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#### Advancing Social and Economic Justice Through Innovation

Teaching Diversity in the Synchronistic Classroom: Student Perceptions, Best Practices and Continued Challenges

Track – BSW/MSW/PhD Curriculum Development Session Type: Panel Time: 45 m

Presenters – Beth Counselman Carpenter (Columbia University), Matthea Marquart (Columbia University), Kristin Garay (Columbia University)

This panel will share case studies, best practices, challenges, and emerging issues when teaching on topics of diversity in online courses from Columbia University's School of Social Work. The panel will include audience participation, interaction between the panelists and time for Q&A at the end. The courses discussed will include a course on racial identity development and a course on gender and sexuality.

Teaching diversity in the synchronistic classroom: student perceptions, best practices

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Make waves. Move mountains. Change lives.



SWDE 2018 Panel Thurs, April 12 @ 4:30-5:15pm Elisabeth Counselman-Carpenter, Matthea Marquart, Kristin Garay

### ΔGFNDΔ

Creating an online constructivist learning environment when

teaching online Gender and Sexuality (Elisabeth Counselman-

Ways to build a respectful & supportive classroom community

	AGLINDA
1	Intro to CSSW Online Campus (3 min)

Participation and its risks

Carpenter and Kristin Garay, 15 min)

Q&A and thank you (15 min)

(Matthea Marquart, 12 min)

online

Inspiring trust and risk in online discussions on topics of diversity

# Columbia University School of Social Work's Online Campus

http://socialwork.columbia.edu/the-student-experience/online-campus/

- Master's of Science in Social Work
- Online & residential MSSW programs are integrated
- Primary model: Synchronous classes in Adobe Connect + asynchronous homework in Canvas
  - Courses have an instructional team: Instructor, associate/TA, live support specialist
  - Chapter with info on the model: <a href="https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/instructional-strategies-for-synchronous-components-of-online-courses/148897">https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/instructional-strategies-for-synchronous-components-of-online-courses/148897</a>

### First graduates in May 2017







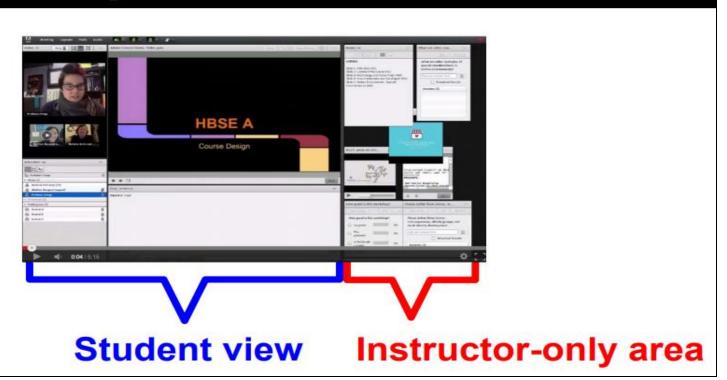
Source: Twitter #CSSW2017



**Steven Schinke**, Senior Director of the Online Program and D'Elbert and Selma Keenan Professor, won the international 2015 Excellence in Online Teaching Award from the Online Learning Consortium.

### What does "class" look like?

#### Sample live class session



Source: <a href="https://doi.org/10.7916/D8PK0F9H">https://doi.org/10.7916/D8PK0F9H</a>

## AGENDA

(Matthea Marquart, 12 min)

online

Participation and its risks

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1	Intro to CSSW Online Campus (3 min)
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Creating an online constructivist learning environment when

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Ways to build a respectful & supportive classroom community

2

#### **Course: Racial Identity Development**

- First-year, second-semester course in Master's program
- 7 weeks during spring semester; 5 weeks during summer
- 25 students max
- Types of discussions:
  - Whole-class discussions during class sessions via combo of webcam, mic, typed chat
  - Small breakout group discussions during class via mic, typed chat
  - Asynchronous discussion forums for homework

# **AGENDA**

Carpenter and Kristin Garay, 15 min)

Q&A and thank you (15 min)

online

Intro to CSSW Online Campus (3 min)

Inspiring trust and risk in online discussions on topics of diversity

- (Matthea Marquart, 12 min) Participation and its risks
- Ways to build a respectful & supportive classroom community

Creating an online constructivist learning environment when

teaching online Gender and Sexuality (Elisabeth Counselman-

# Why is it important for students to participate in the classroom?

"Learning results from what the student does and thinks and only from what the student does and thinks. The teacher can advance learning only by influencing what the student does to learn."

