



The Office of Graduate Studies Presents

GRADUATE RESEARCH *Symposium*

Thursday, April 30, 2020

Virtually Displayed Abstracts

Co-sponsored by the Graduate Student Council

Showcasing graduate students' research, capstone projects and scholarship.



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Director's Welcome Message

Welcome to Stockton University's first virtual Graduate Research Symposium. This year we embark upon the dissemination of research projects in a different format, due to the COVID-19 virus.

We look forward to this new format and as a community we continue to celebrate the journey and accomplishments of our graduate students who have engaged in research within the past year. Designing and conducting research can be a challenging and rewarding part of this academic journey that signifies the culmination of one's empirical quest and capstone experience. I must acknowledge that this research could not have been possible without the dedicated assistance of faculty mentors who have shared their own passion, curiosity, and knowledge with these distinguished scholars.

These Spring 2020 projects signify the student's commitments to practitioner-based research, academic excellence, and are comprised in the oral and poster presentations listed within this booklet. We celebrate the diversity, innovativeness of the research that continues to promote interdisciplinary conversations among the campus community.

As a community of scholars, we are proud of the presenters and grateful to all who contributed to the success of these capstone projects.

Wishing you a healthy and joyous research experience.

Best regards,

AmyBeth Glass, Ed.D.
Director of Graduate Studies

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Dorothy Stump

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Lauren Del Rossi

Teaching Collaborative Transition Services via an Interprofessional Discharge Planning Meeting Simulation

Transition planning routinely requires a collaborative interprofessional (IP) team approach. Despite the expectations of competency in interaction as an IP team member, entry-level students in physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), and social work (SW) typically only learn about this process through discipline-specific lectures. Authors implemented an IP discharge meeting simulation and hypothesized this experience would increase student confidence in transition planning participation and IP collaboration. Student participation in IPE activities aimed at developing clinical expertise and collaboration skills can prepare students to engage in effective interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP).

Kimberly Wilson

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Mary Lou Galantino

Impact of Somatic Yoga and Meditation on Fall Risk, Function, and Quality of Life for Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy Syndrome in Cancer Survivors

Chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy syndrome (CIPN) causes significant pain in hands and feet and is an adverse effect of treatment. Few non-pharmacological interventions have been tested and individuals experience CIPN symptoms years after treatment. This is the first study to explore a somatic yoga and meditation (SYM) intervention on functional outcomes and quality of life (QOL). Ten participants with median age 64.4 years (47-81) attended 61% of the sessions. Eighty percent adhered to the home SYM. Interventions were provided twice a week for 8 weeks for 1.5 hours and participants completed home-based SYM and journal entries. Significant improvements were found in flexibility (SR) ($p=0.006$); balance (FR) ($p=0.001$) and gait speed (TUG) ($p=0.004$). Pain severity ($p=0.041$) and pain interference reduced ($p=0.011$). PNQ was significant ($p=0.003$) and stress (PSS) reduced ($p=0.056$). Qualitative findings included: (1) Vacillation of CIPN pain perception over time; (2) Transferability of skills to daily activities learned; (3) Improvement in physical function leading to return to various work and hobbies; (4) Perceived relaxation as an effect of SYM; (5) Group engagement provided a social context for not feeling isolated with CIPN. Preliminary data suggests that SYM may improve QOL and flexibility, gait speed and balance in cancer survivors with CIPN. Eight participants were high risk for falls as measured by FR and none were fall risk at the end of the intervention.

Master of Social Work

Rachel Kern

Master of Social Work

Advisor: Dr. Robert Barney

Religion and Spirituality in Social Work Practice

As someone with a passion for faith-based community volunteering and charity service, I am proud to be graduating this semester with my Master of Social Work. This field emphasizes the ideas of culturally competent practice, ethnographic interviewing, and other approaches that require a certain level of education, understanding, and acceptance of others' backgrounds. In my presentation, titled "Religion and Spirituality in Social Work Practice", I will share statistical data pertaining to the religions and worldviews that interact most with social service organizations and social workers. A review of the literature demonstrating research analyses on the implementation of spirituality in social work practice will lead to a discussion on application of this information into each level and type of agency, service area, and client we may encounter in the profession. Additionally, by examining a number of theories and models focused on the incorporation of faith-centered or informed approaches that could be utilized in our field, each social worker can determine the method that best fits their practice.

Valencia Thompson-Manago

Master of Social Work

Advisor: Dr. Robert Barney

Psychometric Properties of Beck Anxiety Inventory English vs. Spanish Speaking Individuals

This poster presentation compares and contrasts the Beck Anxiety Inventory English speaking (original version) versus a Spanish speaking (revised version) on a Hispanic population. The objective was to analyze previous studies that determined the validity and reliability of the Beck Anxiety Inventory on both populations. The results conclude that internal consistency reliability scored higher in the revised version than the original due to a more extensive test sample. Test-Retest reliability was not tested in the revised version; however, it was tested in the original version and proven adequate. Factorial validity was proven adequately in both original and revised; however, both used different terminology, and the convergent and discriminated validity was higher in the original version and proven inaccurate in the revised version.

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

Alex Karn

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

Advisor: Dr. Nusret Sahin

Procedural Justice and Police Use-of-Force

Citizen trust in police and compliance to police orders are of great importance to the field of criminal justice. Procedural justice theory suggests that police can gain voluntary compliance if their actions are seen as fair and appropriate. Police use a great amount of discretion while enforcing the law, and procedural justice may not shape officers' decisions or operational practices if they do not internalize this concept. From this perspective, this research aims to explore police officers' perception of procedural justice and its impact on daily policing practices, specifically their attitudes regarding use of force. A survey was administered to sworn police officers in New Jersey for this purpose. The survey has been designed to assess the relationship between police officers' internalization of the procedural justice concept and their inclination to use force against citizens. It was hypothesized that police officers who support the use of procedural justice in daily policing practices are less inclined to use force than their counterparts who do not support procedural justice.

Alyssa Fitzpatrick

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

Advisor: Dr. Kimberley Schanz

Mass Media Effecting Criminal Justice System Perceptions

The purpose of this paper is to provide insight on how the media influences the general public's views on different subjects. Media influences people's lives by persuading people into changing their perspective on certain subjects. The criminal justice field is influenced heavily by public opinions and policy that arises from public opinion, in turn, affects the criminal justice system. Policy changes often happen out of reaction to certain major events. The media plays a role in how these events are received by the public. This paper aims to provide an overview of how CJS policy persuasion occurs using examples of celebrities' social media, television shows, and news. These media sources have a large influence on the general public and how they view the criminal justice system and are able to knowingly and unknowingly sway the public to have certain views on specific cases and policies.

