

Innovative Approaches

manuscripts in this area may include thorough descriptions of activities, strategies, and techniques that have been developed and implemented by counselors.



Social Justice Advocacy in a Multicultural Counselor Education Class

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This article explores one strategy for incorporating technology into the counselor education classroom. Instructors used iPad applications to guide students in analyzing current events through the lens of social justice. The development of the iPad learning experience is discussed and specific suggestions are presented for incorporating iPads into classroom learning.

Keywords: iPads, counselor education, multicultural counseling, social justice

While multimedia instruction has changed education and enhanced the learning process, counselor educators have been slow in using interactive training approaches (Hayes, 2008). However, there has been increasing openness to the use of technology in the classroom as evidenced in the use of: uploading course materials to make them available to students free of charge (Cooper, 2012), exploring technology use in preparing counselors (Benshoff & Gibbons, 2011; Hayes, 2008), use of technology in supervision (Lehr, 2005), and use of it to enhance adult learners in counselor education classrooms (Renfro-Michel, O'Halloran, & Delaney, 2010).

Counselor education is one of the graduate programs within the College of Education (COE) at a regional university in Western North Carolina. In the current university setting, faculty are often encouraged to collaborate with technology specialists, especially when designing teaching activities incorporating new technology. In this project, the instructors were the assigned professor for the multicultural class, who had 21 years of experience as a counselor educator, and an

instructional developer, who had 10 years of experience with technology integration and instructional design. It is important to note that the professor and instructional developer had a four-year professional working relationship, which was characterized by trust and respect. Building on the foundation of this relationship, the professor and the instructional developer worked together to write an iPad proposal. This collegial trust, as noted in the section on 10 practical suggestions, allowed for true collaboration between these two experts from different fields (counselor education, instructional development).

The iPad Proposal

In the fall semester of 2011, faculty in the COE was presented with the opportunity to study the innovative and creative ways iPads could be used in the both undergraduate and graduate classrooms. The faculty was also invited to attend orientation sessions, familiarize themselves with the iPads, and explore the possibilities for classroom use.

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Faculty were encouraged to submit proposals about how a classroom set of iPads, dubbed “classPads”, could be used with students. The COE adopted a model in which a set of “classPads” could be checked out and used for a limited time by instructors and students. This model allowed for the iPads to be utilized by a large number of students and faculty; however, the findings of this study suggest students would have benefited more if they were allowed to keep the iPads throughout the semester.

The iPad proposal focused on using the iPads in a multicultural counseling class for graduate counseling students (community, marriage and family, school, student development). The authors realized this was a unique opportunity to introduce cutting edge technology in a field that has traditionally been slow to adopt technology, so they worked together to submit a proposal for several reasons. In addition to introducing cutting edge technology in a field that has traditionally been slow to incorporate technology in the classroom, the instructors anticipated at least two other benefits for graduate counseling students. The iPads could also help the students in exploring how they may use these devices in a counseling context and assist them in the increasingly competitive job market by their relating their experience with iPads in the classroom to prospective employers. This latter benefit was discussed with students in the introduction of the iPads in the first class of use through: a) the specific applications used (Quick Voice Recorder, Timerplus, Calender, iCloud, iPad Camera, Notes), and b) the encouragement for students to list the experience on their resume.

This article documents how the proposal was transformed into several iPad learning activities, with special attention to an activity about current events and social justice. Recommendations for specific applications are also included. The article also describes the process of self-reflection on the part of the professor, student feedback, and 10

recommendations for instructors in implementing new technologies.

The Plan

The instructors developed a detailed plan for using the iPads because the devices could only be checked out and used for limited periods of time. According to the plan for this specific course, the iPads would be used twice in the semester: once at the beginning of the semester for two weeks and once at the end for three weeks.

This project had three overall objectives:

1. To assist graduate counseling students in applying multicultural theories, interventions, and research using technology.
2. To teach graduate counseling students ways they may apply multicultural theories, interventions, and research in a counseling context.
3. To infuse technology into the course in a designed, intentional manner that enhanced student development of the mind and the “heart.”

The following applications or programs used in the sessions that were already included on the iPads were:

1. ABC News, AudioClips, BBC News, CNN News, Dropbox, Fox News, MSNBC News, NPR News
2. Quick Voice Recorder, Talking Tom 2, Timerplus
3. Calender, iCloud, iPad Camera, Notes, Safari

This classroom experience was chosen as a project among numerous proposals requesting

the use of the iPads in classrooms because it met the mission of the College of Education: housing the counselor education department valuing cultural diversity, experiencing the frontiers of knowledge, practice, and service, integrating multicultural perspectives, and encouraging a community of practice. It also facilitated the five principles of the college's conceptual framework in terms of participation in a community of practice, socially constructed knowledge, moving students from novice to expert, identifying a specific knowledge base of multicultural counseling, and developing dispositions that facilitate multicultural counseling.