HERBERT A. SIMON, one of the founders of the field of Cognitive Science, Nobel Laureate, and University Professor (deceased) at Carnegie Mellon University, from: How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching

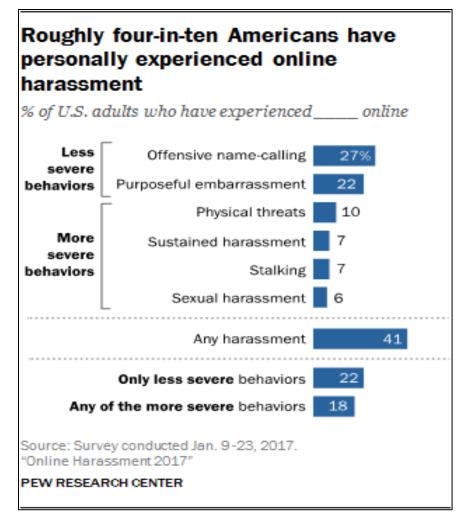
# What risks do we ask students to take when participating in discussions?

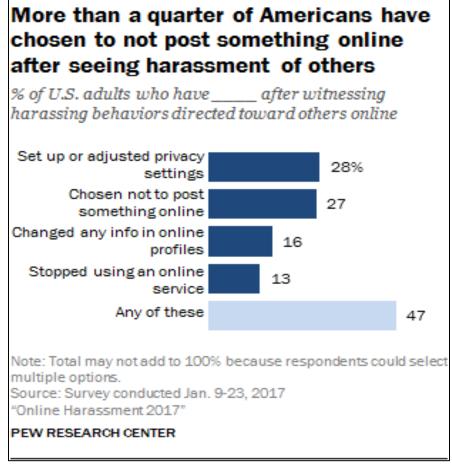
#### We ask students to be vulnerable in front of others:

- Speaking in public
- Volunteering to have people look at them
- Admitting they don't know the answer
- Being wrong, being right, feeling judged either way
- Experiencing conflict / disagreement
- Sharing personal opinions, thoughts, experiences

#### The other people include:

- Potential crushes, exes, competitors, friends, peers
- The instructor who has power over them





Source: <a href="http://www.pewinternet.org/2017/07/11/online-harassment-2017/">http://www.pewinternet.org/2017/07/11/online-harassment-2017/</a>

# **AGENDA**

Q&A and thank you (15 min)

Intro to CSSW Online Campus (3 min)

Inspiring trust and risk in online discussions on topics of diversity (Matthea Marquart, 12 min)

Participation and its risks

Ways to build a respectful & supportive classroom community online

Creating an online constructivist learning environment when

teaching online (Elisabeth Counselman-Carpenter, 25 min)

# How can we create a classroom in which students feel comfortable taking risks & participating?

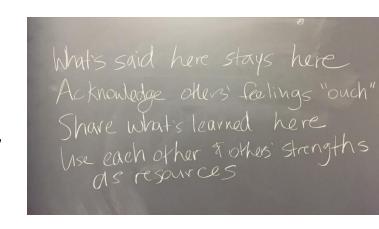
Community agreements: Creating, using, and enforcing Building community prior to the semester