Taylor Searles

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

Advisor: Dr. Manish Madan

Sexual Harassment: Psychological Response and Coping Mechanism among College Students

Sexual victimization has been a prevalent social issue in recent years. Research studies have shown a wide array of impacts such as depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and shame, particularly among college students. Victims of sexual harassment have reported disruptions to their academic experiences and reported troubled sleep patterns. They have further indicated using alcohol and drugs as coping mechanisms. Using quantitative survey responses from a mid-sized college campus, this study examines the long-term psychological distress symptoms and coping mechanisms within the students who have reported experiencing sexual victimization (lifetime or in the past 12 months). Specifically, this paper analyzes relevant gender differences and differences within the class status (freshmen to graduate students). This research also categorizes an individual's response immediately post-victimization (e.g., avoidance, hyper-arousal, self-harm, or re-experiencing symptoms). Policy implications will be discussed.

Master of Arts in Education

Alexis Di Mercurio

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Adapting The Mathematics Classroom By Utilizing UDL To Promote Learning For All Students

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for teaching that helps to differentiate curriculum and provide necessary supports for all learners. The three UDL principles include multiple means of engagement, representation, and action & expression. This study investigated the impact of implementing UDL, and how it improved student engagement and student achievement within a math classroom. The study included seven students, who receive special education and were enrolled in Foundations of Algebra 2. Even within a resource room where all students receive special education, there are many different types of learners who receive specific accommodations and have weaknesses in certain mathematical skills. Math can be a challenging subject for students, along with many other subjects. These arising issues are where the utilization of UDL will help to create a classroom that is responsive for every type learner, promoting growth in their mathematics knowledge, as well as a classroom culture that allows students to be successful students. A literature review has been done with twenty articles to analyze the impact of UDL, but limited research was found in a resource room setting. There were several data measures that were used during this study, including reflection logs, video recorded lessons, a curriculum-based measure, and interim curriculum-based assessments. This study showed that the implementation of UDL resulted in improvement in student assessment scores, student participation, and learning materials accessible for a variety of learners.

Barbara Byrnes

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Formative Assessments influence on Students' Reading Comprehension

The purpose of this research is to determine if the implementation of targeted formative assessments, specifically the use of questions, conferencing, self-reflection, student samples, and observations, impacts students' reading comprehension in middle school classrooms. The rationale for this research has been developed through teacher lead discussions with students. The discussion was based on their lack of reading comprehension within the middle school grades. The participants included in this study are 14 sixth graders, 12 seventh graders, and 6 eighth graders all of which are multileveled academics. The method included interventions. One intervention was the use of questions and conferencing to allow students to self-reflect on their understanding and allow for teacher feedback. Student samples provided data to help students make reflections and teacher conferences more meaningful. Teacher observations were used to learn where students needed some help on a specific skill. All of these interventions help increase reading comprehension. The data collected will be video recordings, student questions, running records, conferencing notes, work samples, and research logs. This data was reviewed and analyzed to determine the central theme of the data. After collecting and analyzing data collected, three themes emerged. They were: when the teacher implemented targeted assessments students' work reflected growth in reading comprehension; during assessments, students can retell a text, with teacher prompting, and make inferences; during assessments, students can retell a text, with teacher prompting, and explain literal elements of the text.

Brianna Corrigan

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

How Explicit Math Instruction Improved Second Graders' Word Problem Solving Skills

Classroom Observations and benchmark data indicated that students struggled to explain the mathematical process in written form in math classes. The purpose of this study was to explicitly teach students to solve math problems and explain the process of how they arrive at an answer to improve their math skills. Participants of this study are twenty one 2nd grade students at a Gloucester Township Public School. This study presents data on why the use of teaching writing is important in math classrooms, the use of math journals and the use of the writing process in math classrooms to increase understanding. The following data sources were collected and analyzed: pre assessment, student's math journals weekly, math attitude survey, video recording of math lessons, reflective logs and a post assessment. The interventions that were used were explicitly teaching students the steps in order for them to problem solve and explain their thinking. This was achieved through the use of math journals and the explicit steps of the writing process. The results from this study show that students post-test math scores were higher than their pre-test math scores. This leads to support how teaching students explicit steps to solve and explain a word problem increases their math skills.

Darnell D. Williams

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Students can Achieve on Achieve3000

The purpose of this research was to determine how student conferencing combined with providing specific feedback to students would enhance achievement for students on the assessment Achieve3000. The rationale for this research was derived from the observation of understanding the importance of data driven instruction and the contrast of whole group instruction for how student's Lexile levels are impacted based upon methods of instruction and specific feedback. No matter a Lexile level of a student, there is always room for improvement and deepening understanding. The participants in this study included a total of 46 students that were divided into two general education classrooms. Each classroom has 23 students, and out of the 46 students 4 have met the criteria for the Excite Program, which falls under the gifted and talented program, and 2 were formerly classified as having a 504 plan. The methodology for this research included a plethora of teaching strategies from whole-group instruction to the mini-lesson model. The data was collected through a series of surveys, classroom journals, gradebook, anecdotal notes, videos and transcripts. Each week the students were tested and the results were analyzed to track growth. The data provided would help strengthen lesson plans and feedback. The conclusion of the results proved that providing specific feedback along with student conferencing led to enhanced achievement on assessments and growth of student autonomy.

Dawn Dolan

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Behavior Specific Praise and Opportunities to Respond on Student Engagement

The purpose of this research was to use a multi-component intervention to evaluate the effectiveness of both behavior specific praise statements as well as opportunities to respond on student on task behavior. The participants in this study included seven second grade students in a self-contained classroom for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Methodology included three intervention phases. First, the teacher implemented increased amounts of behavior specific praise over a six-week period. Next, the teacher implemented increased rates of opportunities to respond over a four-week period. The final week of intervention included a combination of behavior specific praise statements and opportunities to respond. The data collected included video recordings of the teacher's interventions and student engagement. Rates of specific praise, opportunities to respond, student engagement, and student off task behavior were analyzed. Classroom paraprofessionals present for the intervention completed intervention questionnaires for the three intervention phases to be analyzed. Weekly research logs were completed by the teacher during the intervention phases and were analyzed as well. Data analysis revealed that teacher implementation of increased behavior specific praise statements and opportunities to respond improved overall student engagement, implementation of

neither increased behavior specific praise statements nor opportunities to respond resulted in a statistically significant difference on overall student engagement, and teacher implementation of both increased behavior specific praise statements and opportunities to respond simultaneously had the greatest impact on overall student engagement.

