THE PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES OF VARIED DELIVERY METHODS FOR FIELD INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR AMONG SOCIAL WORK ADMINISTRATORS AND FACULTY

Joseph Patton Bohanon

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by

Joseph Patton Bohanon

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:

August 2007
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

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ABSTRACT
THE PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES OF VARIED DELIVERY METHODS FOR
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This study focuses on the possible divergent views between administrators and faculty in the process of providing knowledge and skills with integration in field education for students of social work. This researcher sought to obtain factual data about the perceived advantages of varied delivery methods for field integrative seminar among social work administrators and faculty. The population surveyed in this study included 1,466 faculty and administrators who had taught face-to-face, online, and blended (hybrid mix of face-to-face and online methods) social work courses at Council on Social Work Education accredited schools of Social Work located in the states of Mississippi, Texas, California, New York, and Florida. The present analysis supports the literature in suggesting that online and blended hybrid delivery can be as useful as face-to-face in achievement. The conclusion derived from this research found that there were no significant differences associated with advantages in online learning, face-to-face, or blended hybrid courses delivered to social work students. Future research can look beyond the commonly accepted findings of no significant differences in advantages and achievement between varied delivery of courses to examine how technology can be useful for student learning.
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Field instruction is an important component of social work education. Students of social work participate in field practicums at various agencies to complete their requirements for graduation at the undergraduate and graduate levels. At these agencies, field instructors work with the students to incorporate into practice the theoretical frameworks learned in foundation and advanced level courses. Students are required to attend field seminars during their field practicum. These seminars consist of meetings with classmates and a field liaison. “Social work education programs strive to integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom with practice through the field education experience” (Birkenmaier, Wilson, Berg-Weger, Banks, & Hartung, 2003, p. 167). The Integrative Seminar is used to enhance integration efforts of students and field instructors in the social work profession (Birkenmaier et al., 2003).

In the field seminar, students are expected to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in the content areas of courses related to social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field education. Emphasis is placed on infusing these content areas into their field education in preparation for competent and effective social work professionals.

The majority of literature on field instruction in social work focuses on field education theoretical frameworks that address the teaching and learning via traditional face-to-face methods, such as integrating knowledge and skills into the field practicum. The research discusses how field education can be improved through adult learning and
self-learning theories. When “students learn by doing” the guidance and direction is enhanced by quality supervision (Giddings & Vodde, 2003).

One theory that has been used with field education is the Task-Centered Model for Field Instruction. This model has possibilities for improving the field teaching, which promotes and operationalizes the principles of quality field instruction as put forth in the literature, providing structure and ongoing immediate feedback, promoting class-field integration through linking tasks to theory, and addressing the affective components of the supervisory relationships. (Caspi & Reid, 1998, p. 56)

In other words, the task-centered model for field instruction is an established and empirically validated approach that guides students and supervisors through the teaching-learning process (Caspi & Reid, 1998).

Theories are important when evaluating student learning and field instruction at the field placement. Field practicums rely on supervision from an experienced agency instructor. At times, however, interns have to use a self-directed learning approach because supervisors may have administrative duties along with their own caseloads, causing difficulty supervising students (Merriam, 2001).

Technology has effectively revolutionized American society. The current history of children raised on multidimensional and interactive media sources has differing expectations and understanding from the generations preceding them (Strommen & Lincoln, 1992). The basis for theoretical change exists if there is a revision of educational practice that matches the educator with the learner (Strommen & Lincoln, 1992). In social work, contributors for student learning include the field instructor and field liaison, and also include the student. This type of self-evaluation and self-directed learning infuses competencies for future professional associations and licensing, which begins in the field
practicum (Regehr, Regehr, Leeson, & Fusco, 2002). As Moore discussed in her presentation at a national social work conference, “technology is impacting and transforming social work education today.” There are new proactive efforts to stay current with new developments and opportunities provided by technology and a reactive response to pressures to utilize technology for “non-academic” reasons (B. Moore, personal communication, November 6, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

Upon occasion, faculty members at universities have used distance education technology in the form of conference calls, computer video conferencing, and online lecture supplement in place of on-site seminars (Hiltz & Turoff, 2005). Technologies utilized for distance and online learning include: correspondence courses, physical mail, and printed matter; telephone and/or audio recordings; television and/or video recordings; computer-assisted instruction; group communications (asynchronous and synchronous); the Web and multimedia materials; simulation and gaming; collaborative learning; asynchronous learning networks (ALN); collaborative knowledge systems; immersive simulations; and wireless and handheld devices (Hiltz & Turoff, 2005).

The online lecture supplement is sometimes referred to as a hybrid because it uses both a face-to-face class time and online assignments (Yanes, 2004). The requirement for face-to-face seminar creates some problems for students who are assigned field placements at distant locations to participate in real-time classroom activities usually held on the main campus sites. This problem limits enrollment in a program because students are limited to agencies in the local area. For example, if there are only 20 agencies in a particular area taking student for practicums, then this would limit the program to 20 students doing a practicum per field placement. By contrast, if there were integrative
seminars through Web-based education, upwards of 200 agencies could be accessed and enrollment for field education could be increased.

In the structural change resulting from the elimination of geographical monopolies for higher education, colleges and universities must face the need to change, or risk extinction. They need to embrace the concept of blended courses and provide the infrastructure and incentives to allow faculty to make this transition as rapidly and as effectively as possible. (Hiltz & Turoff, 2005, p. 62)

Another problem with having the field seminar face-to-face is that if students participate in practicums outside of the country there would be a need for additional resources in devising field seminars in those locations. For example, if a student is placed in Jamaica, field liaisons could be trained at the remote locations to conduct the seminars or conference calls among with local field liaisons. One solution would be to set up the integrative seminar with an online Web-based site and use video streaming for face-to-face instruction (So & Pun, 2002). There are elements within a Web-based program like Web Course Tools that could be appropriate for the out-of-country seminar (Wernet, Olliges, & Delicath, 2000). In past years, the World Wide Web online universities are becoming more prevalent. These universities are coming into existence specifically to utilize new Web technologies that support learning independent of time, location, and distance but allow students to study together. Students acquiring knowledge through these means provide ways to interact with each other and a faculty member (Hanna, 1998).

These online universities create a competitive market that could invigorate the need for schools of social work field education programs to develop globally. Instruction comes from the knowledge and skills of coursework, practical applications in the field placement and supervision from the field instructor at the agency. Some schools of social
work are using a hybrid form of technology where online and face-to-face approaches are combined for field seminar.

In viewing the current and future impact of computing in higher education, we must assume the technology of online learning will produce learning systems of a blended nature that are far better than the prior “gold standard” of face-to-face class. (Hiltz & Turoff, 2005, p. 63)

There are schools of social work using Web-based education for their field seminars (Florida State University - School of Social Work Website, 2005). The University of Pittsburgh has been using Web-based integrative seminars since 2001. This innovative program has filled the gap between classroom learning and fieldwork (University of Pittsburgh - Teaching Times Website, 2001). Florida State University has the only School of Social Work approved by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to have a Master’s Level Social Work program online. Their field seminar courses are offered as hybrids combining face-to-face coursework followed by online advanced classes and ending with a face-to-face field practicum and an online seminar (Florida State University - School of Social Work Website, 2005). Across the nation, and internationally, schools of social work are looking at using Web-based education for the field seminar.

At The University of Southern Mississippi, the number of online courses being offered is increasing. The Southern Miss School of Social Work has utilized an Interactive Video Network for some of its courses and has offered fully online elective courses as well as hybrid courses (M. Forster, personal communication, December 5, 2005). Recently, the School of Social Work at The University of Southern Mississippi used a hybrid course with a graduate field seminar that included a partial online experience. Specific to this focus is how Web-based technology can be utilized in social
work field education to best augment student learning. In instances where faculty, administrators, or students are reluctant to use Web-based technology, it will be important to discover what is behind such reluctance. In this way, salient issues can be more accurately and appropriately addressed, removing or minimizing such barriers. “Clearly, Web-based educational capacity has relevance for social work field education, given that (a) field is absolutely fundamental to social work education; and (b) students may be placed at significant distances from a central site for purposes of seminar participation” (M. Forster, personal communication, December 5, 2005).

Administrators of Field Education are looking for more effective ways to integrate social work knowledge with practice skills in their practicum and field instruction (Dettlaff & Wallace, 2002). Field seminar has been an integral part of field education. The seminar provides the student an opportunity to share experiences with peers and receive feedback. Class time gives the seminar instructors the ability to address any student concerns in the field practicum and to provide insight for each situation (Birkenmaier et al., 2003). Field administrators are beginning to use online as a tool to provide a more efficient way of communicating field instruction to field instructors and students during the field practicum. The cost of travel and time spent attending class has been difficult for students who work full time and participate part time in social work coursework (Petracchi & Patchner, 2000). Mixing of online learning with face-to-face could be the more practical route in providing field instruction. Students could develop new skills with technology and have access to programs that may not have been available in the past (Yanes, 2004).
Research Questions

This study identified the problems associated with field seminar in distance education. Once the questionnaire was completed by respondents, concerns with field seminar were addressed. The study focused on six questions:

Research Question 1: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Fully Online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Face-to-Face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Research Question 3: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Blended Hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Research Question 4: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Fully Online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Research Question 5: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Face-to-Face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Research Question 6: Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Blended Hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?
Definition of Terms

*Asynchronous* - This is when there is no timing requirement for transmission. Asynchronous refers to communication that is delayed and interactions are at different times. These are usually e-mail or Web-based discussion forums. "Research has shown that asynchronous discussions can promote participation from students who may not normally be participatory in traditional face-to-face classroom settings" (Anderson, 2004, p. 33).

*Blended hybrid learning* - "Blended learning is a hybrid of traditional face-to-face and online learning so that instruction occurs both in the classroom and online where the online component becomes a natural extension of traditional classroom learning" (Rovai, 2003, p. 83). The terms hybrid and online lecture supplement will be used interchangeably in this paper. "Frequency of student participation in Web-based discussion forums affirmed that the hybrid model combining face-to-face classroom instruction with distance learning methods expanded student interactions and opportunities for feedback" (Yanes, 2004, p. 266).

*Constructivist perspective* - This is based on the key grounding assumptions that: "(a) learning is an active process of constructing rather than acquiring knowledge; and (b) instruction is a process of supporting that construction rather than communicating knowledge" (Duffy & Cunningham, 1997, p. 171). Constructivism builds knowledge by having students involved with the world understanding through the eyes and words of others who give their viewpoints and discussions.

*Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Standards* - All social work programs must provide "foundation content" that is the basis for developing the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. CSWE requires all social work programs to have objectives
and courses reflecting the following content areas: values and ethics, diversity, populations-at-risk, social and economic justice, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice (with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities), research, and field education (Moore, 2005a).

**Face-to-face class** - This pertains to a typical class held in a physical environment where students attend in a standard setting in which live instruction is provided by a faculty member.

**Field administrator** - This typically refers to the field education director or coordinator in a school of social work who oversees the program for placing students in their practicum.

**Field agency** - This location is where students will perform their hours for the field practicum.

**Field instructor** - These individuals have social work education degrees and are responsible for supervising students while they are in their field practicum.

**Field liaison** - This typically is a school of social work faculty educator who is the field seminar instructor.

**Field placement** - This term refers to field education hours students will attend to fulfill requirements for graduation as part of their social work curriculum. Practicum and internship will be used interchangeably in this paper.

**Field seminar** - The role of the seminar is seen as the mechanism that drives the presentation of the content with a major emphasis on field instruction. Those students attending seminar that contribute and/or share information with other students contribute
to the learning process needed in this particular learning situation (Giddings & Vodde, 2003).

**Fully online** - A course which meets wholly online utilizing no classroom time. Fully online courses do not meet face-to-face.

**Synchronous** - This refers to “computer conferencing activities such as chat where communication is immediate and all interaction takes place within the same time frame” (Yanes, 2004, p. 266).

**Web Course Tools (WebCT)** - “WebCT is the world’s leading provider of e-learning systems for higher education institutions. Colleges and universities around the world are expanding the boundaries of teaching and learning with WebCT” (WebCT Website, 2006). WebCT software can be used to create entire courses online or complement a classroom-based course as lecture supplements (through use of online syllabus, chat rooms, discussion boards, additional readings, notes, etc.); also known as a hybrid course (WebCT Website, 2006).

**Delimitations**

This study was delimited by the choice of only social work schools accredited through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). A second delimitation for this study was that it would include only administrators and faculty at schools of social work. Finally, the areas of focus were only five states located in the United States, which included Florida, New York, Mississippi, California, and Texas.

**Limitations**

There could be possible threats to the validity of the study because of limited testing on the Council on Social Work standards. Potential shortcomings could be that some faculty may not be teaching online courses or participating in blending learning
approaches in field seminars. Another limitation was that the questions on the survey were limited to online administration of the survey.

Assumptions

It was assumed that all participants in filling out the questionnaires would be honest. A second assumption was that participants would complete the questionnaires. A third assumption was that all respondents had the ability to use the Internet to complete the online surveys.