Building community during the semester

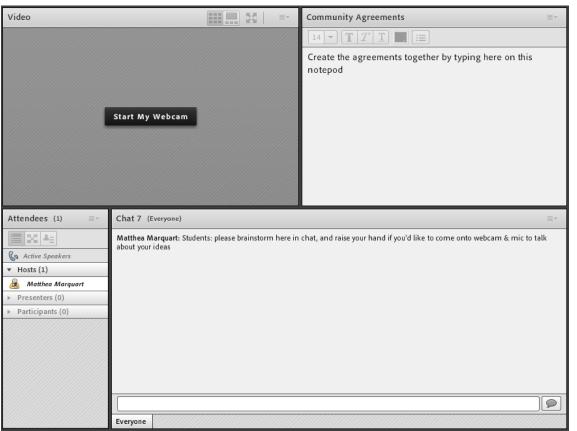
Closing the community

# Example community agreements: Workers and the Workplace

- What's said here stays here
- Acknowledge others' feelings; give feedback, e.g. by saying "ouch"
- Share what's learned here
- Use each other & each other's strengths as resources



### Sample layout to encourage studentcreated community agreements



Note: Asynchronous courses can create community agreements via survey, discussion forum, etc.

# **Example community agreements:**Racial Identity Development



# Example: Using & enforcing community agreements in Racial Identity Development course

- Community agreements reviewed:
  - At the start of each class session, with potential to edit / add to the agreements
  - Within each small group breakout discussion

- Community agreements enforced:
  - In grading rubrics for class sessions
  - In grading rubrics for online class discussion forums
  - In the moment during live class discussions

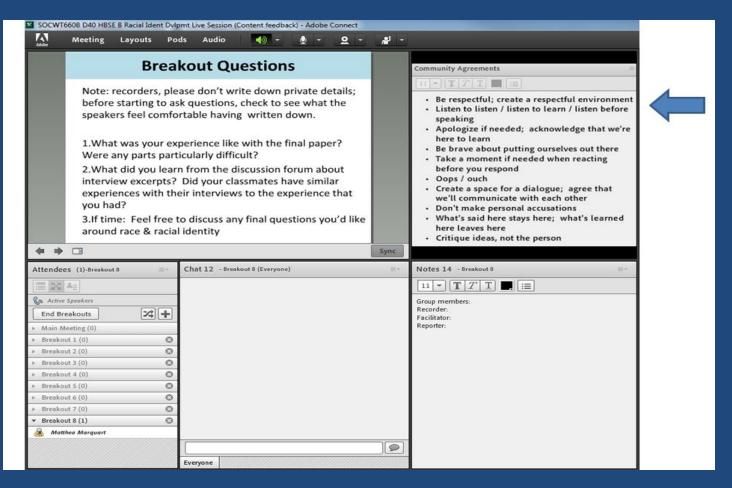
#### Example class slide (online)

#### **Revisiting our Community Agreements**



Anything to add or change? If these are still ok with you and you still agree to follow them, please give us a **green check**.

### Example online breakout group setup



### **Example class participation rubric**

#### **₽** Q 💼 HBSE B: Racial ID Dev - Live Session Participation Rubric (6) You've already rated students with this rubric. Any major changes could affect their assessment results. Criteria Ratings Pts This area will be used by the assessor Arrived on time and ready to participate to leave comments related to this 1.0 pts criterion. This area will be used by the assessor Present in session throughout (excluding any breaks) and staved until the end to leave comments related to this 1.0 pts criterion. This area will be used by the assessor Technology functioning as per online student agreement (no wifi, headset mic working, to leave comments related to this 1.0 pts webcam working, etc.) criterion. This area will be used by the assessor Participated in the chat 1.0 pts to leave comments related to this criterion. This area will be used by the assessor Participated in all of the polls 1.0 pts to leave comments related to this criterion. Contributed to the group during breakout sessions (e.g. taking on the recorder or This area will be used by the assessor reporter roles, contributing to the group discussion, joined the group on webcam when to leave comments related to this 1.0 pts reporting back, etc.) criterion. This area will be used by the assessor Responded to instructor requests (e.g. using status icons when asked, volunteering to to leave comments related to this 1.0 pts participate on webcam and mic) criterion. This area will be used by the assessor Behaved in a professional manner -- supportive of your colleagues and followed the to leave comments related to this 3.0 pts community agreements criterion. Total Points: 10.0

### **Example discussion forum instructions**

In your discussion forum post, due on Monday at 11:59pm EST:

- Share who you'd like to interview, and why. Note: fake names are perfectly ok if there's a reason you'd
  prefer not to say, and you don't have to tell us it's a fake name.
- Share your list of 10 questions for your interviewee.