Heather Harman

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Students' Mathematics Achievement with Formative Assessment and Explicit Instruction

The purpose of this research was to analyze students' formative assessments in a mathematics setting in order to adjust instruction to meet the needs of the students. The research focused on the implementation of ambitious instruction in the forms of change of pedagogy based on formative assessments to increase student's achievement. Participants included twenty-two students in a grade four mathematics classroom. Data collected included surveys, formative assessments, student self-reflections, test grades, reflective journals, and peer-reviewed videos. This data was analyzed for levels of student understandings, types of misunderstandings, teacher responses and ways that the teacher adapted their instruction based on the needs of the students. These would be quantitatively analyzed through the scoring of the formative assessment and their overall summative report grades. Less formally, observations of student performance during exit tickets, student self-reflections and notes on how the teacher changed their pedagogy based on student results would provide valuable data, to be analyzed more qualitatively through the use of recorded notes taken by the teacher. Through analysis of the data, three overall themes emerged: 1) using formative assessment to level-base grouping to increase student performance, 2) analyzing student's formative assessment to adapt my instruction to best meet my student's individual needs, and 3) application of skills based on feedback showed improvement on student exit ticket. The results concluded by having students' complete formative assessments, teachers are able to alter the original plan of instruction to aid students in better understanding objectives and produce positive outcomes.

Jacqueline Ceresini

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Improving Third Graders' Ability to Write an Opinion Essay Through SRSD: POW TREE

The purpose of this study was to use the steps in the Self-Regulated Strategy Development model to teach third grade students a specific persuasive writing strategy, POW + TREE (Pick my idea, Organize my notes, Write and say more, Topic sentence, Reasons, Explanation, and Ending) to improve their ability to write persuasive essays. This was done within the context of the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading: Writers Workshop Curriculum. During the writing portion of the language arts block, the researcher implemented explicit strategy instruction across a period of 10 weeks for 30 minutes every

day to improve students' persuasive essay writing skills. The researcher collected and analyzed pre- and post-persuasive essay test data as well as survey responses to measure students' attitude and perception towards writing instruction and a survey about their self-perception of their self-regulation skills. The researcher also conducted observations to understand how students were engaging and reacting to the explicit strategy instruction and assessments. The results for this study indicated that the explicit strategy instruction had a positive effect on the students' ability to write persuasive essays. Additionally, the observation data showed that during instruction, when the students were provided with explicit steps where they developed background knowledge about the strategy, discussed the strategy, received modeling on how to use the strategy, memorized the strategy, received support, and engaged in independent practice they were able to produce better quality essays.

Jennifer Murnin

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Enhancing Student Math Discourse through Math Talks and Written Expression in Special Education Students

The purpose of this research was to determine whether the implementation of math talk communities and written expression of mathematics strategies would enhance students' mathematical discourse abilities. The rationale for this project was based upon special education students' deficiencies in relation to discussing and reasoning with mathematics strategies. By communicating with mathematics and employing math talks and mathematics written expression, it would stand to reason that students would be more apt to apply strategies and develop a stronger understanding of mathematics concepts. The participants in this study included three third grade special education students in a pull-out replacement setting. Methodology included implementation of strategies to increase students' abilities to reason mathematically, communication academically with peers, and exhibit ability to compose a written expression to demonstrate knowledge of mathematical strategies. These interventions included implementation of math talk communities using mathematics discourse cards as well as implementation of collecting ideas and modeling translating ideas into writing. Data collected would include videos of math talks, student written responses about math, assessment data and math talk and math writing rubrics. The data would be qualitatively analyzed through to determine students' abilities to communicate more effectively mathematics concepts and the impact that has on their overall understanding of math concepts and procedures. Data analysis determined oral discourse enhances student ability to reason in mathematics to develop higher conceptual understanding, application of oral discourse increases student ability to describe math strategies in writing, and math talk communities develop greater student interaction surrounding mathematics concepts.

Jordyn Crossely

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Implementation of Prompting, Reinforcement, and Non-Prompting Instruction to Increase Social Skills in Students with Autism

The purpose of this research was to determine whether implantation of prompting, reinforcement, and non-prompting instruction to increase social skills in students with autism. The rationale came from the teacher observations in a self-contained setting of both present and past students with autism, who generally demonstrate deficiency in social skills. It would stand to reason that increasing students with autism's ability to demonstrate social skills would enhance their ability to communicate with peers in both academic and non-academic settings. The participants of this study are 6 male students in a self-contained autism setting. Methodology included series of interventions such as prompting, reinforcement, and non-prompting instruction to expand students with autism social skills in academic and non-academic settings. The interventions are called "Conversation Hours." The students had conversations weekly with each other in the classroom and outside of the classroom. The data collected included student's surveys that provided the teacher with topics they would enjoy talking about, paraprofessional surveys based on these weekly conversations, and student "exit tickets," for a self-reflection of how they feel their weekly conversations have went. The paraprofessional surveys discussed how much prompting each student needed during the conversations, how much reinforcement was provided, and was the task completed. This data was analyzed through scoring of these surveys, videos, and observation notes were taken during the intervention. The themes for this research are, Students with autism, at varying levels, increase confidence in a social setting with prompting and reinforcement from an adult, Students with autism, at varying levels, increase task completion when using positive reinforcement and prompting from an adult, Students with autism, at varying levels, increase positive interactions and positive relationships with differentiating level or types of reinforcement from adults.

Joseph Pienkowski

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

What's the Problem with Problem Based Learning

What is in a name, and in a person's identity? This was the thematic question posed to my Senior College Preparation English Classroom. Throughout our study of Mary Shelley's gothic tale Frankenstein, students were placed in groups and completed a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) unit where the students, at the conclusion of the novel and required work, had to come up with an action of change to help improve children's lives who experience a lack of identity, and/or abandonment. Throughout the research, data was collected in order to see if the implementation of PBL demonstrates students to be more focused and motivated; moreover, would the academic achievement be higher in a PBL compared to that of a traditional learning environment. This study took place over two semesters in

a College Preparation Senior English Classroom comprised up of fifty-one students, thirty-four were general education students and seventeen were In-Class Support special education classified students. The data collected included surveys (pre/post), assessments (in the traditional/non-traditional route), interviews throughout, videotaped lessons (in the traditional/non-traditional route), and student journal entries throughout. Initial attempts of a PBL task led to lower engagement and academic achievement in comparison to traditional instruction, When adapted and/or modified, student engagement and academic achievement were higher in PBL 1 than in PBL 2, and PBL instruction must be tailored by the classroom teacher to meet the needs of their specific students.