Justification

This study researched those involved with higher education to determine their perceptions of the need for Web-based education for schools of social work field education. Is there justification for the way teachers and administrators perceive the manner in which educational entities must now do business to meet the demands of a digitalized society? This study may interest administrators among institutions of higher learning who are exploring the possibility of adding distance education to their curricula. Magjuka, Shi, and Bonk (2005) pointed out that there are critical designs and administrative issues in online education. “For administrators who are contemplating an online program, it is vital to know the critical design and administrative issues to consider as well as the decision-making processes one might typically encounter” (Magjuka et al., 2005, p. 1). These authors opined factors that have arisen with the onset of technology. First, adult learners like the idea of the conveniences of being at any location and at any time so that they do not have to leave their jobs or families to attend class. Second, the online education is viewed by the public equal in quality to traditional learning in person. Third, as more people graduate from online programs, they are gaining respect in their workplace. As the trends for online education increase, administrators will see the need to
learn about the technology as a marketing approach for increasing student numbers. The competition for online distance education is fierce.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the literature on perceptions of achievement, relevant social work foundations, constructivism, social work education, social work integrative seminar, Web-based education with social work field integrative seminar, effectiveness of online and face-to-face learning, and distance education of faculty and administrators.

While this study explored the possibilities of using technology in social work field seminars as an aid to the learning of students, its focus was on the possible divergent views between administrators and faculty in the process of providing knowledge and skills with integration in field practicum.

Perceptions of Achievement

Recently, there has been increased research on examining online learning at universities regarding the quality of learning and achievement. One particular study looked at how online learning influenced students' achievement. Hoskins and van Hoof (2005) aimed their study to determine whether the approaches to studying, ability, age, and gender of 110 undergraduates in the second year of a psychology degree predicted the extent to which they utilized online learning using WebCT in support of a core Biological Psychology unit. Analysis collected from the data indicated that the use of the bulletin board was the only component which influenced achievement. Students posting messages outperformed those not using, or passively using, the bulletin board (Hoskins & van Hoof, 2005). However, future research should include other components in online
learning that appeal to the diverse learning styles and individual differences of the larger student population (Hoskins & van Hoof, 2005).

Another study performed by Daugherty and Funke (1998) examined perspectives of university faculty and students involved with online learning. Students and faculty were surveyed on the advantages, disadvantages, and general effectiveness of using the Internet as a teaching and learning tool. Findings indicated:

Student benefits included (a) meaningful learning of technology through the integration of course content and computer applications, (b) increased access to the most current and global content information available, (c) increased motivation, and (d) convenience. Faculty reported a wide range of challenges in the development and delivery of Web-based instruction. The most frequently identified barriers included (a) lack of technical support, (b) lack of software/adequate equipment, (c) lack of faculty/administrative support, (d) the amount of preparation time required to create assignments, and (e) student resistance. (Daugherty & Funke, 1998, n.p.)

The findings for this particular study suggested that there is an agreement among universities that online learning is playing an important role in higher education and increases the potential for Web-based instruction as a teaching and a learning tool (Daughtery & Funke, 1998).

A more recent study by Summers, Waigandt, and Whittaker (2005) examined differences between online distance education and traditional classroom learning for an introductory undergraduate statistics course. “Two outcome dimensions were measured: students’ final grades and student satisfaction with the course” (Summers et al., 2005, p. 233). The results indicated that there was no significant difference in grades between the
online and traditional classroom contexts. The study indicated that students enrolled in the online course were significantly less satisfied than the traditional classroom students (Summers et al., 2005).

Social Work Foundations

This section discusses how social work education, from foundation through advanced courses, builds upon itself in the development of knowledge, values, and skills. Specific theories and perspectives will then be explored. Next, constructivism will be presented.

In social work, foundation courses prepare the student with the core knowledge for providing service in the field. These foundation courses include a range of theories, experiential approaches, multidisciplinary perspectives, and evidence-based methods that meet the needs of a system requiring social work intervention (Coggins & Hatchett, 2002). These authors suggested that the worldview is influenced by multiple factors developed from the ecosystems perspective in social work interventions (Coggins & Hatchett, 2002). The social work advanced programs build on foundation knowledge for more depth, breadth, and specificity in educating the student. Both foundation and advanced levels of social work education are multidimensional, and this intellectual process is necessary when integrating the skills into direct and indirect delivery of service. In preparing the student with values consistent with the social work code of ethics, it is incumbent upon educators to support the ideas of how factors such as social status, economic status, and culture impact the lives of clients. The National Association of Social Workers Website (2005) explained that “The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values” (n.p.).
The following core values are the foundation of social work’s unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence (NASW Website, 2006)

The core values give social work a structure, which differentiates it from other professions. Students learn that social work practice is constructed from values and concepts connected to human behavior, the impact of the clients’ environment, types of client problems, and performance of competent interventions. “Moreover, these beliefs regarding effective professional practice are based on theory to a far greater degree than most practitioners and students realize” (Coggins & Hatchett, 2002, p. 69).

Berg-Weger and Birkenmaier (2000) stated, “In general, the social work profession is committed to the idea that sound theory and good practice are inseparable partners” (p. 125). As the field of social work develops, it is important to have empirical investigations into the knowledge bases used for Praxis and to use appropriate techniques that are quantitative and qualitative to solve those client problems. Berg-Weger (2000) performed a study to define theory-practice integration and to develop methods for achieving and evaluating this integration. Ideally, proposing two applications in directing professional criteria for the integration would include an all-encompassing, theoretical perspective along with a worldview. However, the actual integration is contingent upon
the idea that "the responsibility for facilitating this process is jointly shared by the social work program’s faculty, field instructor, and the student" (p. 125).

Constructivism

When discussing constructivism two of the prominent theorists involved with this approach to learning are mentioned throughout educational history. They are Piaget and Vygotsky. These two agreed on the social-interactionist constructivist insights which have been the foundation for some educators working with teaching, learning, and development. Vianna and Stetsenko (2006) discussed how the foundation for constructivism is rooted in the views of Piaget and Vygotsky with

Many present-day approaches in education, seeking solid grounding in psychological theories of development, turned to Piaget and Vygotsky for guidance and insights. Thus, Piaget’s theory has inspired a rich tradition of constructivist education in which learning is primarily defined as a process of concept construction through active interpretation and reorganization of conceptual schemas by the learner. This approach places emphasis on developing thinking through children’s active construction of action schemas as they act on objects and abstract invariant aspects and the logic underlying their actions. Learning is viewed as a self-regulatory process through which cognitive conflicts between existing individual models of the world and new insights gained in actions must be solved. Teaching is redefined (vis-a-vis traditional static approaches) as the provision of meaningful problems designed to encourage and facilitate the constructive process. By engaging in meaningful problem-solving situations, including discussions with others (peers and adults—equally important
partners in Piagetian theory), children are expected to develop conceptual connections that will engender new understandings. (p. 82)

Rovai (2003) posited that constructivism is a philosophy of learning based on the premise that knowledge is constructed by the individual through his or her interactions with the environment. “The learning approach can be traced to the constructivist movement of cognitive psychology, which holds that individuals gradually build their own understanding of the world through experience, maturation, and interaction with the environment, to include other individuals” (Rovai, 2003, p. 79). This viewpoint proposes that students are teachers and that the learner is an active processor of information.

Individuals make decisions based on what they know and how they build in this learning is by experience with their surroundings. At various ages of human development, individuals learn by watching, doing, and listening. In the stages of life an individual’s experience with the world can teach him or her many things. Individuals learn by building up a store of information that can solve problems, assess a situation, and even sense danger. “Constructivism emphasizes how one’s own construction of reality is based on a complex interaction between our thinking, acting, and feeling worlds, with each individual creating his or her own unique meaning-making system” (Neukrug, 2000, p. 77).

What is this meaning-making system? Richardson (2003) discussed how constructivist theorists view constructivism as a theory of learning or meaning making, where one builds on what has been created and experience with gaining knowledge by interfacing with life. However, constructivism is a model of knowing, not a theory of learning, and as such it has directed the foundations of constructivist pedagogy (Thompson, 2000; Richardson, 2003).
Constructivism is viewed from two different educational disciplines—sociological and psychological. In looking at social constructivism, this perspective focuses on how power, the economy, and political and social factors impact groups of people with their perceptions and learning from the worldview. An interesting note is that this knowledge does not acknowledge objective realities externally. Psychological constructivism perceives learning built upon the definition of a peculiar phenomenon, which relies on the historical knowledge of the individual (Richardson, 2003).

There are some similarities between the two approaches, such as meaning is constructed in the human mind. A difference between the two perspectives is one of focus. As mentioned previously, social constructivism focuses on formal knowledge determined within power, economic, social, and political forces. Most of the work on constructivist pedagogy takes place within the second approach—psychological. This approach is used more than social constructivism (Richardson, 2003). Characteristics of constructivist pedagogy include:

(a) attention to the individual and respect for students’ background and developing understandings of and beliefs about elements of the domain (this could also be described as student-centered); (b) facilitation of group dialogue that explores an element of the domain with the purpose of leading to the creation and shared understanding of a topic; (c) planned and often unplanned introduction of formal domain knowledge into the conversation through direct instruction, reference to text, exploration of a Web site, or some other means; (d) provision of opportunities for students to determine, challenge, change, or add to existing beliefs and understandings through engagement in tasks that are structured for this
purpose; and (e) development of students' awareness of their own understandings and learning processes. (Richardson, 2003, p. 1626)

“The constructivist perspective argues, in essence, that knowledge is a socially mediated process (where knowledge represents the integration of social construction and internal acquisition and elaboration), as opposed to an individual, cognitive event” (Herie, 2005, p. 35). The viewpoints differ on these approaches and are strained even more so when the instruction is considered either good or bad. Constructivist pedagogy moves learning experience from teacher-centered to student-centered. Using this pedagogy, students can bring forth experiences and beliefs which utilize an ongoing skill building approach that can be used to address any situation (Herie, 2005). “Current research on learning processes and curriculum design has made constructivism the pedagogical strategy choice for educators due to its perceived advantages over other instructional models” (Herie, 2005, p. 38). Much of what has been discussed regarding the constructivist versus instructivist approaches when used in today’s learning boils down to the view of construction of meaning rather than the memorization of facts (Oliver, 1999; Herie, 2005).

Social Work Education

Several authors describe how students learn during their field education. Some refer to it as self-directed learning (Regeher, Regeher, Leeson, & Fusco, 2002). Others call it experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Sweitzer & King, 2004). Still others describe it as problem-based learning (Lam, 2004).

Regardless of the tag, field education implies integration of coursework learned and an application to real-life experiences. What follows is a discussion of this process of
integration and applications. The various “tags” (descriptions) are explored in relation to how students can best learn from their field education experience.

The majority of literature focused on field education theoretical frameworks that address the teaching and learning via traditional methods, such as integrating knowledge and skills into the field practicum. The research discussed how some field education can be improved through adult learning and self-learning theories. When students learn by doing, the direction is enhanced by the guidance of quality supervision (Giddings & Vodde, 2003).

*Self-directed Learning*

Regeher et al. (2002) observed:

Self-directed learning has become increasingly central to discussions on adult education in the past three decades. . . . This type of learning is very useful when social workers are placed in a position where they have to be autonomous and spontaneous when working with clients in a crisis. Many social work students are young and inexperienced in the work force to perform specific tasks and activities. “Self-directed learners develop the ability to be responsive to the environment and to find creative responses to situations, rather than relying on stereotypic or patterned responses that may result from more structured forms of learning. (p. 55).

The ideas of empowerment and looking at strengths of individuals are important when assessing problems. Self-directed learning can empower the individual to use his or her own strengths in coming up with solutions. These values are parallel with social work values and goals (Regeher et al., 2002). The placement of students into the human services will undoubtedly be an immersion that will either be beneficial or create
reluctance for them to continue in social work endeavors. This infusion of field practicum is vital to the social work students’ stage of educational development for incorporating the knowledge, values, and skills into their professional self-concepts (Regeher et al., 2002).

The major role for agency social workers is to provide supervision that will embody the multifaceted areas of knowledge along with guiding the student with the necessary skills for appropriate service delivery. The field instructor (agency social work supervisor) is seen as bridging the capacities of the intellectual properties that students have obtained with the real-life practice in the problematic realities of client systems. The social worker taking a student under the wing and mentoring him or her with important skills will give support toward a professional direction, which is an important element when providing a good field experience. As Regeher et al. (2002) pointed out, the pivotal role of facilitating and directing the learning process in these practica is left to practitioners who are charged with the complex responsibility of teaching adults, which includes the responsibility of empowering students to become autonomous, self-directed, self-regulating professionals. (p. 55)

The self-directed and self-regulated ideas are emphasized in the field internship with the development of the learning plan or learning contract.

A learning contract is a document developed by the student and field instructor, which is based on the expertise of the field instructor, the focus of the agency, the expectations of the school, and the expressed learning needs of the student. (Regeher et al., 2002, p. 55)

The students will collaborate with the field instructor in planning tasks and activities where the school’s objectives are matched with services that the agency provides.
Students are requested to give feedback to the field instructor on their progress with the field practicum in the form of process evaluations. This can occur at various intervals of time, usually at mid-semester and at the end of the semester. Some social work programs vary with this process, and specific objectives for the evaluations could be different. Most accredited schools of social work have to follow standards articulated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The importance of discussing the learning plan with the students is that they are part owner to the plan, they will feel connected to the agency, and they will know what goals will be guiding their field experience. This interaction with field instructor and student involved with the development of the plan gives the supervisor a different view as the “all-knowing expert to that of a partner in the planning of student learning” (Regeher et al., 2002, p. 55).

*Experiential Learning*

A field experience provides the opportunity to apply theory to practice. This possibility of exchange should be reciprocal (Lam, 2004; Sweitzer & King, 2004). The incorporation of knowledge gained from the social work courses will now play a vital role in seeing how academics will be used in a setting that involves real-life situations. Hopefully, the knowledge learned from coursework and theoretical information should assist in successfully performing various situations (Sweitzer & King, 2004). However, as mentioned previously, self-directed learners use experience to be creative and imaginative in cases where a particular concept does not apply to a particular situation. One can develop new approaches or find a theoretical model that can support the experiential practice that was used in some cases.