The iPads were a natural choice for the multicultural class because it is highly discussion based. In addition, the iPads were also central to the focus of the teaching/learning process because they helped to facilitate interactive learning and real time engagement with the material. They assisted in facilitating richer discussions that lead to higher level critical thinking skills. As stated previously, students used the iPads twice in the semester. The original plan was : a) During the first iPad learning experience (two week segment), the students were to engage in interactive activities designed to orient them to this device; and b) During the second iPad learning experience (three week segment), the students were to use the iPad to complete a multimedia, multicultural assignment. The original design of the class follows and is elaborated on in Appendix A.

The goal of the first iPad experience was for the students to grow comfortable with the basic features of the iPad. Led by the instructors, the students met this goal by participating in warm-up activities using applications such as ABC News, NPR, and Talking Tom 2. Additionally, students worked in small groups in order to practice using QuickVoice recorder, the iPad camera, YouTube, and other tools and applications that could be used during the second iPad experience. The goal of this activity was to

introduce the students to tools that could be used to complete the multicultural experience assignment during the second iPad class.

In the first week, the assigned professor began a personal journal about the experience titled "Diary of a Mad Professor" as a way of cognitively and emotionally processing the experience and venting the frustrations naturally involved in a pioneering project for the professor, the students, and the college. Through journaling, the professor was able to vent any frustration as well as remain focused on the goals of helping students learn and becoming a better teacher. The journal also ended up being a resource for changing the class direction as needed because the professor had kept track of both personal and student cognitive and emotional responses to the use of the iPads and making the use of them more pertinent.

During the second iPad class, the students used the iPads to gather original data (photos, audio, text) and complete the multicultural cultural experience assignment that involves conducting an interview and having music, food, and video experiences that are unfamiliar for the student. In this class session, the students were introduced to applications such as Garage Band (to add sound effects and edit their videos), iCloud (to provide storage space for images, text, and videos), and QuickVoice (to record their interviews). Although this section of the second class was planned, the focus and flow of the sessions from the second iPad class through the fifth class changed due to current social justice and newsworthy events that occurred.

The two instructors met weekly before the class periods to discuss how the class went the previous week and the focus of the upcoming week. This dialogue between the instructors focused on how the students could best learn about multicultural issues through the use of iPads. This superordinate goal allowed for a reduction of ego, a flexibility of content and structure, and a respect for each other's expertise. During their meeting before the

second class, current news issues were discussed with exploration as to how iPads could be used to explore them. This section explored the concept and application of social justice as defined by Sue and Sue (2008). From this perspective, social justice means that counseling is available to all individuals, barriers to obtaining counseling are removed, and counseling services are provided at all levels of society. It also means that the counselor needs to be aware that: a) the core of the problem may be in the social system rather than the individual, b) behaviors violating social norms are not inherently disordered or unhealthy, c) prevention is more effective long term than remediation, d) social norms, beliefs, and policies need to be both changed and challenged, and e) organizational change needs counseling to include a broad perspective that extends beyond the traditional counseling approach.

Revised Plan in Response to Current Events

Before the second class period use of the iPad, specific concerns were happening at many levels that included: 1) internationally (the war in Syria, China and the making of iPads), 2) the threat of nuclear war in North Korea), nationally (presidential candidates, 3) the Ohio school shooting, 4) Trevon Martin's death), and 5) locally (Angela Davis coming to speak on campus, alleged rapes on campus, a hate crime toward a lesbian couple) levels. The urgency of these concerns became the focus of the use of the iPads over the next few weeks; and particularly, the local events made the concept of social justice more real and pertinent to the students.

In the second class period of iPad use, the class was divided into five groups, with each group exploring a news item using various iPad applications. In the third class period, the groups compared how the news item was covered by different news channels. During the discussion, the students provided a

summary of their findings that focused on factors such as the amount of time spent on the item, the language chosen in presenting that news item and the values it reflected. For example, there were wide differences regarding presidential candidates but great consistency in the coverage of Trevon Martin's death. This sparked another class discussion of who owns the different news companies and what is known about those individuals and corporations. Finally, it sparked the question "Who was _____?" of different social justice activists (i.e. Angela Davis, William Kuntzler, Dau Aung San Suie Kyi, Congressman John Lewis, Vaclav Havel) where students had to answer this question in 25 words or less in their groups and present them to the class.