Julie Neuner

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Strengthening Preschoolers' Vocabulary Skills Through Read Alouds

The preschool years are important for children because these are the formative years for developing foundational language and literacy skills for their future success. Vocabulary skills enhance students' comprehension skills and contribute to student reading achievement, therefore is an important piece to teach in the early preschool years. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the impact of explicit vocabulary instruction on preschoolers' vocabulary skills during read alouds. There is a total of seven Pre-K students in this study, ranging from two to four years old. Three students are female and four students are male. Students' vocabulary growth was measured throughout the intervention process. The following data sources were collected and analyzed: pre-, post, and interim vocabulary tests during the intervention process, teacher observations during read alouds, student artifacts from extension activities, video lesson recordings, reflective logs, and implementation checklists. Interventions include interactive read alouds and vocabulary extension activities. The results of this study indicate that explicit vocabulary instruction increases student word knowledge. With repetitive exposure to explicit instruction and extension activities over a twelve-week intervention period, the results show an increase to student word knowledge from pre-test to post-test.

Kim Calascione

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Beyond Keywords, Clues, and Textbooks: Using Schema-Based Instruction to Improve Word Problem Solving Skills

In a Response to Intervention (RTI) setting, small groups of 5 or 6 students struggle with math word problems due in part to having Mathematical Difficulties (MD). At the beginning of the trimester, students were identified by using Link It, a universal screening assessment and MobyMax, a fact fluency assessment. Twenty of the identified fourth and fifth grade students were pulled from their general education classroom for 25 minutes five times a week for one trimester. The purpose of this research

endeavor was to ascertain if Schema Based Instruction (SBI) increased understanding of word problems and improved mathematical skills. This study presented data that reflected how utilizing SBI enhanced word problem solving skills by teaching one strategy at a time based on situational representations. Explicit instruction of the five strategies were taught three times a week. Instructional strategies implemented were direct instruction, modeling, guided practice, and independent practice. Data sources measuring achievement included district benchmark assessments, pre/post assessment, formative assessments, student interviews, video recordings, teacher reflection log, student reflections, and student interactive journals with artifacts. The data indicated intentional instruction, scaffolded curriculum, and collaborative peer interactions supported the SBI which increased achievement for at-risk students with mathematical difficulties.

Kimberly Dascher

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

The Impact of Recess on the Behavioral Performance of Disaffected High School Students

The purpose of this research was to determine the impact of recess on the behavioral performance of disaffected high school students. The rationale for this research stemmed from extensive disciplinary referrals and teacher observations of inappropriate, off-task conduct during the school day. Historically, recess has been integrated into the elementary and middle school setting to alleviate stress and to promote emotional and physical wellbeing. Arguably, the integration of free time into a daily routine could benefit disaffected secondary students. The participants in this study were 9 high school students in a behavioral and credit recovery program. These students experienced a shortened school day, security monitoring, and restricted privileges. This group consisted of 1 senior, 3 juniors, 2 sophomores, and 3 freshmen. The intervention included a daily 30 minute recess break, which was granted to students who earned 7 out of 10 behavioral points during the first class period. Students were permitted to choose an activity from the designated list, as well as make suggestions. The data collected included a daily activity choice board, pre- and post-surveys, and questionnaires requiring students' emotional status, activity level, and desire to learn. Additionally, video observations, teacher journal entries, field notes, and spreadsheets were used to find connections between behavioral performance and recess activities. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis revealed 3 themes: a positive development in students' social emotional responses, a fluctuation in individual conduct, and a constant fluctuation in whole group conduct. The results demonstrated a lack of behavioral consistency in response to daily recess incentives.

Kristin Weyrick

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Project-Based Learning and the Rise in Student Engagement

The purpose of this research was to determine to what extent of student engagement and academic achievement increased through Project-Based Learning. The rationale for this research came from teacher observation in the lack of engagement through the traditional teacher-driven instruction. The implementation of student-centered Project-Based Learning improved student interactions, confidence levels, and collaboration between peers. The participants were 27 eighth-grade Honors students. Methodology included a series of videos, reflective logs, rubrics, teacher created skills test, and student reflections. The data collected would include journal responses that show student reflections, rubrics that assess the PBL, and discussion rubrics that are used for peer assessment. These would be quantitatively analyzed through the scoring of the rubrics. Observations of student performance during the PBL activities and student reflections provide valuable data that suggests: the increase use of PBL instruction led students to positively communicate with one another, the comparison between traditional instruction and PBL instruction found students were more engaged during PBL instruction, and PBL instruction enhanced student achievement as measured by classroom assessments.

Linda Galardi

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Vocabulary Retention and Application: Use of Comprehension Activities in High School Spanish Class

Research done for this study analyzed how students remembered and used foreign language vocabulary. The principal purpose of this study was to determine if Spanish foreign language students were able to better retain and apply Spanish vocabulary through the implementation of comprehensible input strategies in the classroom (songs, draw and label, total physical response stories, adaptive speech, etc). Participants of this study were 67 Spanish 1 at Cape May Technical High School. Students ranged from freshman to seniors and were between the ages of fourteen to eighteen. Their retention and application of vocabulary was measured through a pre-test given before the intervention, an interim test given halfway through the intervention, and a post-test to establish what they learned. The means of the intervention was teaching using comprehensible input, which simply means through speech and readings that the students would be able to understand easily. Primarily through the use of movie talks, stories, and recycling know the vocabulary. In addition, the teacher used repetition and cognates. The findings of this study revealed that students improved their use of Spanish vocabulary and confirmed the efficacy of comprehensible input in the foreign language classroom.

Mary Ruiz

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Examining the Implementation of Leveled Literacy Instruction on Special Education Student Reading Performance

The purpose of this research study was to determine whether or not the implementation of phonics and

fluency instruction using Leveled Literacy Instruction (LLI) improved fifth-grade special education students' reading performance. The rationale for this research came from the need for a multisensory phonics instruction program that reinforced basic skills in a pull out resource room (POR) environment. Prior to the study, POR students were not demonstrating reading improvement in phonics or fluency using the general education modified curriculum. The participants in this study included five fifth-grade students assigned to a pullout-resource classroom for a range of disabilities including autism, dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Methodology included assessing student reading abilities and grouping students based on their instructional reading level using LLI benchmark assessments. The teacher met twice a week with each group to administer multisensory phonics mini lessons and fluency instruction. The data collected during the interventions consisted of phonics exit tickets, video recordings, anecdotal notes, and reading records score sheets. Data collected was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using coding sheets specific to the activity or strategy. Results of this research included higher fluency scores after receiving small group multisensory fluency instruction, improved reading performances after a phonics or fluency skill was modeled by a teacher, and independent use of phonics or fluency strategies during all areas of reading instruction.