There are some perspectives associated with experiential learning in the field of social work. There are discussions about the eclecticism of perspectives in social work
that has developed over the years with “borrowing theories from other disciplines” (M. Forster, personal communication, December 5, 2005). For the most part, there are varieties of theories used in social work; therefore, theoretical orientations could be termed eclectic.

Kolb (1984) introduced four phases that people should go through to benefit from experiential learning.

The first phase is concrete experience (CE); students have a specific experience in the classroom, at home, in a field placement, or in some other context. They then reflect on that experience from a variety of perspectives (reflective observation, or RO). During the abstract conceptualization (AC) phase, they try to form generalizations or principles based on their experience and reflection. Finally, they test that theory or idea in a new situation (active experimentation, or AE), and the cycle begins again, since this is another concrete experience. (Kolb, 1984, p. 30)

**Problem-based Learning**

Problem-based learning was designed some 20 years ago to address learning in preclinical medicine and to redress the kinds of limitations in traditional learning and instruction (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980). The creation and distribution as a “case-based and student-centered method” was well known within the medical schools before it become popular scholarly (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980, p. 240). Integration of knowledge requires specific information infused during the operation of the appropriate theory-based methodologist. Some methods and approaches that are used for integrating the course knowledge into the practicum vary in detail. Lam (2004) presented an educational approach named problem-based learning (PBL) developed at McMaster University which includes the following characteristics:
(a) learning is student-centered; (b) learning occurs in a small student group; (c) teachers are facilitators or guides; (d) real-life problems form the organizing focus and stimulus for learning; (e) problems are a vehicle or the development of clinical problem-solving skills; and (f) new information is acquired through self-directed learning. PBL is believed to have many functions. It is designed to help students (a) construct an extensive and flexible knowledge base; (b) develop effective problem-solving skills; (c) develop self-directed, lifelong learning skills; (d) become effective collaborators; and (e) become intrinsically motivated to learn. (Lam, 2004, p. 375)

Theories learned from the classroom are important when students are working with clients, but important aspects of social work values are compassion, establishing rapport, developing trust, and having empathy. These behaviors stem from an inherent quality that is very useful in how a person integrates and uses a theory. "After all, interns are not interacting with a developmental stage or psychiatric syndrome; they are interacting with a person" (Sweitzer & King, 2004, p. 48).

In a study conducted by Herie (2005), the writer stated, "the constructivist perspective is based on the key grounding assumptions that (a) learning is an active process of constructing rather than acquiring knowledge; and (b) instruction is a process of supporting that construction rather than communicating knowledge’ (p. 39). Within the constructivist paradigm, problem-based learning (PBL) in particular has emerged as an instructional strategy of choice. New technologies such as online learning are the key to starting the mechanisms for alternative teaching/learning practices. This type of learning views real-life problems presented in authentic relevant contexts, where students are guided towards acquiring knowledge and skills. PBL is viewed by some as superior to
such other problem-focused instructional models as case-based learning and goal-based learning. PBL is grounded in learning information that is useful in individuals' daily lives, not learning facts just to acquire them. Using the constructivist approach, online learning will become familiar and online pedagogy will continue to shape the way individuals view things (Herie, 2005).

**Identified problems.** Another way that students integrate theory into practice is to remember things that they have previously learned to solve problems in the field. There have been indications that some problems arise because field instructors are not qualified, the separation of theoretical attainment in coursework with field experience and not delivering enough education for students. The integration of theory and practice in field education is essential when measuring success with social work education. Students find this process difficult, but in order to fulfill the effectiveness for a good field education with valid integration there must be coherent and constructive means to happen (Dettlaff & Wallace, 2002).

The standards described in the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) policy specify how important the blending of practice and theory into social work curricula should be, but directing how the level of expertise in the practicum is done can be difficult to ascertain (CSWE, 2006). The education of students in the field internship provides an environment and a time for exploring the use of their knowledge. They can develop appropriate skills while there is someone qualified to oversee their progress (Lam, 2004).

**Possible solutions.** Dettlaff and Wallace (2002) required students to use a guide in the form of a field journal that blends literature from social work and unites the literature with the students' field practicum. This method can be used by field instructors, and field
educators can review or discuss the journal to perpetuate field learning and integration (Dettlaff & Wallace, 2002). Theories are important when evaluating student learning and field instruction at the field placement. Field practicums rely on supervision from an experienced agency instructor but at times the intern has to use a self-directed learning approach or problem-solving methods because of immediate client concerns. There are many ways a social work program can integrate theory into field instruction (Royse, Dhooper, & Rompf, 1999). Some schools partner with agencies to consult and do trainings for the staff at field placements. Field instructors may also serve on advisory boards to provide feedback on the social work program’s field education component. "Efforts to achieve integration can also be more purposive, as when agency field instructors supervising students for the first time are required to attend seminars on field instruction" (Royse et al., 1999, p. 8).

Social Work Integrative Seminar

"The Integrative Seminar is one mechanism to enhance integration efforts of students and field instructors. Little guidance and few models are available to graduate social work programs in offering such seminars" (Birkenmaier et al., 2003, p. 171).

In the seminar class or support teams, there is a time and place for both separate and connected approaches. If students are struggling with a problem at the placement, a theoretical analysis can help look at it in a new way. The use of theory can assist in forming a connected approach helping to ensure that each person’s unique experience is attended to and honored. (Sweitzer & King, 2004, p. 48)

Giddings and Vodde (2003) proposed a way to decrease the gap between theory-practice integration by developing the Progressive Adaptation & Integration Model for
the foundation practicum and practicum seminar. Using this model, the role of the seminar is seen as the mechanism that drives the presentation of the content with a major emphasis on field instruction. Those students attending seminar that contribute and/or share information with other students contribute to the learning process needed in this particular learning situation (Giddings & Vodde, 2003).

Seminars can be structured or unstructured, but most faculty field liaisons prefer that all students contribute to seminar discussions. The students in seminars should listen as well as being aware of the discussions with their peers and field liaison because this sharing facilitates learning and promotes experiential skills. The processes involved with seminar are important when gaining information about topics that pertain to real-life situations where it may not be common knowledge (Royse et al., 1999). It also creates a professional role in determining successful outcomes.

Web-based Education

"The late 1990s saw an explosion of new information technologies including the emergence of a means of linking widely distributed computer networks together to form a global network of networks called the Internet" (Crouch, 2001, p. 435). Many educational institutions have been promoting the idea of utilizing technology because of its availability and accessibility to a quick presentation of coursework. There seems to be pressure from both higher education and human services to use technology-assisted instruction. The growth of the information highway has "changed the way teachers and students interact, as well as the manner in which educational entities must now do business to meet the demands of a digitalized society" (Crouch, 2001, p. 435). In fact, Twigg (2001) referred to this change as "a paradigm shift, a change in the way we view our world and the assumptions that help us understand or predict behavior" (p. 12). The
increase with higher education offering online courses has shifted age-old methods of traditional teaching and learning. The age of information has created a large parameter in gathering knowledge and developing new ways to learn about the world.

Instructors can use the Internet for student learning, adding a variety of practice tools to their work pouch. This can provide a wide range of options for delivering appropriate instruction to a more diverse group of people.

Computer-mediated interaction has enhanced student satisfaction by creating enthusiasm for assignments, increasing participation, and facilitating relationships. These communication tools are available in Web-assisted course management systems and can produce a fast way of producing learning relationships between student and instructor with students perceiving e-mail interactions with faculty as highly valuable. (Petracchi & Patchner, 2000, p. 335)

Adult learning perspectives have shifted because of technology. Theoretical shifts have changed from behavioral to cognitive to constructivist learning approaches. This type of self-evaluation would be beneficial at various stages of the field practicum. "A constructivist view of the learner taking responsibility for constructing meaning that can help maintain focus on the benefits available through technology" (Moore, 2005b, p. 19). Contributors for student learning are the field instructor and field liaison, but the most important contributor is the student. This type of self-evaluation and self-directed learning infuses competencies for future professional associations and licensing, which begins in the field practicum (Regehr et al., 2002). As Moore discussed in her presentation at a national social work conference, "technology is impacting and transforming social work education . . . there are two dynamics related to technology and social work education" (B. Moore, personal communication, November 6, 2004).
Twigg (2001) asserted that the majority of online courses are organized and offered in the same way as on-campus courses, resulting in "applying old solutions to new problems" (Moore, 2005a, p. 15). Changes with the theories associated with the technology in adult learning perspectives have shifted from behavioral-cognitive approaches to constructivist learning perspectives (McFall & Freddolino, 2000; Biner, Dean, & Mellinger, 1994; Ashery, 2001; Coe & Elliott, 1999; Schoech & Helton, 2001; Finn, 2002; Randolph & Kraus, 2002; Frey, Faul, & Yankelov, 2003; Moore, 2005a).

The Internet can enhance learning by students sharing information using Web tools to recall the learning and process they used. Moore (2003) found that "practice courses were reported as using Web-based instruction more frequently than other curriculum areas (such as policy, HBSE, or research) but that faculty perceived the Web-based instruction in teaching practice classes to be less effective than face-to-face instruction" (B. Moore, personal communication, 2005). The students are the main concern because technologies can be used as a tool to help them in social work because one can access resources, deliver services, network efficiently, teach, and learn (Moore, 2005a).

A study conducted by Crouch (2001) found some implications for Internet-based courses for 2-year colleges in Texas which included:

(a) Establish documented technology plans, reliable technology delivery systems, and centralized systems of support for building and maintaining distance education infrastructure; (b) establish definite benchmarks for course development teaching/learning, course structure, student and faculty support; and (c) develop a standardized evaluation process for online course effectiveness and teaching/learning processes using a variety of methods. (p. 436)
Using the technology in social work is becoming more acceptable for teaching. Benefits of online learning for students are increased technological competence and it gives those students unable to attend school the opportunity to do that (Petracchi, Mallinger, Engel, Rishel, & Washburn, 2005). Communication tools in distance education can actually serve to promote relationships between student and instructor. In Petracchi et al.'s (2005) study, they discussed how students are satisfied with distance learning and suggested that online courses are as effective as face-to-face learning (Petracchi et al., 2005). Petracchi et al. (2005), in their study of effectiveness of distance education, found that

Web-assisted course was just as effective as the traditional course in transferring knowledge and beginning social work practice skills to students. Given the comfort level with technology suggested by the students in this study, social work educators should feel free to incorporate technology into traditional courses.

(Petracchi et al., 2005, p. 14)

Web-based Education with Social Work Field Integrative Seminar

"Conceptual frameworks for integrative seminar using Web-based instruction can be narrowed down to specific applications" (Royse et al., 1999, p. ). Web-based education could be useful for field seminar because instead of teacher- or education-centered learning, the shift would be to learner centeredness.

Teaching Times discusses about the award-winning project Innovation in Field Education: Web-based Integrative Seminar, the School of Social Work faculty members Patricia Kolar and Kathryn Collins addressed a disconnection that often exists between classroom learning and fieldwork. (University of Pittsburgh, 2001, n.p.)

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Located at the University of Pittsburgh, they developed, implemented, and evaluated a Web-based resource page and integrative seminar for first-year social work graduate students enrolled for field placement. As the field of social work grows, there are client services instruction and concentrations needed to provide students with a knowledge base. The University of Pittsburgh (2001) developed this resource page on the World Wide Web to be accessible to students before beginning their practicum. This tool would be helpful in giving students the opportunity to look at field education in a different way. The field Web site could provide links for types of services, social work publications, evidence-based information on interventions, the policies and procedures in a field manual online, and various databases and search engines to choose from to locate information. The Web site could also be a good tool for field instructors who are increasingly unable to commit the necessary time to help students coordinate tasks during this practicum period by allowing research possibilities or posting of tasks that could help reduce some of the time needed to be working with clients or their needs.

The practicum is the crucial time for students to be integrating knowledge to skills during this process. This can be seen as "effective integration [that] may be dependent on collaboration, reciprocity, resources, and relationships shared by field agencies and social work programs" (Bushfield, 2005, p. 216). Technology can be a very useful tool to help in the process of integrating students' knowledge (Hiltz & Turoff, 2005). Social work could use these means to add to the networking role that is important in finding resources (University of Pittsburgh, 2001). "There is evidence that a good field placement is one which contains quality supervision, relevant learning, careful communication and monitoring, as well as accessibility and responsiveness" (Bushfield, 2005, p. 216). Social work educators are at the forefront of the coming changes to be effective in the field.
Technology can be an asset when trying to meet the objectives in field education because it can assist in the communication and add new ways to integrate learning objectives. Online course learning can be viewed as actual hands-on training incorporating field seminars with the technology, knowledge, and skills (McFall et al., 2000). "The importance of quality integration into social work education into the field integrative seminar where there must be effective teaching context for linking, doing, and thinking" (p. 216).

Effectiveness of Online and Face-to-Face Learning

In this section, the findings of several research studies related to significant and nonsignificant differences with the effectiveness of online learning are presented. In one study by Neuhauser (2002), the investigator compared two sections of a Principles of Management undergraduate course, one section online and the other face-to-face, which examined gender, age, learning preferences and styles, media familiarity, effectiveness of tasks, course effectiveness, test grades, and final grades. During this comparison, both groups performed the same assignments but the difference was that one group was online and the other group met face-to-face. The results of this study showed that equivalent learning activities could be equally effective with online and face-to-face learners (Neuhauser, 2002).

