for me.

The class got me to do a resume, helped with my interviewing skills and got me to meet with my advisor a few times which I was too shy and intimidated to do before. It also helped me with all my questions about both practicum and internship.

In spring of 2011, to further supplement the structure provided by the Pre-Field course, the department initiated mandatory advising for all students prior to registering for practicum. In that advising session, the advisor reviewed the student's progress and discussed all departmental and university graduation requirements to be sure the student was on track to graduate. In addition, students were asked to explain their plan to line up an appropriate placement agency in a timely fashion. Faculty teaching the practicum and internship have responded positively to the changes in student behaviors, appreciating a higher level of first day seminar attendance with placements in place. They also report logistical improvements in paperwork completion, timely submission of reports and agency agreements, and a general understanding of the nature of supervision. The content of the pre-field seminar will likely evolve as the fieldwork program continues to be refined.

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