Meghan Mikuletzky

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

The Effects of Multisensory Instruction on Decoding and Reading Fluency

The purpose of this study was to observe the effects of explicit multisensory instruction on fluency and decoding skills. During language arts centers the researcher implemented explicit multisensory instruction, with four third grade self-contained special education students. This occurred over a 10-week period for 20 minutes a day, 4 days a week, to improve fluency and decoding skills. The researcher used a word list that consisted of 65 words with learned patterns and collected pre, interim, and post data for decoding skills as well as weekly assessments on fluency including a pre, interim and post assessment. The researcher also utilized video recorded lessons and reflection logs to see if students were using the multisensory techniques presented to assist in decoding and fluency skills. The results of the study showed that use of explicit multisensory phonics instruction had positive effects on both decoding skills and fluency for all students.

Melanie Sanders

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Collaborative learning stations in the middle; the impact that collaborative math stations can have in a middle school math class

The purpose of this research is to determine how collaborative math stations in the middle school

classroom will provide an opportunity for an increase in students' cognitive engagement. Stations can provide differentiated instruction in the classroom, by creating small groups for guided instruction, by creating independent workstations for individualized learning and by creating collaboration among peers in a classroom. The rationale of this study was conducted to conform to our district workshop model which is to provide stations through instructional practices. The participants in this study focus on one eighth grade math class consisting of 8 girls and 10 boys that have achieved above or on grade level on the state standardized tests. The stations will provide groups with hands-on learning, group activities, and technological resources to provide individualized learning. Students are assessed by using a reflection rubric on their own understanding after direct instruction and individual learning, and then again after a rotation of stations has ended. Through a collection of videos and teacher observations, I will record the findings to determine the benefits of collaborative math stations. Each week a research log will be created to record the interaction of the students rotating through stations that are set up for the week. Students will complete surveys about the effects that stations have on them in the classroom and they will record their own reflection of their mastery on the skills being taught. Once reviewed, the results reveal that when students are actively engaged in collaborative math stations, they are more likely to be emotionally, behaviorally and cognitively engaged in the learning process. They are more likely to participate in meaningful discussions with their peers and have more individualized discourse with their teacher through questioning and feedback.

Nicole Petronglo

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Studying the Emergent Themes and Effects of Performance-Based Feedback on Novice Teachers' Use of Behavior Prevention Strategies

This action research project analyzed the effects of receiving performance-based feedback from a teacher coach on novice teachers' use of behavior prevention strategies. Participants of the study consisted of seven preschool teachers with five or fewer years of public preschool teaching experience. Baseline data was obtained using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool which measures teachers' implementation of the Teaching Pyramid Model, a framework for promoting social-emotional development and strategies for preventing and addressing challenging behaviors. Intervention was implemented in the form of goal planning based on TPOT data and observation and performance-based feedback cycles by a teacher coach. At the conclusion of the study, updated TPOT data was collected. TPOT data, feedback logs, audio recordings of feedback meetings, observation notes, and research logs were maintained and analyzed. Data showed that on-going performance-based feedback using multiple feedback strategies does improve teachers' use of behavior prevention strategies and helps to decrease observed challenging behaviors. More specifically, data indicated that providing feedback on the teacher's overall mindset and approach to behavior intervention contributed to more significant improvements with implementing behavior prevention strategies.

Patricia Rafter

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Effect of the Document-Based Question (DBQ) on Seventh-Grade Students' Engagement Levels and Analytical Thinking

The purpose of this research was to determine how the implementation of document-based questions (DBQs) affected seventh-grade student engagement levels and analytical thinking. The rationale for this research came from teacher observations on levels of engagement and analytical thinking among students in the Basic Skill section. Students had shown a need for assistance throughout daily activities and open-ended questions. Students needed practice to learn how to think about a question and how to approach a document through analytical thinking. Students also needed activities that engaged them in learning. The participants in this study were 11 seventh-grade students in the Basic Skill class. Methodology included a series of both single document-based questions that were assigned two times per week and multi-document questions. Established routines for students to practice analyzing historical documents led to familiarity with the DBQ. Frequency of document analysis encouraged students how to approach a document. The series of DBQs included collaboration, allowing students to benefit from working on historical documents together. Data included formative assessments on student interpretation, analysis, and evaluation of documents. Summative assessment data was collected through videotaping of class discussions. Students were assessed on how they made comparisons, applied what they knew to new information, and how conclusions were drawn. Formal and summative assessments were based on student understanding of different perspectives of historical and current issues. Students interpreted information, taking positions on issues to support conclusions. Assessments were qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed using document analysis forms, and student observations were recorded in detail.

Patrick Reidy

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Adventures of High School Chemistry: The Effects of Inquiry-Based Learning in the Chemistry Classroom

The purpose of this research was to determine the effects of inquiry-based (discovery) learning had on student engagement in a chemistry classroom. Specifically, in terms of this study, student engagement was defined as science self-efficacy, general in science, and motivation to continue working on science-related topics. The rationale for this research came from the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) into the revised chemistry curriculum and feedback from past students. NGSS asks students to think like scientists, rather than simply restating facts. To that end, student engagement was compared to traditional direct instruction (lecture) and discovery learning, such as hands-on labs, projects, task cards, and inquiry activities. The data collected and analyzed, included: videos of lessons (both inquiry-based and direct instruction), student surveys (end of the unit and post-lab surveys), research logs, and student artifacts of inquiry activities from November 2019 through February 2020.

Three major themes emerged: 1) increased student engagement during inquiry-based lessons, 2) authentic usage of vocabulary and scientific principles during inquiry-based lessons, and 3) students are more receptive to hands-on labs than other inquiry-based learning activities. The results of this study indicated that inquiry-based learning strategies increased student engagement in chemistry compared to traditional direct instruction.

Rachel Helena Ludwig

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Crafting and Cultivating Creativity: Impact of Handwriting Instruction on Students K-3

Current research has shown that many students are not receiving handwriting instruction in school. Some students could not sign their name or engage with this important and personal task. The purpose of this study examined the impact of explicit handwriting instruction for students in Kindergarten through Third Grades. There were a total of 13 students. The measures included each students' overall handwriting growth in automaticity, fluency, and legibility. The following data sources were collected: daily student journal samples, reflective logs, video recordings, photographs, student and parent surveys, and a summative project. Student interventions included daily handwriting instruction, finger exercises, proper pencil grip, reminder checklists, graphic organizers, and alphabetic reference charts in both cursive and print writing. They experimented with different mediums. The results indicated that students' handwriting improved after instruction. With repetitive exposure to explicit instruction over 14 weeks, the impact of their written expression in the context of personal narratives was expanded. Keywords: handwriting instruction K-3, handwriting fluency, teaching cursive writing, handwriting quality, beginning handwriting instruction, manuscript and cursive.