Some studies have examined the perceived effectiveness of online instruction in social work education for various curriculum areas (Moore, 2005a). One study by Moore (2005a) specifically explored the perceived effectiveness of Web-based instruction in social work education in order to determine if there were any differences when comparing Web-based instruction and face-to-face instruction across various curriculum areas defined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).
An online survey was developed as the instrument to collect data. The survey used a Likert scale to measure perceived effectiveness of Web-based and face-to-face instruction in teaching about values and ethics, diversity, populations-at-risk, and social and economic justice based on 14 CSWE accreditation standards. The survey also asked respondents to indicate their perceptions of effectiveness for both Web-based and face-to-face instruction in meeting the 35 CSWE standards related to the five core curriculum areas (human and social environment, policy, practice, research, and field. (Moore, 2005, p. 58)

However, Moore (2005) emphasized that "when examining the similarities and differences across the social work curriculum, those involved in Web-based teaching suggest there are indeed differences between the perceived effectiveness of Web-based and face-to-face instruction" (Moore, 2005, p. 63). However, Moore (2005) stated, "the most important issue is learning how to use Web-based instruction in ways that enhance the professional preparation of future social workers" (p. 64).

There are studies that have attempted to explore the differences in learning style preferences and learning success with online courses and face-to-face courses. Researchers Aragon, Johnson, and Shaik (2002) performed a study to examine the relation of learning style preferences and learning success of students in the two learning environments of online and face-to-face. The rest of this study suggested that students can learn equally well in either online or face-to-face, regardless of learning style (Aragon et al., 2002).

In constructivist approaches, learning is more a matter of going from the inside out rather than from the outside in. The learner actively formulates internally the meaning of the surrounding environment and begins the building of learning. Using tests can
promote thinking about what they know by moving them toward learning engagements that are complex. Such learning engagements or environments should interface learners with real situations that are matched with their discipline. The environment would be conducive with other perspectives that create learning. The engagement would be supportive in determining goals and allowing them to control those aspects. The environment would provide a comfortable place where students can share their learning experiences. Computers can be useful for researchers in addressing how to build these learning environments (Reiser & Dempsey, 2002).

Jonassen (1994) suggested that constructivism should be applied to distance education and proposed a constructivist design model for online learning that included the following guidelines:

Focus on knowledge construction, not reproduction. . . . Present authentic tasks . . . [that] provide real world case-based learning environments. . . . Foster reflective practice, and enable context and content dependent knowledge construction. . . . Support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation, not competition among learners for recognition. (p. 35)

The constructivist approach to online learning is consistent with the paradigm shift that Barr and Tagg (1995) suggested is taking place in U.S. higher education. They reported that higher education institutions are thinking less about providing instructions and more about producing learning. (Rovai, 2003, p. 81)

Fink (2003) wrote about online design suggesting that "faculty knowledge about course design is the most significant bottleneck to better teaching and learning in higher education" (Rovai, 2004, p. 82). The importance for online faculty to have a clear understanding of the major tasks for designing a course online before starting the process
of putting the course together was cited. It is very important to prepare and plan accordingly with online courses.

Many educators have developed a strategy for using technology by teaching courses partially online and face-to-face. This "blended learning is a hybrid of traditional face-to-face and online learning so that instruction occurs both in the classroom and online where the online component becomes a natural extension of traditional classroom learning" (Rovai, 2004, p. 83). Blending learning is sometimes referred to as the hybrid model where the course is set up to use various components of the online learning without losing some of the face-to-face interaction.

Research that compared distance education to traditional face-to-face instruction has provided substantial evidence that distance education can be as effective as traditional education; when the method and technologies used are appropriate to the instructional tasks, there is student-to-student interact, and when there is timely teacher-to-student feedback. (Rovai, 2004, p. 84)

Change is necessary when converting traditional courses to online without considering the design programs and reparation for implementation for differences in formats. This change is about learning, not teaching, and anyone can bring talents, diversity, experiences, and worldviews into the learning environment. In designing a fully online or blended course, the instructor should carefully consider the following course design elements: (a) presentation of content, (b) instructor—student and student—student interactions, (c) individual and group activities, and (d) assessment of student performance.

Anderson (2004) provided in her online course the constructivist-learning activities such as scenarios, role-playing, what-if simulations, and reflective writing to
promote engaging students with cyber experience and presenting a partnership with the
knowledge that has meaning (Anderson, 2004). Each element adds the electronic
supplanting that will build on learning the technology but communicating with others
who are interested in getting information that is relevant to the life-long learning.
"Activities promote student-directed goal setting, personal construction of knowledge,
collaboration with peers, development of problem-solving skills, completing products
that are relevant to their work setting, and authentic assessment" (Anderson, 2004, p. 32).
E-portfolios are becoming popular with educators to see the acquisition learning with
students which is not about the final product but how students build their capacities for
learning about life. The e-portfolio projects are submitted as e-mail attachments, on the
discussion board, assignment dropbox, or posted on a Web page (Anderson, 2004).

Based on her findings, Yanes (2004) stated, "In general, the integration of distance
education methods seems to have improved the course in all aspects" (p. 274). An
important detail that came to focus from the study was assessment. Because discussions
are typed instead of discussed in class, this gave the instructor a good way to assess how
the student participated.

Summarizing this information from the research perspective, using Web-based
discussion forums increases the likelihood that data can be saved more effectively
and adds to the instructor's capacity for an informative analysis to measure
student learning in course activities. By this research we have seen how an
analysis of discourse can assess student's cognitive growth as a planned event. (p.
275)
Divergent Distance Education Views of Faculty and Administrators

In Isham’s (2004) study, there were some differences between the perceptions which give divergent views between administration and faculty. Her primary purpose for this research was to examine faculty and administrator’s beliefs about distance education, their experience with distance education technologies, and their willingness to be involved with distance education. This study "indicated that while both faculty and administrators held positive beliefs toward distance education, administrators had more experience using specific education delivery technologies, and were more willing than faculty to be involved with those technologies" (Isham, 2004, p. 1224). Data were collected with two self-reporting questionnaires, one for faculty and one for administrators. In addition to demographic data, respondents provided information regarding their beliefs about distance education and their experience with nine distance education technologies. Data were analyzed using independent $t$ tests to compare faculty and administrator beliefs about distance education, their experience with distance education technologies, and their willingness to use those technologies. Pearson product moment correlations were used to analyze relationships between faculty beliefs about distance education and their willingness to use distance education technologies in the future (Isham, 2004). The implications drawn from this study were that faculty needed motivational provisions in order to deliver distance education and the development of professional education for faculty.

In one study at the University of South Carolina, "perceptual differences were examined among higher education faculty members who have had experience with distance education and those who have not, with regard to their perceptions of the effectiveness of distance education versus the traditional face-to-face classroom setting.
(Ulmer, 2005, p. 12). The results suggested that faculty members with experience were less receptive to learning about online technology to be used for teaching courses. In general, distance educators are not viewed as having a high status compared to traditional instructors.

This study may interest administrators among institutions of higher learning who are exploring the possibility of adding distance education. The findings suggest that experience breeds acceptance in this regard, and that decision-makers would benefit from increasing their familiarity with educators experienced in distance education. (Ulmer, 2005, p. 12)

This research examined divergent views and perceptions between administrators, faculty, and students related to the inclusion of Web-based technology in social work field education. An important focus was how these differences impact student learning including the learning modalities made available to students. Specific to this focus was how Web-based technology can be utilized in social work field education to best augment student learning. In instances where faculty, administrators, or students were reluctant to use Web-based technology, it was important to discover what is behind such reluctance. In this way, salient issues can be more accurately and appropriately addressed, removing or minimizing such barriers. Clearly, Web-based educational capacity has relevance for social work field education, given that (a) field is absolutely fundamental to social work education; and (b) students may be placed at significant distances from a central site for purposes of seminar participation. (M. Forster, personal communication, 2005)
Conclusion

The literature review prepared for this chapter explored the various social work foundations theories associated with areas of concern to see which particular frameworks were important for further review. Readings were performed to find those supportive concepts that contribute to the research questions. Social work ideologies and philosophies, the explanations for field integrative seminar, and Web-based conceptual frameworks give the study a basis for formulating the importance of how each contribute to the changes taking place in higher education and how instruction is delivered. The major focus for the previous chapter looked at the theoretical foundations associated with social work and how constructivism has been utilized for teaching online courses. The main ideas discussed in this section were advantages and achievements for the various types of instructional delivery such as online, hybrid, and face-to-face in social work education. The increased use of distance education methods in teaching courses may become an issue with faculty and administrators in social work and other disciplines of higher education.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter describes the methodology of the study. This chapter includes the
description of participants, materials, procedures, and data analysis.

Participants

This study drew information from a convenience sample population of
administrators and faculty employed at accredited schools of social work in California,
Florida, Mississippi, New York, and Texas. The sample included only those Master’s of
Social Work programs that are accredited by the Council of Social Work Education in
those states. Each faculty and administrators, in programs from which e-mail addresses
could be located, were sent a letter (Appendix A), consent form (Appendix B), and a
questionnaire (Appendix C) individually.

Materials

Brenda Moore, Ph.D., LMSW-AP, an Assistant Professor and BSW Director with
the Department of Social Work at Texas A&M University-Commerce, gave the
researcher permission to use her instrument for the present study (Appendix D). The
instrument was developed in 2005. The instrument had construct validity, which is the
content-related evidence to determine that the presumed construct (nonobservable traits)
is what is being measured (Gay & Airasian, 2000). The instrument developed by Moore is
based on the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) standards. The standards can be
viewed online at www.cswe.org.

There was limited testing on validity and reliability. . . . The instrument had
construct validity based on CSWE standards. I did alpha coefficient on each of the
standards for each area (HBSE, Policy, etc.) w/.80 or better (which is acceptable)—most were higher. I also did a pilot study to increase validity and reliability which resulted in a few changes to the subjective areas, but not the CSWE standards. (B. Moore, e-mail correspondence, 2006).

The reliability of this study was assessed after the data were collected. Professor Moore’s study surveyed the opinions of faculty participants with experience in Web-based teaching. Specifically, it explored the perceived effectiveness of Web-based instruction in social work education in order to determine if there were any differences when comparing Web-based instruction and face-to-face instruction across various CSWE-defined curriculum areas. The researcher used the questions from the Demographic section, which includes Teaching Values & Ethics, Diversity, Social and Economic Justice in Section I, only Field Practicum Content on Teaching Social Work Curriculum Content in Section II, and Courses Taught Using Web-based Instruction (Part A) and Web-based Teaching Tools (Part B) in Section III. Questions about Curriculum Content in Section II and Best Practices in Providing Web-based Instruction (Section V) were excluded from the study because the focus was restricted to field education. Questions concerning the primary instruction delivery mode, Blended (Hybrid) Learning, were added to the instrument. The instrument was examined by a panel of experts, and the researcher refined the instrument by making changes suggested by experts. Two questions were added to the instrument which asked about social work theory and online instruction demands.

Demographic variables included the current rank and tenure, gender, highest degree earned, race/ethnicity, years of experience teaching full time in social work, and percentage of overall teaching experience in graduate education. These demographic variables were used to describe the study sample.
Procedure

The methodology consisted of a questionnaire that was sent by e-mail to all administrators and faculty from five CSWE accredited schools of social work for which e-mail addresses were available. The sample was selected from the population of social work administrators and faculty who work in California, Mississippi, Texas, Florida, and New York. The questionnaires were distributed to those individuals by e-mail asking for participation. A version of the questionnaire was available to participants online via the World Wide Web. Survey Monkey was used as the online software program for collecting the data. The data were entered into the Version 11.5 SPSS program.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Fully Online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 1

A Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the advantages of Fully Online instruction. If there was a significant interaction between the independent variables, that interaction alone was interpreted. If there was no interaction, the main effects were analyzed. If the main effect for Method was significant, post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the significant differences were.
Research Question 2

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Face-to-Face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 2

A Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the advantages of Face-to-Face instruction. If there was a significant interaction between the independent variables, that interaction alone was interpreted. If there was no interaction, the main effects were analyzed. If the main effect for Method was significant, post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the significant differences were.

Research Question 3

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Blended Hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 3

A Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the advantages of Blended Hybrid instruction. If there was a significant interaction between the independent variables, that interaction alone was interpreted. If there was no interaction, the main effects were analyzed. If the main effect
for Method was significant, post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the significant differences were.

Research Question 4

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Fully Online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 4

A Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the achievement of Fully Online instruction. If there was a significant interaction between the independent variables, that interaction alone was interpreted. If there was no interaction, the main effects were analyzed. If the main effect for Method was significant, post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the significant differences were.

Research Question 5

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Face-to-Face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 5

A Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the achievement of Face-to-Face instruction. If there was a significant interaction between the independent variables, that interaction alone was interpreted. If there was no interaction, the main effects were analyzed. If the main effect
for Method was significant, post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the significant differences were.

*Research Question 6*

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Blended Hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

*Analysis for Research Question 6*

A Factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the achievement of Blended Hybrid instruction. If there was a significant interaction between the independent variables, that interaction alone was interpreted. If there was no interaction, the main effects were analyzed. If the main effect for Method was significant, post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the significant differences were.

The variables used to analyze research questions are presented in Table 1.

