

October 30, 2014
UCITE
Case Western Reserve University

Re: Nord Grant Application

Dear Nord Grant Committee Members,

Purpose: We propose to conduct a study to evaluate the effect of academic technology on Social Work student learning outcomes. The curriculum for the Social Work is guided by core competency areas that reflect standards of the Council on Social Work Education. Each competency area has performance outcomes - practice behaviors of skills needed for generalist practice. The Masters of Science in Social Administration (MSSA) curriculum is designed so that students, upon completion the degree, will be able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities at a generalist level as well as in an area of specialization. Specific to our study, we propose to evaluate achievement of competency in practice behaviors when working with individuals. Results from this study will be used to modify teaching methodology of this course and to pilot advanced outcome assessment strategies, which will in turn impact curriculum development, modification and the learning for all MSSA students.

SASS 477, Direct Practice Foundation Methods and Skills, is the first course in the foundation curriculum's two-semester sequence in social work methods and skills. All students who enter the MSSA program without a bachelor's degree in social work take this course (approximately 125 in 2013 and 95 in 2014). The goal of this course is to develop culturally competent social work generalist practitioners who are armed with the knowledge and skills necessary to practice ethically in diverse social work practice settings. This course focuses on teaching interviewing skills for beginning practitioners relevant to work with individuals and families. One of the ways we assess student learning is through a recorded role play where the student demonstrates his or her learned practice behaviors (Recorded Role Play Assignment).

In the fall semester of 2013, seven sections of SASS 477 were taught. All sections provided the students with the same content but were delivered in different ways. Five sections were taught in the traditional format, which was structured to include an in-class lecture (1.5 hours) and an experiential lab (1.5 hours). The in-class lecture portion included discussion and small group work. The lab portion provided the opportunity for students to practice interviewing skills by role-playing as social worker and client. Students were assigned course reading and workbook exercises to be completed out of class. One section was taught in the traditional format but used academic technology during learning activities to promote collaboration and critical thinking skills (i.e., Google Apps for Education). Finally, one section was taught in the "flipped" classroom format where the course was structured to have students watch online narrated PowerPoint lecture videos and complete assigned reading out of class. During class, students completed the workbook assignments as interactive and collaborative learning activities (1.5 hours) and the same experiential lab (1.5 hours) as the traditional format. Currently in the fall semester of 2014, seven sections of SASS 477 are being taught. Six of the sections are being taught in the traditional format with integrated technology during learning activities and one section is being taught in the "flipped" format.

We see this coming Spring semester of 2015 as an ideal opportunity to begin to assess the effect of integrating technology into the classroom on student learning. Those MSSA students who

Megan R. Holmes, Ph.D., MSW
Assistant Professor

Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel
School of Applied Social Sciences
Case Western Reserve University
10900 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44106-7164

Visitors and Deliveries
11235 Bellflower Road

Phone 216.368.2516

Fax 216.368.8670

Email mholmes@case.edu

<http://msass.cwru.edu/faculty/mholmes>



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

took SASS 477 in the fall semester of 2013 will be graduating in the Spring semester of 2015. By using the student's Recorded Role Play Assignment as a baseline measure for practice behavior competence and having the students record a second Recorded Role Play as a follow up measure, we will be able to assess both immediate and long term effects of teaching methodology on student learning. Student learning will be assessed and scored by clinicians who are blind to the teaching methodologies each student experiences.

Rationale: Leading universities are using new learning spaces and the latest technological innovations to promote a pedagogical shift toward "active learning," a term that describes a form of instruction using student-student and student-teacher collaboration, increased information access, nontraditional forms of student assessment, and updated instructional delivery. The intent of incorporating academic technology is not for its own sake, but rather because the technology has the potential to support and enhance student learning. Although some types of technologies have been available in classrooms for a hundred years or more (e.g., the chalkboard), the focus on active learning is changing not only the types of technologies used, but also how they are being used. While many social work educators have promoted engaging and thought provoking discussions among students without the use of technology, some are beginning to utilize different technologies as a tool to engage students and enhance students' learning. Instructors are now embracing technologies as a way to provide students with opportunities to actively engage in the classroom, with instructors moving from the often quoted "sage on stage" to "guide on the side." Therefore, we are seeing a shift from technology being provided to the instructor to a more democratic distribution allowing students to more actively participate in the learning experience.

Most social work research on the use of technology in social work education has focused on online education or distance learning while only a few studies have examined the use of technology in the classroom to promote active student engagement. However, these studies did not examine the effect of using academic technology on student competency of practice behaviors, which is essential to our Social Work learning outcomes. To our knowledge, no articles have been published focusing on the flipped classroom in social work education.

Expected Outcome: As more technologies are introduced and embraced, it is important to determine the effects of using these technologies on teaching and learning outcomes in social work education. The proposed study will identify specific learning strategies that have contributed to demonstrating competency in social work learning outcomes. The results of this study will impact all future students entering the MSSA program (175 per year). Based on our study findings, we will develop learning strategies that have been shown to be effective in student learning both for the direct practice methods course as well as for other social work methods courses. Results of our study will be presented to our MSASS faculty as well as written for publication.

The budget is for two years and includes funding for a doctoral student to assist in instrument development and data collection during the Spring semesters of 2015 and 2016, an incentive for each student who participates in the study, and funding for a doctoral student to help develop learning activities based on the results of our study.

Sincerely,



Megan R. Holmes
Assistant Professor



Zoe Breen Wood
Assistant Professor



Grover Gilmore
Jack, Joseph and Morton
Mandel Dean in Applied
Social Sciences



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

Budget

Item	Amount
<p>Student Incentives 100 students will be recruited to participate in the study. Recruitment will occur during the Spring semesters of 2015 and 2016. Each student will be asked to record a 15 minute role play video using the same guidelines as their SASS 477 Recorded Role Play Assignment. Students will also be asked to complete a brief survey that assesses learning style, participation in course work and learning activities, perceived satisfaction with the teaching style used in their SASS 477 course, and comfort with technology along with other demographic information. Participation in the study will take approximately 1 hour of time and each student will receive an incentive of \$25.</p>	\$2,500
<p>Doctoral Student Assistant We will hire a doctoral student during the Spring semesters of 2015 and 2016 for approximately 80 hours (40 each semester). The student will assist in IRB submission, instrument development, data collection, data analysis, and literature review. We will hire a doctoral student during the Summer of 2016 for approximately 60 hours to develop learning activities based on the results of our study. These learning activities will then be implemented during the Fall semester of 2016.</p>	\$2,500
Total Amount	\$5,000