Robyn Evangelist

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

The Impact of Using Mentor Text on First Graders' Writing Skills

In a first-grade inclusion classroom, students were struggling to develop grade-level writing skills because of their lack of exposure to written text and samples. The purpose of this study was to use mentor text and explicit writing instruction to improve first grade students' writing skills in an inclusive classroom. This study presented data and how a combination of explicit teaching focused on teacher modeling, writing opportunities and facilitating students' understanding of writing concepts. The following data sources were collected and analyzed: the district's Writing Assessment Benchmark pre-post test, writing samples and artifacts of student work, students' feedback surveys, video recording of writing lessons, and reflective logs. As a result of this research, the findings indicated that mentor texts showed student growth in first-grade students' writing skills. The post-test writing survey results revealed that students felt more confident in generating ideas and writing short stories after

intervention. Additionally, the observation data showed that during instruction, when students were provided with explicit steps with the use of a mentor text, the students were able to understand and implement necessary mechanics and skills in their writing increasingly over time.

Shannon Hathaway

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Effects of Teacher Intervention on Productivity and Student Behavior in the Social Studies Classroom

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of certain aspects of productivity (i.e., routine, transition, flexible grouping, and/or preparedness) on classroom environment (physical, social and emotional) and student interaction (student-student; student-teacher) in the sixth grade social studies in-class support classroom. Research shows a correlation between classroom environment and student engagement. This study implemented routines such as the use of timers, non-verbal cues for transitioning and physical environment for grouping. Data was collected through logs, surveys, written observations and video recordings. Results have shown increased on-task behaviors, although not consistent, decreased classroom management issues and more efficient transitions from activity to activity. As a result of these changes to the classroom environment, a measurable increase in student engagement has been noticed.

Shefali Patel

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Using Effective Questioning Techniques/Strategies to Promote Better Teaching Practices

The purpose of this research was to see how the use of effective questioning techniques/strategies can help a teacher enhance their teaching practice. The teacher will scaffold her questions and use different techniques/strategies for each of the lessons. The participants in the study included students in a tenth grade College and Career Readiness English classroom. The methodology included a series of classroom interventions that forced the teacher to vary her questioning techniques/strategies to see what was effective and what was not effective. Some of these interventions included implementing think, pair, share and utilizing proper wait time. The data included were research logs, classroom teacher's surveys, and students' work. These were analyzed through comparing and contrasting results in correlation to each questioning technique/strategy. The results of the study showed that using multiple questioning techniques/strategies in a lesson, reflecting after teaching, accepting constructive feedback, and knowing questioning taxonomies can help a teacher enhance their teaching practice.

Susan Kern

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Priti Haria

Systematic Math Instruction to Improve Real-World Math Skills for Students with Multiple Disabilities

This action research study focuses on the impact of systematic visual instruction to improve the daily living math skills of two students with Multiple Disabilities. Through the use of visual hands-on instruction, teacher modeling, step-by-step task analysis and small group direct instruction, students completed tasks in both the classroom and pre-vocational settings. With a future goal of employment following graduation from high school in mind, this action research looks at educational strategies for improving money math skills in order to support independence for daily living. Analysis of teacher observation logs, video recordings, and student work sample data illustrates growth in student ability to recognize, name, and combine coin amounts while carrying out specific tasks related to pre-vocational skills.

Todd Warker

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

Classroom Learning Strategies and their Impact to Engagement Among History Students

The purpose of this study was to examine the interactions among and conclude that the positive engagement between students in a highschool World History classroom could increase through a variety of learning strategies. The lessons were taught in front of a class of ten students, all of whom were at a resource level classroom. A diversified group of lesson strategies were used in this research such as Think- Pair- Share, Picture Walks, Circle Discussions and Jigsaw. All of the lessons were designed to have the students engage in discourse with each other and with the educators in the room. The course of the research took place over a ten week period. During the final five weeks of the research, the instruction would be turned into a remote learning setting, using Google Classroom. Data collected through video and research logs showed that positive engagement in the classroom, between the students did increase. Although all of the strategies used were effective in reaching their goal, the biggest increase and producer of student engagement would come from the Circle Discussions, Jigsaw and Think- Pair- Share strategies.

Toni Capille

Master of Arts in Education

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Lebak

The use of formative assessments to drive post instruction interventions within an inclusive classroom.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the use of formative assessment and teacher

observations affect the outcomes on students' academic achievements after post instruction interventions. The rationale for this study began after the unit one post assessment where student achievement was low and there was little formative assessment used to determine students' performance before the final assessment. The methodology of the study included the emphasis of exit tickets, teacher observations, and other formative assessments that drove the instruction to accommodate the students' academic achievements. The days following the exit ticket or formative assessments the data was categorized into three levels (Met grade level standards, approaching grade level standards and below grade level standards). The below grade level performing students were pulled aside into a smaller group and retaught using different methods of instruction. The data collected in this study focused on the exit tickets which showed the performance of the students post instruction, teacher reflections from small group instruction, as well as reflections on the lessons. The findings of the study reflect an increase of student achievement following the use of formative assessment to adjust teacher's instruction based off the needs of the classroom.

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Angela Maione

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Philip Tietjen and Dr. Jung Lee

Using Mobile Technology to Improve Social Skills and Conflict Resolution in the Elementary School Setting

Technology has become increasingly present in the lives of children. Schools are developing or already have in place 1:1 initiative giving each child their own form of technology. Children have mobile phones to contact their families, video games in which they not only play but communicate with their peers, and classroom activities in which they have to blog, share and present ideas. Communication through video games and socialization within a classroom school setting are completely different as video game conversation doesn't require the student to "wait their turn to talk." Many students struggle with socialization within the elementary school setting due to constant connectivity.

Since technology is present in every aspect of students' lives, educators need to utilize technology to combat the problem of lack of socialization and conflict resolution in elementary school students. Elementary school teachers can utilize electronics as a tool to enhance socialization and conflict resolution skills through the implementation of video modeling. Bandura's social learning theory suggests that observations impact social learning. Elementary school students can observe their peers making logical choices to solve conflict through the use of video modeling.

Brian Hackney

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Philip Tietjen

Increasing Student Motivation and Attitudes Towards Literature Using Self-Determination Theory and Flipped Classroom Model

Motivation among students is a growing concern for middle school and high school teachers. Keeping students motivated to produce high levels of work and also be engaged in learning activities has become increasingly challenging. The purpose of this study is to see if using Self Determination Theory (SDT) and aspects of the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) would increase student motivation and create positive attitudes towards reading amongst eighth grade students in literature class.