**Conclusion**

This chapter described the methodology of the study. It included the descriptions of participants, materials, procedures, and data analysis. Further information was given for each variable analyzed in Table 1. This study used quantitative and qualitative research which indicates that it was a mixed methodology.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQs</th>
<th>Variables Included</th>
<th>Value Labels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1   | IV - Classification | 1 = Administration  
|     |                     | 2 = Faculty     |
|     | IV - Methods        | 1 = Fully Online  
|     |                     | 2 = Face-to-Face  
|     |                     | 3 = Hybrid       |
|     | DV-Q16a-Advantages (Online) | 1 = Not at all effective  
|     |                     | 2 = Somewhat effective  
|     |                     | 3 = Moderately effective  
|     |                     | 4 = Very effective  
|     |                     | 5 = Completely effective  |
| 2   | IV - Classification | 1 = Administrators  
|     |                     | 2 = Faculty     |
|     | IV - Methods        | 1 = Fully Online  
|     |                     | 2 = Face-to-Face  
|     |                     | 3 = Hybrid       |
|     | DV-Q16b-Advantages (F2F) | 1 = Not at all effective  
|     |                     | 2 = Somewhat effective  
|     |                     | 3 = Moderately effective  
|     |                     | 4 = Very effective  
|     |                     | 5 = Completely effective  |
| 3   | IV - Classification | 1 = Administrators  
|     |                     | 2 = Faculty     |
|     | IV - Methods        | 1 = Fully Online  
|     |                     | 2 = Face-to-Face  
|     |                     | 3 = Hybrid       |
|     | DV-Q16c-Advantages (Hybrid) | 1 = Not at all effective  
|     |                     | 2 = Somewhat effective  
|     |                     | 3 = Moderately effective  
|     |                     | 4 = Very effective  
<p>|     |                     | 5 = Completely effective  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQs</th>
<th>Variables Included</th>
<th>Value Labels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4   | IV - Classification | 1 = Administration  
                     | 2 = Faculty  |
|     | IV - Methods        | 1 = Fully Online  
                     | 2 = Face-to-Face  
                     | 3 = Hybrid  |
|     | DV-Q18a-Achievement (Online) | 1 = Not at all effective  
                     | 2 = Somewhat effective  
                     | 3 = Moderately effective  
                     | 4 = Very effective  
                     | 5 = Completely effective  |
| 5   | IV - Classification | 1 = Administrators  
                     | 2 = Faculty  |
|     | IV - Methods        | 1 = Fully Online  
                     | 2 = Face-to-Face  
                     | 3 = Hybrid  |
|     | DV-Q18b-Achievement (F2F) | 1 = Not at all effective  
                     | 2 = Somewhat effective  
                     | 3 = Moderately effective  
                     | 4 = Very effective  
                     | 5 = Completely effective  |
| 6   | IV - Classification | 1 = Administrators  
                     | 2 = Faculty  |
|     | IV - Methods        | 1 = Fully Online  
                     | 2 = Face-to-Face  
                     | 3 = Hybrid  |
|     | DV-Q18c-Achievement (Hybrid) | 1 = Not at all effective  
                     | 2 = Somewhat effective  
                     | 3 = Moderately effective  
                     | 4 = Very effective  
                     | 5 = Completely effective  |
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

Social work ideologies and philosophies, the explanations for field integrative seminar, and Web-based conceptual frameworks give this study a basis for formulating the importance of how each contribute to the changes taking place in higher education and how higher education instruction is delivered. Online delivery provides educational opportunities for individuals who may not have the ability to attend classes in a traditional format. Online learning is changing the way educational curriculum is being offered today in colleges and universities. The idea of using technology in social work field seminars as an aid in teaching of students is one possibility for diversity in delivery. This study takes into consideration the possible divergent views between administrators and faculty in the process of providing knowledge and skills with integration in field education.

The researcher for this study sought to obtain factual data about the perceived advantages of varied delivery methods for field integrative seminar among social work administrators and faculty. The population identified for survey in this study included 1,466 faculty and administrators who had taught face-to-face, online, and blended (hybrid mix of face-to-face and online methods) social work courses at Council on Social Work Education accredited schools of Social Work located in the states of Mississippi, Texas, California, New York, and Florida. An e-mail explaining the purpose of the study along with a link to the survey that was managed by a Web-based software program named Survey Monkey was sent to each of the identified faculty and administrators. The letter is
included in Appendix A. Over a 2-week period, 120 faculty and administrators responded to the survey. At the end of the third week, 56 more responses had been received. A fourth week was given to wait for any remaining responses before the final survey data were compiled from the 200 respondents. The data collected from the surveys were analyzed and organized using SPSS 11.5 program procedures.

There were several problems with missing data encountered on some surveys. Some respondents only used face-to-face teaching methods and did not have the opportunity to experience online or mixed methods teaching. “Not applicable” was not an available option on the questionnaire; therefore, some of the returned surveys were incomplete. Another possible reason for nonresponse could have been that there were some respondents who were administrators without teaching responsibilities. These issues will be discussed in the qualitative analysis portion of this document. Open-ended comments that were collected are available for review in Appendix E. Finally, some schools and/or colleges of social work either did not utilize a field seminar or some of the respondents did not have any experience with field seminars.

Descriptive Statistics

The following tables display the descriptive statistics analyzed using SPSS 11.5. Each table describes the means and standard deviations from survey questions for each dependent and independent variable.

The means and standard deviations correlating to the perceptions of instructors in regard to the advantages of Fully Online instruction as a function of the dependent variables are presented in Table 2.
Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Questions by Advantages (16a)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Status</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.577</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Both Faculty and Administrator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The means and standard deviations for perceptions of the instructors to the advantages of Face-to-Face instruction as a function of the dependent variable are presented in Table 3.

The means and standard deviations for perceptions of the advantages of Blended Hybrid instruction as a function of the dependent variable are presented in Table 4.

The means and standard deviations for perceptions of the achievements of Online instruction as a function of the dependent variable are presented in Table 5.

The means and standard deviations for perceptions of the achievements of Face-to-Face instruction as a function of the dependent variable are presented in Table 6.

The means and standard deviations for perceptions of the achievements of Blended Hybrid instruction as a function of the dependent variable are presented in Table 7.

Statistical Results

The core of this study was constructed around the responses to survey questions corresponding to the following six research questions:

Research Question 1

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Fully Online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 1

A factorial ANOVA was conducted in response to research question 1: The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perception of the advantages of Fully
### Table 3

**Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Questions by Advantages (16b)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Status</th>
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<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1.032</td>
<td>95</td>
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### Table 4

**Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Questions by Advantages (16c)**

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<td>4</td>
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Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Questions by Achievement (18a)

<table>
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<th>Instructional</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
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<td>3. Both Faculty and Administrator</td>
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<td>.577</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>.072</td>
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</table>

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Questions by Achievement (18b)

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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<td>.944</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for Survey Questions by Achievement (18c)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Current Status</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.958</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Administrator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.036</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Both Faculty and Administrator</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1.000</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Online instruction. The factorial ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between classification and method of instructional delivery, $F(3, 144) = .28, p = .839, \eta^2 = .006$, nor was there a significant main effect for classification, $F(2, 144) = .38, p = .687, \eta^2 = .005$, and there was not a significant main effect for method of instructional delivery, $F(2, 144) = .98, p = .380, \eta^2 = .013$.

Research Question 2

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Face-to-Face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 2

Again, for research question 2, a factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the advantages of Face-to-Face instruction. The factorial ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between classification and method of instructional delivery, $F(3, 138) = .61, p = .611, \eta^2 = .013$, nor was there a significant main effect for classification, $F(2, 138) = .47, p = .626, \eta^2 = .007$, and there was not a significant main effect for method of instructional delivery, $F(2, 138) = 1.2, p = .305, \eta^2 = .017$.

Research Question 3

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of Blended Hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?
Analysis for Research Question 3

A factorial ANOVA was conducted for this research question as well. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the advantages of Blended Hybrid instruction. The factorial ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between classification and method of instructional delivery, $F(3, 137) = 1.1, p = .357, \eta^2 = .023$, nor was there a significant main effect for classification, $F(2, 137) = .71, p = .49, \eta^2 = .010$, and there was not a significant main effect for method of instructional delivery, $F(2, 137) = .89, p = .409, \eta^2 = .013$.

Research Question 4

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Fully Online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 4

For research question 4, another factorial ANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependant variable was the perceptions of the achievement of Fully Online instruction. The factorial ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between classification and method of instructional delivery, $F(3, 141) = .38, p = .761, \eta^2 = .008$, nor was there a significant main effect for classification, $F(2, 141) = .23, p = .79, \eta^2 = .003$, and there was not a significant main effect for method of instructional delivery, $F(2, 141) = 1.05, p = .354, \eta^2 = .015$. 

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Research Question 5

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Face-to-Face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 5

Once again, a factorial ANOVA was conducted for the next research question. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the achievement of Face-to-Face instruction. The factorial ANOVA indicated no significant interaction between classification and method of instructional delivery, $F(3, 136) = .80, p = .494, \eta^2 = .017$, nor was there a significant main effect for classification, $F(2, 136) = .11, p = .904, \eta^2 = .002$, and there was not a significant main effect for method of instructional delivery, $F(2, 136) = 1.23, p = .294, \eta^2 = .018$.

Research Question 6

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of Blended Hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Analysis for Research Question 6

And, finally, a factorial ANOVA was conducted for research question 6. The independent variables were classification (Social Work Faculty or Social Work Administrators) and Method of Instructional Delivery (Fully Online, Face-to-Face, and Blended Hybrid). The dependent variable was the perceptions of the achievement of Blended Hybrid instruction. The factorial ANOVA indicated no significant interaction
between classification and method of instructional delivery, \( F(3, 137) = .99, p = .40, \eta^2 = .021 \), nor was there a significant main effect for classification, \( F(2, 137) = .39, p = .671, \eta^2 = .006 \), and there was not a significant main effect for method of instructional delivery, \( F(2, 137) = .49, p = .611, \eta^2 = .007 \).

**Qualitative Analysis**

The next portion of the study included qualitative feedback. Two questions were included in the instrument asking for comments on particular areas of study. One question, number 23 in the questionnaire, asked for comments regarding the choosing of one delivery system over another as more effective in teaching about values and ethics, diversity, and social and economic justice. The other question listed as number 28 in the questionnaire asked if there were any comments regarding why one delivery system is more effective than the other in teaching across various areas of the curriculum.

The comments from question 23 have been categorized into themes where each one is presented in Table 8. The comments from question 28 have been categorized into themes where each one is presented in Table 9.

"By combining qualitative research methods with survey research methods, we can benefit from the strengths of survey research while we offset its weaknesses regarding superficiality, missing social context, inflexibility, artificiality, and questionable validity" (Rubin & Babbie, 2005, p. 305). The research study included a couple of open-ended questions provided to respondents on the questionnaire to elicit comments for qualitative response. The first question was answered by 104 respondents, or 52% of the sample. The question asked, “Please record any comments regarding why one delivery system is more effective than the other in teaching about values and ethics, diversity, and social and
Table 8

Please Add Comments on Why One Delivery System is More Effective than the Other in Teaching About Values and Ethics, Diversity, and Social and Economic Justice (No. 23)

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<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1. Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Manner of Presentation/Delivery (Instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Learning Styles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9

Please Add Comments on Why One Delivery System is More Effective than the Other in Teaching Across Various Areas of the Curriculum (No. 28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
economic justice.” Respondents’ quotes are copied from question 23 comments, which can be viewed in Appendix E.

Many of the respondents indicated that face-to-face instruction delivery included more interaction with that approach. A few of the quotes were, “I believe that face-to-face interactions encourage more nuances in discussion values and ethics, and hidden personal biases. Face-to-face is more effective in developing insight into self and ultimately developing more insight into others.” Another quote regarding interaction was, “Face-to-face is critical because experiential aspects are essential—for this topic I feel it is important to go out into the community and have face-to-face interaction with community groups and stakeholders. This cannot be achieved online.”

One respondent made an additional comment that was relevant to the theme of interaction with the quote, “I believe that if structured and supported appropriately, AND properly matched to students’ learning styles, all delivery formats can be highly effective in teaching about values, ethics, diversity, and social and economic justice.”

There were some interesting quotes about effectiveness with the types of instruction delivery such as the following, “I feel as if the answer to all of the questions is ‘completely effective.’ But, even with the in-class exercises, the discussion and the assignments, I am not comfortable saying that I know that the teaching methods are effective. It is difficult for me to determine whether students are learning these values or whether they came to the class already knowing and practicing these values. I do know that in non-face-to-face teaching methods, the distance between instructor and student is enormous and assessing effectiveness of learning is difficult.” Another respondent stated, “I believe that if structured and supported appropriately, AND properly matched to
students’ learning styles, all delivery formats can be highly effective in teaching about values, ethics, diversity, and social and economic justice.”

The one major theme that emerged from these questions was summarized by the following quote from one of the respondents: “Setting is less important than method. Lecture (written or oral) is least effective when retention and application is the desired educational objective. It is not where one teaches, but how one teaches that makes the difference.” Another quote that supported the learning style theme was, “We use all three models of delivery, and all three have strengths. I suspect the BIGGEST factor in ‘effectiveness’ of a particular model is the individual student’s learning style.” Another quote worthy of attention was: “Any differences in effectiveness are not necessarily rooted in the mode of delivery but in the manner of presentation. The mode of delivery may require that material be presented differently but it would be the instructor’s effectiveness at adapting the presentation rather than the mode of delivery itself that would determine effectiveness.”

The next question answered by 64 respondents (32% of the sample) used for qualitative purposes was regarding why one delivery system was more effective than the other in teaching a Social Work Field Practicum course. The following respondents’ quotes are copied from question 28 comments, which can be viewed in Appendix E.