The change in focus of the use of the iPads was significant. This activity became more personally meaningful to the students because they were studying current issues in a thoughtful, interactive atmosphere that looked at current events through the lens of social justice, aided by the use of technology. Such a focus resulted in a strong sense of community in the classroom and a deep integration of multicultural counseling issues. The technology helped the students link current events to critical issues such as sexual orientation, hate crimes, sexual violence, non-violence protests, and bullying.

Results

A survey was conducted in order to attain students' feedback regarding the effectiveness of the iPad activities. At the end of the semester, 14 of the 15 students completed an anonymous, voluntary, electronic survey consisting of 10 questions, seven of which were answered on a Likert scale ("strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" with 3 being "no opinion"): Survey results are in parentheses. The following survey was developed by the authors based on the goals of the use of the iPads as outlined in the original proposal (results are in parentheses):

1. I found the use of iPads in this class to be a helpful addition to the course content. (3.4)
2. I was familiar (in terms of usage) with iPads prior to this class. (3.7)
3. I wish we could have done _____ with iPads in this class. (Less, About the Same, More) (About the Same)
4. I believe the use of iPads have made me feel more confident about using technology. (3.6)
5. Use of the iPads distracted from the focus of the course. (3.1)
6. What I learned using the iPad will help me as a student. (3.2)
7. What I learned using the iPad will help me in my future practice as a counselor. (3.2)
8. Using the iPad helped me better understand multicultural issues in the news. (3.9)
9. What would help with the use of iPads in future classes is (check all that apply)?: More iPad sessions in class (29%), Being able to keep the iPads to use away from the classroom (36%), Having a keyboard (57%), Other (7% each in 3 categories).
10. Please list any comments, critiques, or suggestions for using iPads in future counseling classes: _____

The most salient survey results were two-fold. First, while students may be familiar with iPads, the use of them in the classroom resulted in an increased confidence with using technology as reported by them in items 2 and

4. Second, the majority of students reported the objectives of the proposal were met as noted in item 8.

Discussion

These results indicate that in this class, the students moved in the direction from novice to expert in terms of technology (iPad use) by both their survey self-report and professor observation. The professor found that students asked for less assistance with the iPads from the two authors and relied more on their peers or themselves. Additionally, in each class session they were increasingly more engrossed with the assignment than struggling with the technology.

Regarding social justice awareness, the professor found that each week as they explored current news issues, the breadth and depth of their class discussion improved. For example, they originally struggled with finding the language used in the coverage and the implied values. As the discussion evolved over the weeks, the students more quickly found key terms being used by the reporters and then more confidently commented on how the selection of such words commented on the values that appeared to be guiding the coverage. Also, they began to add components that were not solicited by the professor such as how long the different news sources covered a story and the length or position of the news story at their link.

During the last class, students commented on how the project made them aware that they needed to be wise consumers of news information on social justice issues by being critical observers and thinkers of information presented. They also commented that this classroom experience with the iPads and the classroom discussion assisted them in overcoming personal barriers to integrating technology with the practice of counseling through the specific focus on social justice issues.

After the iPad class sessions, the professor

and the instructional developer meet to discuss the survey results and develop a list of suggestions for counselor educators wanting to incorporate iPad technologies into their teaching. The following list of Top 10 Practical Suggestions was shared with colleagues at a college-wide symposium in the spring of 2012:

1. Use in conjunction with the university's course management system. Relate the iPad experience to course content rather than grade.
2. Distribute a survey to students at the beginning, middle, and end of the experience.
3. Do careful planning of focused classroom activities.
4. Be flexible in the implementation of the iPads into lesson plans. Lesson plans may need to be changed due to various factors such as student comfort level with technology, current events impacting course topics, etc.
5. Let students and professor keep iPads between class meetings.
6. Use iPads for more condensed, consecutive periods of time. Go for "depth not breadth" in their usage.
7. Have the professor keep a reflective journal of personal reactions to process the integration of the iPads in the classroom.
8. Simplify the checkout/return process as much as possible.
9. Be aware of one's own "teaching persona" as well as style in terms of iPad integration. For example, if one is an extroverted teacher, be aware of how to use iPads for a quieter,

individualized/small group activity.

10. Work with trusted colleagues in technology. Check your ego at the door and learn to refer to their expertise.

Conclusion

Successful technology activities require both planning and flexibility. Instructors wanting to integrate technology into their teaching should work closely with a technology expert to plan learning activities yet remain open to changing the focus on depending on local events. Finally, instructors should take time to reflect on the process by keeping a journal and survey students in order to get their feedback. Both the instructor's reflection and the survey data should be taken into consideration when planning future learning activities.