Two surveys were given to students prior to the learning module that measured current attitudes about reading as well as student preferences on work environment and delivery of instruction. These surveys were used to create a learning module that focused on providing students with more choices in the classroom. This is a key idea in SDT. Students were provided weekly reading assignments rather than daily assignments and were given no requirements in the order they needed to be completed. The classroom was also set up to provide flexible seating options. This study will determine if providing students with more choices in the classroom leads to them taking more ownership of their education which, ultimately, leads to increased motivation.

Darnell Rhone

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Jung Lee and Dr. Philip Tietjen

Collaborative Learning Through Pair Programming Effects on Employees

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether or not the implementation of collaborative learning by the use of pair programming and effective pairing techniques has had a positive impact on employee productivity and efficiency.

Kayla Harlan

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Jung Lee and Dr. Philip Tietjen

Individualized Instruction Through Gamification

Over the past several years, as we see a growth of technology being utilized in the classroom, gamification became a new instructional tool used by teachers. Technology creates new ways of learning, teaching, and assessing. Technology-based educational games can address the needs of each individual student. The gaming aspect of diagnostic testing will motivate the students to participate and

try their best on the assessment. It will keep the students' attention through the technology, game-based aspect.

This project focuses on special education students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, who are in the Pull-Out Resource program. To boost their operations in algebraic thinking skills, the students work daily on the application Freckle, with the goal of increasing their knowledge within the standard. As they work, individualized data is being collected, which is how the instructor will create individualized instruction for each student.

The purpose of this study is to explore how gamification could be utilized as a diagnostic tool. Using gamification in the classroom could be used to identify and pinpoint any student weaknesses. Once the student's weaknesses have been identified, the instructor would then create and implement individualized instruction. The goal of this study was for the learners to be able to show growth and mastery of their operations and algebraic thinking skills through individualized instruction which was created with the gamification data.

Michelle Di Liberto

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Philip Tietjen

Can Multiple Intelligences and Andragogy help an elderly congregation to understand and apply technology in their worship services?

This study analyzes the current worship format at Lakehurst United Methodist Church in Lakehurst, NJ. Many congregation members who attend this church are retired, elderly senior citizens. These men and women are grounded in traditional worship: pastor preaches, hymnals are used for songs, and a church organ plays music for these hymns. Bulletins have been implemented as an aid for worship, but the small print in both the hymnals and the bulletins has deterred many people from active participation in worship services.

Pastor Rene would like the church to be vital so that it will thrive in future years. In researching church vitality, she has implemented the assistance of our governing institution, the Greater New Jersey United Methodist Church. The Greater New Jersey United Methodist Church offers a program called Team Vital. This program is available to all Methodist Churches. The Team Vital program helps to look at vitality markers of the church so that we can enhance various programs that are actively available to the congregation.

The scope of this paper focuses on methods of worship that are currently in place at Lakehurst United Methodist Church. Pastor Rene has signed our congregation on to participate in this Team Vital program. In doing so, she appointed a few members of the congregation to determine how the church's worship services can be modernized. The members chosen for Team Vital are looking to solve the congregation's on-going technology problems involved in worship and will be implementing new solutions to enhance worship services.

Michelle Lombardi

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Jung Lee & Dr. Philip Tietjen

The Effects of Digital Gamified Learning: Motivation and Academic Performance of Fourth Grade Math Students

Due to the recent increase in rigor set forth by the New Jersey Common Core State Standards, levels of academic achievement and motivation in fourth-grade mathematics students has begun to decline. This study examines the use of digital gamified learning (DGL) strategies in a fourth-grade math class to increase motivation and subsequently raise levels of academic achievement. Results of a Needs Analysis indicated that less than 50% of fourth-grade students in the state of New Jersey met expectations on the most recent standardized state math test, and less than 10% exceeded expectations. Additionally, the results of a student-attitude survey revealed that a vast majority of students felt unmotivated and anxious in a traditional math class --and lacked a sense of control over their learning. To address these correlational problems, the academic achievement of 23 fourth-grade math students was tracked as they participated in a three-week math lesson plan that incorporated the use of DGL activities paired with traditional instructional methods. A second group of 23 fourth-grade math students also participated in the same three-week lesson plan, but without the DGL activities. At the conclusion of this study, a post-survey was administered to evaluate changes in student attitudes, as well as a post-instructional assessment that measured academic progress and understanding of concepts taught to both groups throughout the course of the study. Results indicated a statistically significant difference between the two groups' academic scores on the post-assessment at the level of .05 ($p=0.029$) and a 60.86% increase in student motivation.

Noelle Schwegel

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Jung Lee (research professor and advisor) and Dr. Philip Tietjen (capstone professor)

The Effects of Project-Based Learning on Socialization in an Inclusive First Grade Classroom

This study examines the use of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as an instructional strategy for social studies and science instruction and a means to promote socialization in an inclusive first grade classroom. The goal of this project was to increase social skills and authentic learning experiences for first grade students in an inclusive classroom. Results of a needs analysis conducted on a first grade class of 17 students showed that 82% of students enjoyed working with peers, but only half of all students felt equipped to resolve conflicts and most were unable to identify conflict resolution strategies necessary to navigating peer interactions. Students also showed areas for improvement with maintaining personal space, making eye contact, and using appropriate voice level and speech. Results also displayed that over three fourths of students had positive feelings about learning new things in regards to social studies and science, but were unable to identify specific topics within each subject, indicating a lack of personal connection. To address these areas for growth, PBL strategies were implemented during social studies and science to guide students through peer collaboration activities

and the development of stronger social skills. At the conclusion of this study, student social skills performance scales and inventories were conducted to show that 88% of students had positive feelings towards collaborating with peers and over two thirds of students could maintain personal space, make eye contact, and display appropriate sharing techniques when working and interacting with peers.

Sacha Taylor-Blades

Master of Arts in Instructional Technology

Advisor: Dr. Philip Tietjen

Native Tongue With a Side of English

While the United States does not have an official language, English is the language predominantly spoken in school systems across the country. This is problematic when the student sitting at the desk is not fluent in English, or speaks a different language at home. One way would be to teach students in such a way that they are able to process the new information just as their English-speaking counterparts are, in a familiar tongue. The purpose of this study was to examine whether addressing content before language immersion would improve comprehension. Twenty-two students in a Foundations of Technology class in a suburban high school in a mid-Atlantic school district were selected to have their lessons during the second semester presented in hyperdocs. This technology based instruction enabled the students to translate the work as needed. Pre and post test results show that English Learner students scored significantly better at the end of the semester. Follow-up research is needed to see if this trend continues over time.