There were two main themes found throughout the responses for this question. The first theme was interaction and the second theme was how the delivery was used to determine which one was effective. Both of these themes’ responses were similar to question 23 comments. Some of the comments included, “The real-time nature of face-to-face contact coupled with immediate interaction between the student and instructor may
help students better process problems that they experience in the field.” However, a respondent with a different point of view stated, “The online resources that are available through book companies give students an opportunity to view videos of actual clinical interviews. Students can view cases and send comments via e-mail to the instructor. I believe that there is an advantage to on-line delivery for every course, provided that the course is developed properly. The fact that students can communicate with each other and their instructors without the stress of traveling to a remote campus, as many of our students commute in from other areas, provides numerous advantages. Fuel costs have escalated, driving is stressful and sometimes dangerous, the time spent driving cuts into time that students can devote to their studies, and/or other obligations that they may have to job, family, etc.”

Ancillary Findings

There were some interesting results that were not part of the original research questions. For example, some of the respondents did not teach in Social Work because they were strictly administrative. Two important items were how perceptions were not clearly defined and the questions were posed more as phrases rather than questions. Therefore, an ancillary finding, not about this research particularly, but about research in general, was that clarity is of utmost importance when sending out surveys.

There were some technological problems that had not been considered when setting up the questionnaire. After sending the survey out by e-mail to the targeted population, respondents were not available (out of office, on sabbatical, retired, on vacation, etc.). At times, there were errors sent back to the researcher from the e-mails. Finally, some of the participants were not able to access the survey because of a
technological malfunction. Again, these were findings valuable to all researchers due to
the nature of this study (electronic) but not specific ancillary findings for this particular
study.

Summary

Chapter IV presented descriptive and factorial analysis of quantitative data and
analysis of qualitative data retrieved from 200 survey responses that were collected from
various faculty and administrators employed by accredited schools of social work in
Mississippi, Texas, California, New York, and Florida. Discussions, conclusions,
limitations, recommendations for future practice and research based on the findings, and a
summary are presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter offers a descriptive summary of the analytical results presented in Chapter IV. It also presents conclusions and discussion based upon the findings of the study and concludes with recommendations for policy and practice and future research in the related topic areas of this study. The purpose for this study was to gain information from participants in higher education, specifically faculty and administrators at accredited schools of social work, to determine if their perceptions of the face-to-face, online, or blended course delivery would identify a preferred method for schools of social work pertaining to field seminar. An online survey was set up with the Web-based software program Survey Monkey. The recipients of the survey were sent e-mails asking for their participation.

Conclusions

In the following section, research questions will be listed separately, and then conclusions will be discussed to show the impact of this study on prior literature. Future practice and recommendations for future research will be included in the following sections before concluding with a summary.

Discussion

Research Question 1

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of face-to-face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?
In a study by Neuhauser (2002), the investigator compared two sections of an undergraduate course, one section online and the other face-to-face. During this comparison, both groups performed the same assignments, one group was online and the other group face-to-face. The results showed equivalent learning activities could be equally effective with online and face-to-face learners (Neuhauser, 2002). Similar findings resulted from the current study. This study proved similar outcomes: no significant differences with advantages in the face-to-face instruction of courses delivered to students.

Research Question 2

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

A study performed by Daughtery and Funke (1998) examined perspectives of university faculty and students involved with online learning. Students and faculty were surveyed on the advantages, disadvantages, and general effectiveness of using the Internet as a teaching and learning tool. The findings for this particular study suggest that there is an agreement among universities that online learning is playing an important role in higher education and increases the potential for Web-based instruction as a teaching and a learning tool (Daughtery & Funke, 1998). In the current research study, the researcher found that there were no significant differences associated with advantages in the online delivery of courses to social work students.
Research Question 3

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of blended hybrid instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Petracchi et al. (2004), in their study of effectiveness of distance education, found that using technology for hybrid courses was just as effective as the traditional course in transferring knowledge and beginning social work practice skills to students. As noted in the qualitative feedback, instructors were more open to using partial Web-assisted for the delivery of some courses rather than not using the technology at all. For the current research, the conclusion derived from this research found that there were no significant differences associated with advantages in blended hybrid instruction of courses delivered to social work students.

Research Question 4

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of face-to-face instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

The increase with higher education offering online courses has shifted traditional methods of teaching and learning. The literature on specific courses suggests that there is no significant difference between Web-based and face-to-face instruction (Twigg, 2001). This current research study indicates that many social work faculty and administrators still enjoy face-to-face instruction but that the delivery method of instruction is not significant for achievement.
Research Question 5

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of achievement of online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

Many educators have developed a strategy for using technology by teaching courses partially online and partially face-to-face (Colis & Moonen, 2001; Rovai, 2004). Blending learning or the hybrid model of online delivery is where the course is set up to use various components of the online learning without losing some of the face-to-face interaction. According to the findings of this study, the method of blended hybrid instruction indicated no significant differences for achievement in the delivery of course work.

Research Question 6

Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery?

The growth of the information super highway has “changed the way teachers and students interact, as well as the manner in which educational entities must now do business to meet the demands of a digitalized society” (Crouch, 2001, p. 435). Much of the literature on distance education discusses a trend toward learner-centered instruction which infers that there should be enough room for online and traditional classroom education to live beside one another. This study from this research supports that trend. There was no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of advantages of online instruction, based on classification and the method of instructional delivery.

The three methods of instruction, traditional face-to-face, blended, or totally online, do not have to be polarized with one another because each can possess advantages
and provide for student achievement. Online and blended hybrid course delivery could be useful for field seminar because instead of teacher or education-centered learning, the shift would be to learner-centeredness. As the field of social work grows, there are client services instruction and concentrations needed to provide students with a broad knowledge base.

Limitations

There were several limitations for this study. First, respondents may not have been representative of the intended population. It can be difficult to ensure that the respondents represent a more general population. Sampling and representativeness are disadvantages with online surveys. This survey of faculty and administrators at different universities involved a population where all members had Internet access. However, it may have been the younger faculty most likely to respond rather than those from a more traditional point of view with approaches to teaching and using the technology.

Faculty and administrators would need to consider their own environment and current settings as these results are based on national, not local, data. Administrators should look at their own resources and support to determine the feasibility of faculty using technology. Some faculty did not teach online courses or participate in blending learning approaches in field seminars. Therefore, these instructors were not able to make comparisons. Another limitation could have been that the questions on the survey were limited. With a greater breadth of questions, the researcher may have been able to draw more conclusions. A final limitation was the low number of responses from the subsample of administrators. Generalizability of these subsamples is quite limited.
Recommendations for Practice

This study has significant practical implications for promoting a learner-centered approach for social work students who attend seminar. As the "interaction age" replaces the information age, the roles of instructors have changed (Hiltz & Turoff, 2005). No longer dependent on the instructor as the headliner, the focus with learning revolves around interaction with environment. Whether that means interaction with instructor, peers, or the technology, this gives the student more skills to practice in serving their communities. The use of online or blended instructional delivery would enhance many social work skills such as reflective practice, measurable evaluations, objectivity, subjectivity, and broader dimensions of interaction. Technology is seen as a critical tool to assist in the collaboration between schools of social work and social service agencies. Since many higher education institutions are offering more online courses/programs, the social work field instruction may need to prepare their faculty for the use of technology in seminars or infusing with the course curricula.

When examining the implications for practice, administrators should determine areas of weakness (and also identify strengths with the use of technology) to enhance their programs. From a marketing standpoint, distance education could be used as a recruitment tool for attracting students to a social work program. In order for administrators to initiate using fully online or blended course delivery, faculty would need infrastructure support, communication, training, and compensation.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study should be replicated with social work administrators and faculty who are experienced instructors in either fully online or with a blended hybrid instruction
delivery and not including those populations that teach only face-to-face. Research also suggests that online and blended hybrid instruction delivery environments might be particularly supportive of experimentation, divergent thinking, and complex understandings, and less supportive of convergent thinking, instructor directed inquiry, and scientific thinking than face-to-face discussions.

Future research should include other components in online learning that appeal to the diverse learning styles and individual differences of the larger student population (Hoskins & van Hoof, 2005). Future research can look beyond the commonly accepted findings of no significant differences in advantages and achievement between online and traditional courses to examine learner interactions with course content, student interactions with instructors, and interactions among classmates in online course environments. Finally, future studies should include the students' perceptions as well as the faculty and administrators.

Summary

Chapter V presented the list of research questions followed by a discussion which included conclusions and how this study related to the literature. The remaining sections discussed limitations, recommendations for practice, and future research. Entering into the last part of this decade into the 21st century, future visions are already emerging in the form of new technologies. Institutions will need to take a leaders role to promote their vision and to experiment with new ideas using existing technologies. It is important for schools of social work to use these new resources to open doors for previously underserved populations of students. An important outcome from this study was finding insignificant differences between how instruction was delivered as perceived by
administrators and faculty in social work with advantages and achievement in areas of study. This research supports the body of literature asserting the outcomes for delivery of online and blended hybrid instruction as effective as face-to-face instruction.
Dear Social Work Faculty and Administrators:

We are conducting a survey to determine faculty and administrators’ perceptions of varied delivery methods of field integrative seminar in social work education. You have been identified as having experience in providing instruction in social work. Your input will provide useful information for social work educators.

To access this survey, point your web browser to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=973693055146. Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Joseph Bohanon, MSSW
Joseph.Bohanon@usm.edu
601-266-4173

Wanda Maulding, Ed.D
Wanda.Maulding@usm.edu
601-266-4582
Dear Social Work Faculty and Administrators:

You are being asked to participate as a subject in the research project entitled "The Perceived Advantages of Varied Delivery Methods of Field Integrative Seminar Among Social Work Administrators and Faculty." The purpose of this study is to determine if there are significant differences in the perceptions of advantages based on classification and the method of instructional delivery in social work field seminar. You have been identified as having experience in providing instruction in social work.

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the study and your input will provide useful information for social work educators. If you have any questions before, during or after the study, you may contact Joseph Bohanon, Ph.D. Candidate (601-266-4173) or Joseph.Bohanon@usm.edu. You may refuse to participate or stop your participation in this project at any time. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a subject participating in this study, you may contact Betty Ann Morgan, administrator for the Institutional Review Board, at (601) 266-6820. You have a right to privacy, and all information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential as far as possible within state and federal law. Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate or if you discontinue participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Completion of the survey will take approximately 10 minutes.

Thank you in advance for your time and participation. In order to access the survey, please click [link] to complete the survey, and click the submit button when you are finished. The survey will be submitted directly to us.

Sincerely,

Joseph Bohanon, MSSW
Joseph.Bohanon@usm.edu
601-266-4173

Wanda Maulding, Ed.D
Wanda.Maulding@usm.edu
601-266-4582
APPENDIX C
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Survey on Perceived Advantages of Varied Delivery Methods of Field Seminar in Social Work

Your response to the statements on this survey will provide information regarding perceived advantages regarding varied delivery methods of field integrative seminar in social work education. There are three sections to be completed. Thank you for your time & input!

1. Current status:
   □ Administrator □ Faculty

2. Instructional Delivery Mode
   □ Fully Online □ Face-to-Face
   □ Blended (Hybrid)

3. Current rank & tenure
   □ Professor □ Tenured
   □ Associate Professor □ Untenured
   □ Assistant Professor □ Non-tenure tract
   □ Instructor - full time
   □ Adjunct/visiting instructor (part time)
   □ Other ________________

4. Gender: □ Male □ Female

5. Highest degree earned: □ Bachelors of ________________
   □ Masters of ________________
   □ PhD or other doctorate

6. Race/Ethnicity: □ Euro American
   □ African American
   □ Hispanic
☐ Asian & other Pacific Islander
☐ Native American
☐ Other (specify _______________)  

7. Years of experience teaching full-time (or equivalent) in social work: ____

8. What percentage of your overall teaching experience has been in graduate education? _____
### Section I - Perceived Advantages of Varied Delivery Methods in Teaching Values & Ethics, Diversity, Social & Economic Justice

Section I contains 14 statements related to teaching values and ethics, diversity, and social/economic justice. Please evaluate your perception of the advantages of varied delivery modes for each of these statements which are from the CSWE Educational Policy & Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please assess your perception of the advantages of varied delivery modes, for each of the following statements.</th>
<th>Perceived Advantages of Face-to-Face Delivery</th>
<th>Perceived Advantages of Fully Online Delivery</th>
<th>Perceived Advantages of Blended Delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Not at all effective</td>
<td>1 = Not at all effective</td>
<td>1 = Not at all effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = Somewhat effective</td>
<td>2 = Somewhat effective</td>
<td>2 = Somewhat effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = Moderately effective</td>
<td>3 = Moderately effective</td>
<td>3 = Moderately effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 = Very effective</td>
<td>4 = Very effective</td>
<td>4 = Very effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Completely effective</td>
<td>5 = Completely effective</td>
<td>5 = Completely effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Providing students with awareness of personal values</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Helping students understand &amp; apply social work values</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Helping students analyze ethical dilemmas</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Helping students understand and respect people from diverse backgrounds</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Helping students learn how to ensure that social services are culturally relevant</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Educating students to recognize diversity within &amp; between groups</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Teaching students about strategies for effective practice with persons from diverse backgrounds</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Teaching students how to examine factors associated with being at-risk</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Educating students to identify how group membership influences access to resources</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Presenting content on risk factors</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Providing content on social &amp; economic justice</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Providing content on strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting social &amp; economic justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparing students to advocate for nondiscriminatory social &amp; economic systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please record any comments regarding why one delivery system is more effective than the other in teaching about values & ethics, diversity, and social & economic justice?
Section II - Perceived Advantages of Varied Delivery Methods in Teaching Social Work Field Practicum

Section II contains 4 statements for field practicum content. Please evaluate your perception of the performance with varied delivery modes for each of these statements which are from the CSWE Educational Policy & Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Practicum Content</th>
<th>Perceived Advantages of Face-to-Face Delivery</th>
<th>Perceived Advantages of Fully Online Delivery</th>
<th>Perceived Advantages of Blended Delivery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Helping students use their field settings to identify with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Helping students use their field settings to integrate empirical and practice-based knowledge</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Helping students use their field settings to promote the development of professional competence</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Helping students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please record any comments regarding why one delivery system is more effective than the other in teaching across various areas of the curriculum?
### Section III (Part A) – Types of Social Work Theory and Online Instruction Demands

This section contains 1 statement regarding field theory in social work and 2 statements pertaining to student and administrative demands for faculty to provide online instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please assess your perception for the following statement.</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
<th>Problem-Based</th>
<th>Other Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. What type of theory best informs field theory in social work?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 = Not at all effective</td>
<td>1 = Not at all effective</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 = Somewhat effective</td>
<td>2 = Somewhat effective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 = Moderately effective</td>
<td>3 = Moderately effective</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 = Very effective</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 = Completely effective</td>
<td>5 = Completely effective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please assess your perception for the following statements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. Do student needs require you to offer more online instruction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please assess your perception for the following statements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. Does administration pressure require you to offer more online instruction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section III (Part B) – Courses Taught Using Online Instruction

This section will provide information that links CSWE curriculum content areas to courses that you have taught using online instruction (with 50% or more of the course content using online instruction rather than face-to-face classroom instruction).