By Wednesday at 11:59pm EST, reply to at least two of your classmates. In your replies:

- · Share something that resonated with you about their post, or that you found interesting
- Share feedback about the questions they plan to ask -- you can provide unlimited positive feedback, but
  you have a maximum of ONE piece of constructive feedback if you have something helpful to suggest, e.g.
  about the phrasing of a question, a tip about the overall approach, etc. So, think carefully about what you'd
  like to say.
- · Engage with those who have responded to your post
- Keep in mind that tone can be difficult to interpret online, so be extra careful to write your responses in a respectful tone, and remember to follow our community agreements

This discussion forum is worth 20 points. The points for this assignment will be for:

- Submitting your first post on time (2 points)
- . In your first post, sharing who you'd like to interview and why (4 points)
- In your first post, sharing a list of 10 questions you'd like to ask your interviewee (4 points)
- · Submitting your responses to two of your classmates on time (2 points)
- In your responses, following the instructions (4 points)
- Demonstrating professionalism and a supportive tone in your language, and following our community agreements (4 points)





### **Example discussion forum rubric**

Rubric for discussion forum on who to interview & questions to ask  You've already rated students with this rubric. Any major changes could affect their assessment results.				
Criteria	Ratings	Pts		
Submitted first post on time	This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.	2.0 pts		
In first post, shared who you'd like to interview & why	This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.	4.0 pts		
In first post, shared a list of 10 questions you'd like to ask your interviewee	This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.	4.0 pts		
Submitted responses to at least two classmates on time	This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.	2.0 pts		
In responses, followed the instructions	This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.	4.0 pts		
Demonstrated professionalism and a supportive tone in your language, and following our community agreements	This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion.	4.0 pts		
Total Points: 20.0				

"Building safety was the foundation of my course. In our first class, I addressed the fact that students were entering the course with a multitude of lived experiences in terms of race and racial identity development. I explained that the course would not be didactic and that we would go beyond the binary of Black and White and the Western concept of race. We co-created community agreements and this was a living document we reviewed before each class."

-- Adrienne N. Williams, Lecturer

# How can we create a classroom in which students feel comfortable taking risks & participating?

Community agreements: Creating, using, and enforcing Building community prior to the semester

Building community during the semester

Closing the community

#### **Example welcome announcement**

Dear Racial Identity Development Class,

Welcome to the course! I'm delighted to be working with you this semester, and I look forward to each of your contributions to the class discussions, both in the Canvas course site and in class. Everyone at CSSW brings a wealth of experiences to share, and the more you contribute, the stronger this course will be.

For class on Wednesday, please do three things: [continued....]

My policy is to start every class on time. To avoid getting points taken off for lateness, please log in earlier than you think you need to log in; this will help you deal with any unexpected technical difficulties. I will be in class about 20-30 minutes early each week for anyone who wants to chat, ask questions, or get to know each other, e.g. so that I can be a good reference in the future.

I look forward to seeing you in class!

Best, Prof Marquart

#### **Example opening discussion forum**

Getting acquainted - Building community by getting to know what we have in common

Mar 3 at 4:51pm 70 190

In this course, we are going to have some personal conversations, and we'll be coming from all sorts of different perspectives. Therefore, before we get into conversations about race, I'd like us to take a little time to connect with each other as human beings and colleagues. The goal is to start to build a supportive community.

In your discussion forum post, due on Tuesday at 11:59pm EST:

- Tell us where you're from and where you live now, and something you like about each place.
- Share 1-2 things that you care about or love, and why. This should be general enough that other people can relate.

By Wednesday at 11:59pm EST, reply to at least 3 of your classmates. In your replies:

- Share something that resonated with you about their post, or that you have in common.
- · Engage with those who have responded to your post.
- Keep in mind that tone can be difficult to interpret online, so be extra careful to write your responses in a respectful tone.

