GO THE DISTANCE – IF YOU BUILD IT THEY WILL COME

DEVELOPING & DELIVERING A VIRTUAL/LIVE INTERACTIVE COUNSELOR EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAM

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IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR APPLYING DISTANCE EDUCATION

- Due to the various technological resources available for educators and counseling supervisors, these individuals need to become more familiar with the use of technology in supervision.
- With the advent of computer technology, high-speed Internet connections, and online course management systems, the door has been opened for using technology to assist these students.
- For counselor educators who do not have a strong knowledge or understanding of technology, developing and implementing online synchronous or asynchronous courses can be a daunting task.
RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISTANCE ED OPTION

- A pedagogical perspective that clinical training courses (individual and group skills and techniques) must be taught with ‘live’ interaction and participation.
- Live student interactions are an integral component to developing impactful skill sets.
- Live – immediate access to the instructor.
- Increases program access, especially in reaching a more diverse student base.

HOW TO SET UP A LEARNING SPACE

- While you didn’t have to drive to an actual classroom, your personal/ virtual learning space needs to be formulated in a professional manner. Your personal learning space is your ‘chair/desk’ in the classroom. At times, classroom exchanges involve confidential and sensitive information, role-plays, topics and language that should be done in a discreet/private setting. In other words; children, pets, TVs/radios, cell-phones, and other potential distractions should be addressed prior to class sessions and their potential interference during the class be minimized. In other words, your virtual class participation should mirror actual live class participation. Be seated. Picking up your mobile device and moving while the video and audio are connected to the class session is distracting. Be comfortable, however, do not be lying on a bed or couch. This is very distracting to your professor and classmates.
• Log in at least 10 minutes early to the class. This allows you to check for technical issues. Make sure that the video and microphone are working prior to joining the class.

• Your video/camera and audio/microphone must be on to participate. Be sure to position the camera to provide a clear view of your entire face. Partial headshots are distracting.

• Mute your microphone if you are not talking. This eliminates and/or minimizes background sound feedback.

• Make sure you devote your full attention to the class and who is speaking. It is the same as being present in a live classroom. Your professionalism is appreciated.
SPECIFIC STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED

- Bob
  - Break out rooms for dyads/triads in Group Counseling Training
  - Break out rooms for individual skills training (instructor can monitor rooms)
  - Creative techniques (use of whiteboard, handouts, audio/visual aids, etc.) in both individual and group skills training
  - Practice sessions recorded in ZOOM, submitted to Blackboard, evaluated in ENSEMBLE and returned to student for review

- Jonathan
  - Should contain visual and audio content
  - Interactive discussions
  - Screen sharing/resource identification
  - Polling

- Lisa
  - Class meetings for internship
  - Record feedback for tapes submitted and upload to class room
  - SupervisionAssist for all documents, live videos, communication with site supervisors, data base for placements
  - Break out into groups during group supervision

SURVEY ON USE OF VIRTUAL COMPONENTS

- 68 Students responded (3 had not taken a course yet with a virtual component)
- 10 questions (2 short answer)
- If students had not taken a course with virtual components they were sent to end of survey
Q2 - HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE TECHNICAL QUALITY OF THE DELIVERED AUDIO AND VIDEO USED IN THE DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES YOU HAVE TAKEN SO FAR?

- Too many issues & quality is not good 2 (3.08%)
- Mostly think quality is fine 33 (50.77%)
- Quality is good 30 (46.15%)

Q3 - HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE EASE OF NAVIGATION AND CONTROL OF THE DISTANCE EDUCATION AUDIO AND VIDEO

- Too many issues & navigation is challenging 0 (0%)
- Mostly think ease of navigation is fine 33 (50.77%)
- No issues navigating video and audio 32 (49.235)
Q4 - HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES YOU HAVE TAKEN?

- Ineffective 1 (1.545)
- Effectiveness is fine 37 (56.92%)
- Effectiveness is just as good as face to face 27 (41.54%)

Q5 - HOW CONNECTED TO THE INSTRUCTOR DO YOU FEEL WHEN USING DISTANCE EDUCATION COMPONENTS?

- I don’t feel connected at all. 1 (1.54%)
- I feel somewhat connected. 34 (52.31%)
- I feel very connected. 30 (46.15%)
Q6 - HOW CONNECTED TO THE OTHER STUDENTS DO YOU FEEL WHEN USING DISTANCE EDUCATION COMPONENTS?