How many courses have you taught using online instruction? _____

Please list the courses you have taught using online instruction and identify the most relevant curriculum content area for that course (only choose one content area).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Level of Instruction</th>
<th>How many times have you taught this course using online instruction?</th>
<th>What percentage of the course was taught using online-tools (rather than face-to-face instruction)?</th>
<th>Curriculum Content Area (choose one—see below)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWK 610</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Social Welfare Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWK 608</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWK 617</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWK 673</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Field Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWK 692</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Elective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your time.

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APPENDIX D

PERMISSION TO USE QUESTIONNAIRE

----- Original Message ----- 
From: Brenda Moore
To: 'Joseph Bohanon'
Sent: Friday, December 02, 2005 9:53 AM
Subject: RE: Dissertation on Web-based education

Joe - Sorry for the delayed response; I know you understand the end-of-semester crunch! I've attached my survey instrument for you to see if there's any value for you. I tried to attached another dissertation that was helpful to me but our email system declined to send because it was so long. I purchased it off of Dissertation Abstracts - great electronic database that allows you to preview first 21 pages and then order full dissertation if appropriate. I purchased 3-4 dissertations ($35) and it was WELL worth it!

Best of luck and let me know if there's anything else I can do to help.

Brenda
APPENDIX E
OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

The following respondents’ quotes are copied from question 23 regarding why one delivery system is more effective than the other in teaching about values & ethics, diversity, and social & economic justice comments,

- “I believe that fully online is too impersonal and perhaps intellectual. I find that it is often in and through interactions that worker's internal triggers are set off. Being able to identify and process feelings that are stimulated in relation to issues where many of us hold inherent biases is necessary to promote a change of attitude, values and beliefs.”

- “I believe that if structured and supported appropriately, AND properly matched to students’ learning styles, all delivery formats can be highly effective in teaching about values, ethics, diversity and social and economic justice.”

- “I think teaching skills is a bit more of a challenge online, but in general, given the correct structure of assignments, this content can be taught as effectively online as F2F.”

- “Since we only use face-to-face I cannot comment on any other method.”

- “In face to face and blended courses, it is possible to put comments, beliefs, biases, in context. When utilizing a fully online format, students as well as instructors may feel that their comments, etc. are taken out of context. Also, by utilizing a face to face format an instructor can observe the non-verbal cues (helpful in work with clients) in the educator/student...
successes and challenges with peers and an experienced instructor/professional/social worker. This relationship is similar in nature to that of the helping relationship that students will observe and participate in within the context of the work they do as professionals. This makes teaching all of the social work values easier, more relevant, and appropriate to students."

- "I think it is easier to hide online and the "feel" of face to face is better. Anything dealing with strategies or practice is bettered practiced with people than description etc."

- "The nuanced interpersonal and physical interaction cannot be substituted for in the online format."

- "I believe that face-to-face interactions encourage more nuances in discussing values & ethics, and hidden personal biases. Face-to-face is more effective in developing insight into self and ultimately developing more insight into others."

- "I don't know that we have evidence that ANY method is effective in teaching about these issues this survey has methodological issues, I can't answer "I don't know" for any of them so I am simply not answering many of them"

- "The engaging interaction of being in each other's presence enhances and makes real the values and ethics."
content. There should be a category for "don't know", I don't know about "hybrids".

- "I do not think Fully Online Delivery is appropriate to rely on helping students learn this material."

- "I believe a large portion of these concepts are taught through the modeling done by the instructor and this is limited in online; also the issues are learned quite well through direct conversations and full impact of the communication (including body language) that would be missed online."

- "Face to face is critical because experiential aspects are essential--for this topic I feel it is important to go out into the community and have face to face interaction with community groups and stakeholders. This cannot be achieved online."

- "Face to face contact between students and faculty provides the opportunity to elicit and discuss students' positive and negative attitudes and stereotypes based on verbal and non-verbal cues. Although on-line teaching is particularly useful with respect to concrete information, it does not allow for observation of verbal and non-verbal nuances and therefore cannot be addressed."

- "I'm only familiar with face to face teaching methods which obviously bias my responses. When working with students on awareness,
with online for content areas.”

- “All these issues are largely dependent on the faculty being willing to ensure that there is material presented that challenges students to think complexly about those issues. Effective online courses can have the advantage of discussions that are more in depth than can be had in a classroom setting with the inherent time constraints of the class period.”

- “I believe that Students need to be able to speak with others in a conversation, practicing hearing other viewpoints openly. The written word is a challenge - who knows where it might go online.”

- “This depends much on the style of the presenter. It is critical that the multiple issues surrounding each of these topic areas are presented. For example, "Group membership influencing access to resources" has less to do with actually belonging to that group than it does having to do with lack of education, lack of good insurance, etc. These issues cross all kinds of boundaries and have are not necessarily a group membership issue. It is the nuances of teaching that must be gotten across to students. This cannot be easily done online, except if the online link is real-time so that the class can discuss. It is effective for some, ineffective for others. It can also be used as a shield or a proxy for some professors who have poor person-to-person interaction skills. This can be good or bad, depending on the drawbacks of doing on-line or classroom for various professors and topics.
For ethics, diversity, etc., these are so heavily values-based, particularly for new students (and many faculty), that interactions and debate are critical. A blog helps, but it is difficult (and risky) to replace the classroom without study."

- "How can I really fill this out when I don't teach online courses??"
- "Face to face interaction between peers and between students and faculty can be powerful in developing self awareness and socializing students to professional values."
- "Students need to learn about diversity and cultural competence in service delivery by creating an experience in the seminar. Role modeling, promoting skills in critical thinking about diversity and effective interaction among people from diverse backgrounds in the seminar as well as processing interactions that occur in the field is essential and cannot be accomplish effectively through 100% online education. Some of this process can occur through a hybrid method."
- "It is important to have experiential learning activities in the classroom as well as online to reinforce didactic education."
- "Have only had experience in one delivery system."
- "All the things you are interested in are socially constructed and context dependent. As such, I fail to see how online delivery can effectively address these issues."
- "Technology can often times create a "disconnect" in and of itself; this is counter to personal and social awareness."
• "The answers lack a response related to "don't know." From an instructor's perspective, I feel as if the answer to all of the questions is "completely effective." But, even with the in class exercises, the discussion and the assignments, I am not comfortable saying that I know that the teaching methods are effective. It is difficult for me to determine whether students are learning these values or whether they came to the class already knowing and practicing these values. I do know that in non-face to face teaching methods, the distance between instructor and student is enormous and assessing effectiveness of learning is difficult."

• "It is absolutely impossible to develop the personal awareness that one needs to learn about values, diversity, social and economic justice without the experience of being in a classroom that resembles students' environments. Therefore, classroom teaching is essential."

• "I believed that in areas of providing content, online delivery could be effective; process issues, however, must be experienced face to face."

• "Some of this content can be delivered online; however, these are complex questions and issues, about which students have complex questions, ideas, and feelings. It is difficult to anticipate these and be fully responsive to them in an online format, unless it is completely interactive. And some issues can only be perceived in the context of physical presence--body language, verbal expression and tone, facial expression--these can be important expressions related to learning or difficulties and would be lost with no face-to-face interactions."
• "I think that these topics are difficult to teach in any delivery system, but I think that face to face is best for values, ethics and social justice. To me, online is for delivering more factual and less "process" oriented material. One advantage of an online approach could be that students can be slightly more "anonymous" and less exposed in expressing "non-pc" opinions."

• "I believe that seeing someone face to face allows for a much different type of interaction that online delivery. Spontaneous thoughts, ideas, discussions are sometimes where my most effective teaching takes place. I find that it would be much more difficult to teach true social work skills, as well as deliver information/hold discussions about things like discrimination, oppression, social justice, etc online."

• "It isn't necessarily the delivery system as much as it is the person who is administering the delivery system."

• "I'm not sure it is as simple as the delivery method of FtoF vs. online. Some of it depends on how the FtoF is set up. A lecture format with 30+ students may actually be less effective than an online course with 10-15 students in which more active dialogue and exploration is fostered."

• "Blended and Face-to-face delivery allow better for the process of learning that also involves students learning from each other in a spontaneous, interactive manner that can become stilted when fully online. These methods also provide opportunities to mirror, act out/role-play client situations in a participatory way that is hard to reproduce online. Face-to-face delivery facilitates dealing with difficult and sensitive content among
clients; content that can also trigger students' personal issues. They promote fuller participation from ALL students in critical reflection on and analysis of material and probably enhances students ability to challenge themselves.”

• “Social work practice is very nuanced. I don't believe that communicating these nuances is possible or desirable via a fully online delivery method.”

• “Since these are such charged topics, with learning being experiential as well as intellectual, face-to-face has many advantages.”

• “Students learning from each other are a vital component to teaching some of these values and that is more difficult to achieve through fully online delivery of courses.”

• “I think that nothing replaces face to face dialogue on these subjects. Technology can be used to enhance that discussion but not replace it.”

• “Learning in the areas circumscribed above takes place through relationships and personal interactions.”

• “These components require, in my opinion, a high degree of processing with faculty and peers. I don't see this being possible online.”

• “Face-to-face is most effective, from my experience, when it includes in-class and videotaped role plays, vignettes, videotapes and other media that help the professor illustrate the points that s/he wishes to make. My above ratings for "online" and "hybrid" are based on the assumption that more sophisticated technology/software that can integrate a videotape of the professor's lecture (akin to .mpg movies or streaming media), targeted
reading, and a self-test that follows these, are not used. Instead, my above ratings assume use of hyperlinks to additional readings, links to the professor's Power Point slide shows, and scanned readings. My ratings for fully online and hybrid would have been higher if these more sophisticated and, I believe, effective methods were employed.”

• “I believe that some aspects of values, ethics, diversity, social and economic justice require face-to-face methods. For example, I believe face-to-face methods are best for establishing a strong and supportive relationship with students. That relationship, in my opinion, is necessary for exploring content related to self awareness. Another benefit of face-to-face education that I am not sure how to replicate effectively on-line is the relationship with other students from different backgrounds. These relationships promote acceptance and openness to difference. To have on-line chat or bulletin boards that enable students to share their experiences with diversity, or the impact of oppression on their own personal lives, is quite difficult. It is hard to relate to words on a screen in the same manner that one relates to someone face-to-face.”

• “I think that face to face contact is better than online contact since an instructor can interact with the student on varied levels. From these observations an instructor can determine the most effective way for the student to receive the instructional information. Face to face contact forces the student to deal with the issues head on with the instructor. With the use
of computers the instructor can retrieve information from the student that
they then can use in their face to face contact."

• "Social Work education needs to be delivered face to face. The impact of
other students' feedback and discussion, being able to have students move
into discussion groups, watching students' responses to the material - are
all part of learning/ internalizing social work values, ethics, and practice.
We are teaching to a profession which emphasizes personal contact and
the establishment of interpersonal relationships, on micro/ mezzo/ macro
levels. Online teaching is a barrier to a professor being able to read
students' body language, provide a safe environment to discuss various
issues, etc. We don't know what type of environment the student is in on­
line. (other than a room). some of the material we teach can be very
difficult/ challenging - and I want my students "right there" in my
classroom to feel safe and comfortable in talking about difficult topics/
new topics for them."

• "Social work is a career in a modeling; most effective modeling comes
from in person, face-to-face. Clients don't want to see social workers via
computer; look at the data on the use of robots in medical settings. Our
roots are in in-person contact."

• "Nonverbal responses cannot be assessed in on-line courses."

• "There is the need for discussion to clarify terms. If teaching fully online,
then it is necessary to use discussion boards, etc."
• "The difficulty of this curriculum area requires as much face-to-face interaction as possible for modeling and for critical thinking."

• "So many defenses live in people's heads. Bringing the face and wholeness into dialogue allows more points for authentic connection and change potential."

• "DISCUSSION, REACTION, ENERGY, EMOTION... I find that these are critical in teaching effective clinical interventions around diversity and social justice. I can see the benefit of online for confidential self-investigation, but for practice, I feel face-to-face is irreplaceable."