The points for this assignment will be for:

- Submitting your first post on time (1 point)
- In your first post, answering the questions (1 point)
- Submitting your responses to three of your classmates on time (3 points)
- In your responses, following the instructions (3 points)
- Demonstrating professionalism and a supportive tone in your language (2 points)

## Breakout Instructions: Intros & finding things in common

This activity builds on our Getting Acquainted discussion forum. In the discussion forum, you had the chance to find out what you had in common with individuals in our class. Now, let's see what you have in common with a group of your classmates.

- 1. Unmute your mics & introduce yourselves
- Choose a recorder to take notes (only one person can write on the note pod at a time)
- Choose a facilitator who will make sure all voices are heard in the discussion
- 4. Choose a reporter to share with the whole group when we come back together
- 5. Discuss which option below you will do, and then do it:
  - Option 1: List as many things as you can that you <u>all</u> have in common
  - Option 2: Find 1-2 really unique things that you <u>all</u> have in common

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#### **Examples of community-building strategies**

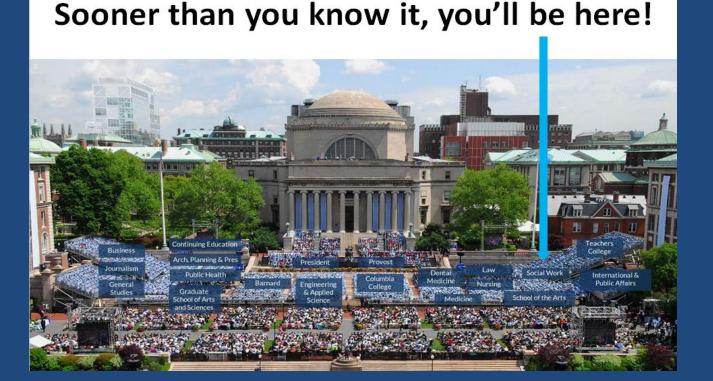
Community-building discussion forums

Class celebrations/congratulations

Ask students to tell each other what they appreciate / respect about each other

Share fun or personal music / videos / images before class or during breaks

Congrats on nearing the end of your first year at CSSW!



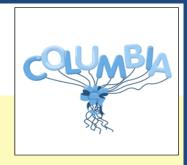
#### Each week you're getting closer to graduation!



Congratulations CSSW Class of 2016!

https://youtu.be/fncrrLArBck

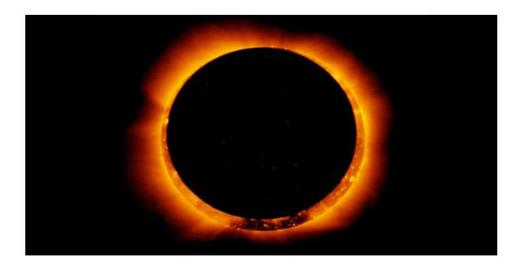
#### Some class celebrations



- \_\_\_ Happy birthday!
- \_\_\_ Happy 3-year anniversary & upcoming marriage!
- – Congratulations on your summer fellowship!
- \_\_\_\_ Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday to your daughter!

Anything else to celebrate? Please type into chat.

#### **Happy Eclipse Week!**



#### 2-Minute Self-Care Break



https://youtu.be/--zv6V8OfKg

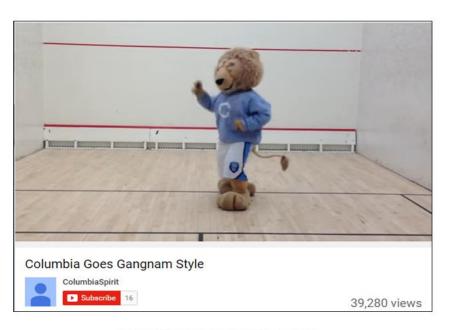
Roar, Lion, Roar!
-written by Corey Ford (CC '23)

Lyrics:

Roar, Lion, Roar
And wake the echoes of the Hudson Valley!
Fight on to victory evermore
While the sons of Knickerbocker rally 'round
Columbia! Columbia!
Shouting her name forever!
Roar, Lion, Roar!
For Alma Mater on the Hudson Shore!



#### 2-Minute Self-Care Break



https://youtu.be/hYjQt\_oiQqk



#### Pre-breakout chat question

What's something that you respect about your colleagues in this class?