This type of experience requires, at its core that those professionals working on the project need to: 1) like each other, 2) have good communication with each other, 3) respect each other personally and professionally, 4) have shared goals such as teaching and student learning, 5) have experience working together, 6) have a lack of ego and territorialism, and 7) be willing to expend additional time and energy.

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Appendix A

2/23/12: Session 1: iPad Orientation

Overall Class Goal: Students will be given basic orientation of the iPad and the applications will be provided. Students will be divided into five groups of three to work on activities.

After this class session, students will be able to:

- Name and locate power button, home button, and rocker
- Create and delete an iCloud account
- Connect iCloud account to their iPad
- Find and open applications used for class activities
- Search for and download apps
- Explain the difference between iPad and ClassPad
- Signup for a Dropbox account
- Access Dropbox
- Practice typing, clicking, swiping, and mashing using Notes
- Practice pinching and squeezing using Safari
- Access and sign out of the app store

Applications needed: ABC News app, NPR News app, BBC News app, Fox News app, CNN News app, MSNBC News app, Talking Tom 2, Notes, Timerplus, calendar, Dropbox, illusions 3D/mindgames, City Story, iBooks.

3/1/12: Session 2: iPad Learning Activity

Overall Class Goal: In the spirit of small group competition, students will look up individuals connected with multicultural issues (e.g. Vaclav Havel) and a multicultural related news issue (e.g. China invading Tibet) from one American news perspective (ABC, NPR, Fox, CNN, MSNBC) and an international perspective (BBC). Groups will summarize (in one short paragraph each) the American news perspective assigned to their group, the BBC perspective, and a comparison between them. Groups will compose a final paragraph that summarizes the values driving that news source's interpretation of the individual and the issue. One member from each group will post their summary on a forum in AsULearn (the university's course management system).

After this class session, students will be able to:

- explain how values, traditions, and customs of groups who are oppressed in American culture due to ethnicity, religion, gender, class, disability income, sexual orientation, and/or age are portrayed in the media.

Applications needed: ABC News app, NPR News app, BBC News app, Fox News app, CNN News app, MSNBC News app, Safari.

3/29/12: Session 3: iPad Review and Learning Activity

Overall Class Goal: The class will review the material presented in the two earlier sessions. In their small groups, students will experience the power of listening and laughter and the presence of values underlying decision making processes in counseling. Talking Tom 2 will be used to explore the listening and laughter dynamic while City Story will be used to create a multicultural city. Students will report back to the class what they learned as a result of using Talking Tom 2. They will also introduce

the city they created and explain the choices they made based on their values as a group.

After this class session, students will be able to:

- explain how listening and laughter can be used in counseling as sources of healing and building cross cultural bridges as well as the presence of values that underlie counseling decisions

Applications needed: Talking Tom 2, City Story

4/5/12: Session 4: iPad Learning Activity

Overall Class Goal: Students will explore the use of the iPad in a professional counseling context. The professor will demonstrate how notes, the timer, and calendar can be used. Students will work with these applications and name ways they can be used to increase productivity. Students will research and suggest other applications that can be used to improve productivity. One member from each group will post their summary on a forum in AsULearn.

After this class session, students will be able to:

- describe how the iPad can be used to improve productivity in a professional counseling context.

Applications needed: Notes, Timerplus, calendar, Safari.

4/12/12: Session 5: iPad Learning Activity

Overall Class Goal: Students will have the opportunity to work on their multicultural Cultural Experience assignment that involves a summary of an interview, music, food, and a videotape/DVD with each one in regard to a different minority/oppressed group that is new and unfamiliar to the student.

After this class session, students will produce a product:

- Students will access Dropbox and Photostream to retrieve photos, text, and/or video for building the multicultural reflection, posted on their blog. Students will post a link to their blog in an AsULearn forum. Students will use apps to edit files and compile the final product of the multicultural blog entry.

Applications needed: iCloud, AudioClips, Quick Voice Recorder, Good Reader, iBooks, Notes Plus, iPad camera, YouTube, Blogger.

Applications used: ABC News, AudioClips, BBC News, City Story, CNN News, Dropbox, Fox News, Good Reader, iBooks, Illusions 3D/mindgames, MSNBC News, NPR News Quick Voice Recorder, Talking Tom 2, Timerplus, and Youtube

Applications or programs that will be used but are already included on the ClassPad: Calender, iCloud, iPad Camera, Notes, and Safari.