• "Using the adult and cooperative learning model in a face-to-face atmosphere is far better than "on line" delivery. On line is good for giving assignments and follow up but not for face-to-face discussions."

• "Face to face delivery provides for the necessary experiential and interactive processes needed for students to effectively integrate classroom with practice."

• "Students learn from each other and the face-to-face allows for more flow to discussions than is possible online. Also, flexibility in the discussion is more apt to happen in person than on-line. Furthermore, it is difficult to get all the students on-line at the same time which is important in fostering interaction."

• "Face to face contact puts students in better direct contact with peers. Face to face allow better group exercises."
"Examination and awareness and discussion of complex multi-layered issues is probably better managed face-to-face; pure content, dissemination of data, information can probably be done just fine online."

"I believe students are able to better internalize the information in a face-to-face format."

"I think courses that include philosophical issues/dilemmas (i.e., social justice, discrimination) require face to face interactions to be successful."

"The development of face-to-face relationships helps students to exchange value laden learning in a way that holds them personally accountable. Online learning limits this."

"Hybrid provides an opportunity for students to provide content in a safe manner when they may not want to speak in class."

"Synergistic effect of discussing case studies and role playing."

"Face to face is always most comfortable as it allows for unencumbered communication."

"While my students have communicated with me and each other through e-mail and an online discussion board, I strongly believe that the opportunity for face-to-face contact is much more effective for addressing values & ethics, diversity, and social & economic justice. The students' direct interaction with each other provides a unique forum for discussion, understanding, and self-awareness."

"In my experience with the administration of 100 percent online course delivery methods with MSW courses, It seems to me that effectiveness of
content delivery has more to do with the expertise of the instructor, ease of use with the student, and ease of access of the technology than with the relative advantages of face-to-face versus online.

- "I think both can be effective in deliver of this content."
- "Students online may feel more free to speak and express problems. In class, people expect you to say certain standard things. Online with the professor, they may be more open. Online (or hybrid) there are more links and resources available, pictures and video tools to use."
- "I think face to face is more effective because you can have discussions and the experience of discussing in person i think has more value, more effect than discussing on line."
- "Setting is less important than method. Lecture (written or oral) is least effective when retention and application is desired educational objective. It's not where one teaches; but how one teaches that makes the difference."
- "We use all three models of delivery, and all three have strengths. I suspect the BIGGEST factor in "effectiveness" of a particular model is the individual student's learning style."
- "They all seem to be effective as long as the online delivery is developed to include various media that will enhance learning opportunities (not just discussion board- some video clips, case examples, group discussions, maybe chat, etc.)"
- "I'm not really in a position to answer these questions because I have never taught an on-line course or a hybrid one. I still believe in face-to-
face contact with students for most content areas—maybe your findings can change my mind! I do realize that face-to-face is a luxury of the past, and if I weren't retiring soon, I would be figuring out how to be effective with on-line teaching."

- "I think effectiveness relates to the instructor's level of comfort with the teaching interface."
- "Didactic material—online is alright. Material that is less didactic—hybrid would seemingly be the way to go."
- "By using appropriate presentation strategies and assignments, I believe that each delivery system can be effective and valuable."
- "Sometimes the learning community that is created in a face-to-face environment is more successful in creating feelings of empathy and in building relationships, which is important as we learn about issues such as diversity and justice."
- "Fully online delivery is not appropriate for teaching practice skills, and/or helping students learn to apply social work values and ethics to specific practice situations."
- "Unless you have the students in the classroom, you have no knowing who is doing the work."
- "Any differences in effectiveness are not necessarily rooted in the mode of delivery but in the manner of presentation. The mode of delivery may require that material be presented differently but it would be the
instructor's effectiveness at adapting the presentation rather than the mode of delivery itself that would determine effectiveness."

- "Nothing replaces the face to face contact between one human teacher and one human student, when both remember that they are both learners of life."

- "Since I have never taught an online course, it is only my perception that face to face is more effective."

- "With the coming of the interactive video classroom, online education can be more effective than F2F. If we just use WebCT/Blackboard, we have problems."

- "It is the difference between experiencing and directly observing/fully participating based learning versus a cognitive/intellectual/theoretical understanding."

- "I think face-to-face interaction by students, facilitated by an on-site instructor, is the very best vehicle for accomplishing this goal. Other delivery systems are advantageous only from a money-saving point of view."

- "I believe there needs to be face-to-face discussion on these issues. Teaching values requires some analysis of situations. It is not cut and dry like teaching content."

- "I believe that online and/or hybrid methods of delivery are superior to face-to-face delivery in every way because technology makes research and practice methods available to students in their homes, where they are more..."
relaxed about processing the information. Videos, online resources regarding treatment of special populations are available at the touch of the fingers. This is awesome.”

- “I believe face to face is more effective as it seems to engage students better, and provides more opportunity for feedback. There seems to be more of a connection with the student which enhances their interest and commitment to the class.”

- “Who knows why something works? Isn’t that the researcher's job to find out?”

- “Live and in person dialog between students makes face-to face more effective.”

- “In face to face delivery, I can model appropriate behaviors in these areas.

- “I believe that that it is difficult to communicate passion - around values - whether you call it social work values, or social justice, online. It is easier to provide content and strategies online.

- “Face to face delivery allows students to learn not only from the instructor but from other students' experiences. This process then allows for more responsive teaching opportunities including role-plays and problem-solving exercises.”

- “I have ranked the teaching methods as equal. In my experience, the delivery method does not impact teaching as much as other qualities the instructor may or may not possess.”
• "When students are in class and can interact with each other there is the greatest opportunity for most effective learning especially in regards to these topics that can be challenging, controversial and heighten emotions."

• "My bias is explained by the fact that I have not engaged in online course delivery as an assistant professor in graduate or undergraduate social work education. However, I have developed a web-based ethics course for social work & nursing CEUs (accepted by Licensure Board, but not yet implemented or evaluated). So, I can only evaluate what I know to work at this time."

• "All my teaching has been face to face and I cannot speak knowledgeably about other delivery methods."

• "I believe student and instructor need to be face to face when discussing certain aspects of social work. Personal values, ethics, diversity, are some of the areas I believe face to face instruction is more effective. I am definitely a believer in on-line instruction. I use black board with my students as well. However, I would not be comfortable with a totally on-line course, especially practice related."

The following respondents' quotes are copied from question 28 regarding why one delivery system is more effective than the other in teaching a Social Work Field Practicum course.
"Being able to assess affective engagement with course content is important to determine students' mastery of course content. I see online delivery as a barrier to this aspect of evaluation."

"I am very unclear about what you're asking here. If you're talking about the integration aspect then I think it can be effective online or F2F, if you're talking about actual field instruction and supervision, I don't think that should be done online. I'm just not sure what you're asking about here."

"We only have face-to-face instruction in this school."

"Practicum courses are an essential part of social work education, and while the online format may be an efficient way to impart information, it does not provide the opportunity to process the nuances in varied placements that live thought provoking discussions can elicit."

"Face to Face again provides a better context for judgment. On the other I am not sure how to answer #27 - Are we talking about face-to-face at an agency or demonstrating in seminar versus evaluation at agency. Demonstrating something needs to be seen in person."

"I think of online and face-to-face as different, but not necessarily different on the domains the you cover (EPAS)."

"Field Practicum has to include face-to-face discussion just like client-worker interactions have to be face-to face."

"How could I possibly know?"
• “Teaching through direct observations and immediate feedback after a video taped session would be more productive. Because social work is an applied field, so much needs to be learned and the more "on hands" the teaching/supervision is offered, the better I see the online more as a supplement to and not the sole method to use.”

• “Field practice is primarily based on experiential learning where students learn to use knowledge and skills to engage with clients and apply assessment and intervention skills. Face to face delivery allows faculty to model and reinforce the profession's values and behavior, as well as uses a group model to engage students in discussion of the professional and personal value conflicts that arise in the field.”

• “see previous”

• “This is easier to do online, and is much more amenable.”

• “Don't teach field.”

• “Teaching students practice skills can occur most effectively in a face-to-face seminar. A hybrid method is the next best option and fully online delivery of this content is least effective. The instructor needs to model effective practice skills through responding to student concerns and questions, facilitating effective group interaction as well as discussing content. The delivery of the information is as important as the information.”

• “na”
• "Utilization of tools that measure these outcomes are extremely limited in my experience."

• "Again, the person-to-person experience allows for greater expression of questions, problems, identification, and so on. While some competencies and learning can definitely be demonstrated online, much that constitutes the heart of social work (the relationship with clients--micro or macro), cannot be fully known, explored, or demonstrated in a two-dimensional medium."

• "I think it is more how the method is used than the method itself."

• "Integrative seminars are about integration of experiences. I believe this occurs best when students have an opportunity to discuss experiences face to face in a group."

• "Again, learning is very much experiential as well as intellectual. For some of the items above, field instructor (i.e., face-to-face) involvement is essential."

• "The group process and feedback is critical to students' understanding of social work role and use of self in context of field setting. As important as relationship is to social work practice, it is my opinion that face to face interaction is just as critical to student learning."

• "(Same comments made on previous page)"

• "I did so in the previous section. I've said what I believe and feel. Social work is a profession requiring education in the classroom setting. Period."

• "Same as above, only more so!"
"Some skills require demonstration that cannot be reproduced on-line."

"Face-to Face allows for more effective exchanges."

"A field practicum, in my opinion, must be accompanied by a field seminar, especially at the undergraduate level."

"Once again, the Field Practicum courses necessitate an interactive, experiential teaching modality that correlates with the interactive/experiential process that is occurring in Field."

"For the same reasons as previously stated. Also, online communication can often be misconstrued."

"I do not believe that field education can be integrated in a fully online delivery."

"I think that skill-based courses (i.e., program evaluation) can be easily taught online."

"Field Practicum is about development of skills. This learning is enhanced when students engage each other face-to-face in the here and now."

"The real time nature of face-to-face contact coupled with immediate interaction between the student and instructor may help students’ better process problems that they experience in field."

"Synergistic effect of discussing case studies and role playing."

"Again, this goes back to the opportunity for open, face-to-face interactions. Hearing a person’s voice, seeing his or her body language, and developing group cohesion are all important, I believe, for the sharing and learning that can take place in this kind of setting."
• "I am not sure if your questions are completely clear about whether you
mean ALL field experiences or just what would be in-class meetings. I
believe that field experiences delivered completely through online systems
are very difficult to manage."

• "no difference."

• "Again, where teaching/learning occurs is less a factor in teaching
outcomes than how teaching/learning are approached. Engaged
teaching/learning strategies produce best outcomes...I think maybe the
setting is irrelevant. If better learning outcomes are desired, then more
needs to be added to Ph.D. programs about how to teach."

• "It seems like completely online would be less effective if there were no
interaction with the professor. I would suspect the delivery systems would
be equally effective if the instructor saw the student during field visits and
completed the practicum course online."

• "I think online delivery can be as effective as face to face and hybrid if
reflection and discussion activities are integrated into the course."

• "As state above, the more didactic kind of material would seemingly be
alright for online, and visa versa."

• "When appropriate teaching strategies are used, all these delivery systems
can be effective."

• "Do you want to go to a therapist who learned everything they know on
line and were supervised the same way? I wouldn't."

• "Same comments as in previous section."
• "I don't know what you mean by fully online in field so you can ignore these answers."

• "The assumption is that face-to-face results in substantially more learning from the sharing and interactions between and amongst the students, and the on-line and blended offer substantial such opportunities. Also, detecting and addressing non-verbal/para-verbal communications is almost totally absent in fully-online delivery and quite limited in blended, depending on how much the blending is face-to-face."

• "I think face-to-face interaction by students, facilitated by an on-site instructor, is the very best vehicle for accomplishing this goal. Other delivery systems are advantageous only from a money-saving point of view."

• "As stated previously, the online resources that are available through book companies give students an opportunity to view videos of actual clinical interviews. Students can view cases and send comments via e-mail to the instructor. I believe that there is an advantage to on-line delivery for every course, provided that the course is developed properly. The fact that students can communicate with each other and their instructors without the stress of traveling to a remote campus, as many of our students commute in from other areas, provides numerous advantages. Fuel costs have escalated, driving is stressful and sometimes dangerous, the time spent driving cuts into time that students can devote to their studies, and/or other obligations that they may have to job, family, etc."
“Same as previous statement.”
“See previous comment.”
“General comment: I'm unclear if you are asking about field practicum, which might be actual field work, or field seminar, which is the classroom experience that integrates academic concepts with field work.”
“The point of social work field practicum is hands on experience.”
“10 % of what is learned is by reading; 20% of what is learned is by seeing; 70% of what is learned is by doing. How do you ensure learning is occurring when sitting in front of a computer screen?”
“See earlier comment.”
“Students can gain the most from face to face contact especially in regards to hands on practice which is being taught in S.W. Practicum as it offers the greatest opportunity for role play, reactions and expression.”
“My bias is that the social work field practicum, like a medical residency, should be a hands-on experience based in real (not virtual) time.”
“Again, the face to face contact with students in the field seminar course. Our BSW field seminar course is a hybrid course, one have classroom setting and one half blackboard assignments and discussions.”
The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 27012502
PROJECT TITLE: The Perceived Advantages of Varied Delivery Methods For Field Integrative Seminar Among Social Work Administrators and Faculty
PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 12/01/06 to 05/31/07
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation or Thesis
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Joseph Bohanon
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Health
DEPARTMENT: School of Social Work
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
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PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 01/25/07 to 01/24/08

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.  
HSPRC Chair

1-26-07

Date
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