# **Review:** What's something that you respect about your colleagues in this class?

- being brave
- everyone's attention to detail :)
- ability to listen
- willing to have a conversation about race
- Thoughtful, considerate listeners
- Everyone is open-minded and committed to social equity
- listening!
- consideration for everyone else
- They are intelligent, respectful, and supportive
- Willingness to be present and listen
- being able to handle this subject
- everyone seems open to changing their mindset
- being respectful of peers, openness, diverse experiences

- respect each other's opinion even if they do not always agree
- I respect people's ability to open up and ask questions regarding their gaps in knowledge on race
- · Open to other viewpoints
- open-minded
- considerate and respectful
- willingness to be honest and brave
- Willing to learn, open minded, willing to change
- Their dedication to constantly strive towards excellence within themselves, and applying that same passion to helping those in need through evidence based social work practice.

"Every class we begin with a series of polls per the Sanctuary Model ("Community Meeting"). The questions/poll questions before we begin class are:

- Feeling as a number (1 = no fun / 10 = you're winning)
- Goal for the day:
- Support person:
- Thoughts about the last class:

I spend some time reviewing what folks wrote and explain the importance of checking in."

-- Noel B. Ramirez, Lecturer

# How can we create a classroom in which students feel comfortable taking risks & participating?

Community agreements: Creating, using, and enforcing Building community prior to the semester

Building community during the semester

Closing the community



#### Welcome back!



#### Please share:

- What's something you'd like to thank your colleagues for?
- What's something about your colleagues you've been impressed by?
- If you could give your colleagues a gift, what would it be and why?





# Welcome back, and thank you for a wonderful course!

I look forward to seeing you at graduation in 1-3 years (depending on your program)



# **AGENDA**

Carpenter and Kristin Garay, 15 min)

Q&A and thank you (15 min)

1	Intro to CSSW Online Campus (3 min)

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Creating an online constructivist learning environment when teaching online Gender and Sexuality (Elisabeth Counselman-



#### Contact info:

- Matthea Marquart: Twitter @MattheaMarquart or msm2002@columbia.edu
- Columbia University School of Social Work: Twitter @ColumbiaSSW; Video <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/columbiassw</u>; Website <u>http://socialwork.columbia.edu</u>

Creating an online constructivist learning environment when teaching online Gender and Sexuality: a platform for multiple voices to be heard

SWDE - San Antonio 2018

Elisabeth Counselman-Carpenter, PhD, LCSW & Kristin Garay, LMSW

## Today's Objectives

- To define the foundations of an online constructivist learning environment
- To identify how the synchronistic classroom creates a deeper platform of diversity when learning theories of Gender and Sexuality,
- To identify strategies to build an online constructivist learning environment
- To share case studies of how the teaching team created a safe space for marginalized voices to be heard in multiple manifestations.

## Learning from mistakes

- Initial manifestations of the course involved a focus on gender-based violence and the creation of informational pages to co-create knowledge.
  - Students struggled both with the material and the assignment focusing more on the technology required than the critical analysis of the assignment.
  - A problem-based learning model was the primary lens of the readings, and media was not regularly included.
- Students in their discussions were either very vocal (group monopolizer, perpetuating certain microaggressions, or at the other end - very silent).
  - Students who identified as 'conservative' were struggling with some of the concepts and identities and students who identified on the spectrum often felt oppressed by their students who had not yet grasped the material.

# Online Constructivist Learning Environment vs. Problem Based Learning

- This type of learning environment challenges problem-based learning (PBL) in which one problem is analyzed and deconstructed.
- Replaces it with a model in which multiple voices are drawn out in order to co-construct meaning.
- The goals of the online constructivist learning environment (CLE) include testing and challenging dominant ideas against alternative views and contexts, the understanding that there are multiple world views, and as such, multiple viewpoints, and experience of, with and in multiple perspectives (Cunningham et al, 1993, Savery and Duffy, 1995, Duffy and Cunningham, 1996).
- Within the online CLE, addressing diversity is not a problem to be solved, but an opportunity to maximize the student learning experience through multiple standpoints (Holzl, 1999).