- I don’t feel connected at all. 9 (13.85%)
- I feel somewhat connected. 35 (53.85%)
- I feel very connected. 21 (32.31%)

Q7 - I BELIEVE THAT THE CURRENT MODEL OF COURSE DELIVERY (HYBRID FORMAT, E-COURSE, SYNCHRONOUS LIVE/VIRTUAL MEETINGS) FITS MY EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS AS A GRADUATE STUDENT.

- Strongly Disagree 1 (1.56%)
- Disagree 0 (0%)
- Somewhat disagree 6 (9.38%)
- Neither agree or disagree 1 (1.56%)
- Somewhat agree 5 (7.81%)
- Agree 31 (48.44%)
- Strongly agree 20 (31.25%)
Q8 - I FEEL THAT THE PROGRAM SHOULD JUST OFFER TRADITIONAL, FACE TO FACE COURSES AND LIMIT THE USE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION COMPONENTS.

- Strongly Disagree: 30 (46.15%)
- Disagree: 16 (24.62%)
- Somewhat disagree: 9 (13.85%)
- Neither agree or disagree: 3 (4.62%)
- Somewhat agree: 4 (6.15%)
- Agree: 0 (0%)
- Strongly agree: 3 (4.62%)

Q9 - WHAT ARE THREE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF VIRTUAL CLASS MEETINGS?

- Less paper to lose track of. Ability to take part where ever you are. Range of classes.
- Ease of access, interaction with all peers, time management
- 1) Time and money for travel, when classes are already expensive (I live an hour and a half from Charleston, two hours from Huntington). 2) Do not have to miss work to travel to face to face site because of distance. 3) Can link up from other locations when there is an emergency or you have to be out of town for professional development.
- I am able to work full time and ‘attend’ class, instructors make it engaging , ease of use of Blackboard and Zoom
- For most of use in the graduate program we are already working a full-time job and usually have families at home. Having the ease of being able to connect virtually appeals to be to be able to still be at home with my family (although my supervision of my children is minimal) I am there, with them, not absent from their lives.
- I am able to have identity with others.; It provides opportunities to hone my skills while utilizing technology; It allows opportunities and benefits to get questions answered quickly in real-time.
• Students from far away can get the same education. It’s quicker to access for people with busy lives.
• I can see and interact with everyone in the class from my living room (awesome); I can attend class from where ever I am; I can interact publicly or privately with different members of the class.
• LIFE! Working full time, raising a family, and trying to juggle graduate school is A LOT! Personally, I wouldn’t drive to Charleston or Huntington for class because I simply don’t have time. It isn’t possible...3 hour drive for just a few hours of class.
• I can get my education out of state, mostly on my own time. Zoom works...nothing else comes close, especially Collaborate.
• It allows students who live farther away from campus an option to take courses without have to leave work early and drive long distances after having worked all day. If you have children you don’t have to worry about finding a babysitter. Saves people from having to commute and hour + for class one way.
• I have the same feeling as if I were in an actual class on campus.
• I feel more connected to professors and peers. I feel like there are more opportunities to give input. Long distance people don’t have to drive.

Q10 - WHAT ARE THREE NEGATIVE OR CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF VIRTUAL CLASS MEETINGS?

• Not as much interaction with peers and professor. Sometimes there are technology issues, which is also true of in person meetings.
• Not having the tech savvy skills; Encountering tech issues with not hearing speakers loud enough and video freezing; Prevents the face-to-face traditional culture climate to delivery possibly more effectively.
• If internet connection is bad, it makes virtual meetings more difficult.
• People screw around and it’s distracting. Connection issues in the beginning, but good now.
• I had to upgrade my internet service because I would get dropped occasionally; virtual classes were completely new to me so I had learn how to attend; virtual classes are still new-ish to me and there are several features I still learning how to use - like using the whiteboard and viewing files during a meeting.
• The internet not cooperating, not having available laptops with built in cameras, and eliminating the classroom experience.
• It is sometimes hard to focus as you would in a classroom, I don’t always feel connected to the other students.
“If you are not a good instructor live, that will also translate to this modality of delivery. It may even make the instruction worse!

We have found this to be true.

QUESTIONS