# Online Constructivist Learning Environment (CLE)

#### Jonasson's Model (1998) and Holzl (1999):

- 1. The Question/Case/Problem/Project/Issue
- 2. Related Cases
- 3. Information Resources
- 4. Cognitive (Knowledge-Construction) Tools
- 5. Conversation and Collaboration Tools
- 6. Social/Contextual Support

- 1. The question/problem/case: rather than something to be solved, should highlight multiple voices and perspectives. How can students co-construct meaning of this problem/issue?
- 2. Problem context: how can the instructor frame this in a way that is consistent with different cultures?
- 3. Related cases: are these based in cultural diversity? Cases should be chosen in a way that scaffolds student memory and enhances cognitive flexibility.
- 4. Cognitive flexibility. Can students be pushed to think outside their personal cognitive boundaries?
- 5. Information resources.

## Synchronistic Opportunities

- Synchronistic Classes (90 minutes in length):
- -40-50 minutes of lecture
- -10-30 minutes of media to discuss in a panel format
  - \*use of randomizer
  - \*importance of camera/panel format of up to 5 students
- -20-30 minutes of breakout group discussion
  - \*importance of teaching team rotating through groups
- \*\* Other tools:
- -Use of anonymous polls that are then broadcast for universalization of group questions/thoughts.
- -Course associate managing and mining chat
- -Mining of participation log (whose voices are being heard? Whose voices aren't?)

#### Asynchronistic Opportunities

- Discussion Forum
- -Required posts that may not be graded for content, but are graded for activity, posts and responses to colleagues.
- -Resource forum where students share resources from their placements, or life experiences and engage in dialogue about how they may be used.
- Reflection logs
- "Treasure Hunts"
- -Students take ownership of their co-creation of the resources, media and articles discussed in class.

## Reflection Journal Assignment

- Each week for the first 6 weeks, students were required to reflect on certain media chosen by the teaching team.
- The final week, students selected 3 of their own media choices, shared the links and reflected on those.

One excerpt: "Lastly, I selected three videos to view for this final media reflection. After watching the "Growing Up Coy" documentary last week, I was really curious about the transgender identity. This is something I used to find scary, as it was the "other" and so greatly stigmatized, so I wanted to expose myself and learn even more; education is the best repellant of fear!"

#### Journal Reflection Question

- Please identify your level of exposure to this topics prior to this week's assignments.
- How this media related or differed from your multiple identities?
- How does this knowledge influence your social work practice?
- How did this material intersect with your personal values and your social work professional values?
- What questions did this bring up for you? (please list in bullet point format).
- DO NOT WRITE A SUMMARY OF THE READINGS AND THE MEDIA

#### Best practices

- 1) Sound tech. preparedness & support for live session, with a DRP (Disruption Readiness Plan).
- 2) Inclusive learning plans for students with accommodations, in particular Deaf students and visually-impaired students.
- 3) The use of inclusive media standpoints with a focus on intersectionality and representation of domestic and international voices with media that includes depth and diversity of racial identities in addition to diverse gender and sexual identities.
- 4) Framework of non-burdening. For students who identify as LGTBQIA+, framing the curriculum so that it specifically does not ask them to be the spokesperson. Choosing diverse, interactive activities including lecture, large scale panels, breakout groups, and reflective journal create multiple opportunities for dialogue without perpetuating burden.
- 5) Diverse selection of course readings: in addition to research articles from peer-reviewed journals, this syllabus includes graphic non-fiction, graphic novels, Ted Talks, podcasts, and blog posts.

## Pedagogical Questions

Level of self-disclosure:

How much should the instructor disclose about their social identity, multiple standpoints and how will this influence the co-creation of knowledge in the class?

Microaggressions synchronistically/asynchronistically:

What plan is in place to handle perpetuated isms in the classroom? Is there a framework for restorative justice? A plan as to how to follow-up with student who have been impacted?

Diversity of resources:

How and when are you mining the data for resources? Peer-based versus socially-based resources? Is there an audit trail in place to track how these selections were made? Are multiple reviewers involved in the process?

#### References

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