Master of Science in Communication Disorders

Daniela Rengifo

Master of Science in Communication Disorders

Advisor: Dr. Monika Pawlowska

The Role of Acculturation in Latinos' Perspectives on Autism

In the United States, the Latino community is rapidly increasing. Once they arrive, their relationship to the American and country of origin's cultures may fall along the acculturation continuum: assimilation (identify with the American culture), separation (identify with their country of origin culture), integration (identify with both cultures), and marginalization (identify with neither cultures). Individuals from Latin American countries often times do not have the resources to help them understand what autism is, how it works, and the help that can be provided. Once they arrive to the United States, they are exposed to education and services for autism. However, their relationship to the American culture may affect whether or not they seek professional services. The purpose of this study was to examine if the degree of acculturation affected Latinos' perception on whether or not their family members with autism should receive speech and language therapy.

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Alexis Disbrow, Emily Disbrow, Dionia Henderson, Alex Negri, and Justin vanOyen

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Victoria Schindler and Dr. Rebecca Mannel

Demographics of MSOT Student Learning Abroad Group & Development of Competencies for Global Engagement

Pretest data was collected from a Masters of Occupational Therapy Student (MSOT) Learning Abroad Group, composed of fifteen students, on competencies for global engagement along with demographic information through a survey and scale format administered in a classroom environment. A seven point scale was utilized to rate the students perceived competence in regard to disposition and knowledge of various cultures, and a survey format was used to collect data on demographics. The results of the pretest data revealed that the fifteen MSOT students are diverse and come from various backgrounds, and the majority have high levels of competence in regard to the cultural areas. Many themes arose in the pre-test survey, correlating to the high levels of cultural competence within the fifteen students. These themes evolved through individualized and familial experiences, as well as a personal drive and eagerness to learn and evolve from the Colombia trip. Due to the fact that the instruments utilized were self-report scales, there was no reliability or validity present. Additionally, there was a fault in the self-report scales, with the participants rating themselves higher than they believe to be, resulting in inflation scores.

Alyssa Casanova, Tatiana Davidson, Michelle Eng, Chelsey Thivierge, and Christina Thomas

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Victoria Schindler and Dr. Rebecca Mannel

Effectiveness of the 'Skills for Success' Program in Increasing Self-Perceived Change in Occupational Performance in Undergraduate Students with DSM-5 diagnoses

The aim of the study was to determine the efficacy of the Skills for Success program in improving self-perceived college outcomes for undergraduate students with DSM-V diagnoses. A non-randomized convenience sample using a mixed methods design analyzed qualitative and quantitative data from the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM). Data from the COPM measured student's self-perceived changes in performance and satisfaction for educational and college-related goals throughout a college semester. A comparison of pre and post test quantitative data showed a significant change between initial and final performance measurements ($p = 0.000$). and satisfaction ($p = 0.001$). Qualitative data supported the post test scores and found the following interventions to be successful: Utilization of "Teach-back method" for study skills; creation and implementation of scheduling systems for organization/time management; introduction to writing resources, soft due dates for writing assignments, and improvement in social skills were achieved by joining clubs, attending mentoring/mentee social games, and engaging in reciprocal conversation with mentor. Therefore, the

Skills for Success program exemplifies the benefits of an occupationally relevant, client-centered intervention to address and improve skills needed to be successful in college and beyond.

Hannah Bibeault, Carly Burnup, Lyndsey Fraser, Frances Sweeney, Michelle Vargas

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Victoria Schindler and Dr. Rebecca Mannel

The Effectiveness of Mental Health Experiences for MSOT Students on Attitudes and Comfortability in the Mental Health Population

The roots of occupational therapy date back to the early 20th century emphasizing the need for deinstitutionalization of individuals suffering from mental illness (Castaneda, Olson, & Radley, 2013). More than a century later, the importance of mental health still remains a profound topic of education among graduate level occupational therapy programs. Developing students' attitudes and comfortability with this population is valuable for ensuring quality client-centered care. As holistic clinicians, our role in mental health involves developing roles, routines, and habits as well as adaptive coping strategies for optimal occupational performance.

Prior to starting a 2-½ entry level master's program (MSOT), 30 students from Stockton University with diverse undergraduate degrees had a variety of experiences interacting with the mental health population. The purpose of this study was to evaluate Stockton MSOT students' attitudes and comfortability with the mental health population pre and post clinical mental health experiences. Using a mixed-methods design, students rated their comfortability at the start of their program and in their final semester using the Opening Minds Scale for Health Care Providers and the OT Student Comfort with the Mental Health Population Scale. Through engagement at an adult day program and mentoring in supported education, students were able to positively influence their attitudes and comfortability over the course of a four semester didactic program.

Katie Coiro, Michelle Guidice, Alondra Guzman, Devin Pino, Alexa Pritchard

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Victoria Schindler and Dr. Rebecca Mannel

An Analysis of the Skills and Attitudes of Stockton University MSOT Student's Using the Development of Competencies for Global Engagement Scale.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the Development of Competencies for Global Engagement scale's ability to determine the skills and attitudes of Stockton University Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT) Students towards Colombian culture. The sample included voluntary participation of 15 MSOT students from Stockton University. Information was obtained using the skills and attitudes section of the Development of Competencies for Global Engagement quantitative self-report questionnaire. Information for thoughts, concerns, and anticipated experiences were found utilizing a two question, open-ended qualitative survey. Our study concluded participants self-identified as having basic skills to communicate effectively to individuals from Colombia and above average in attitudes towards

willingness to promote social justice and well-being abroad. All MSOT students stated that they were excited for their study abroad experience and were only concerned with a language barrier and possibly offending individuals of other cultures. All MSOT students believed traveling to Colombia would positively impact their future careers of occupational therapist and result in increased cultural competency. The original study was to include a study abroad trip that was cancelled due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this, the limitations of the study include the history effect, voluntary participation of the sample, and decreased generalizability.

Lyndsey Fraser

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Kimberly Furphy

Teaching Collaborative Transition Services via an Interprofessional Discharge Planning Meeting Simulation

Interprofessional education (IPE) experiences offer unique benefits for pre-professional students across multiple disciplines. Due to the complexity of discharge planning, IPE experiences may augment professional confidence and competency in addition to augmenting understanding of discipline-specific roles. Entry-level students in occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and social work (SW) commonly learn discharge planning processes passively within individualized disciplines. The Interprofessional Education Collaborative's Core Competencies emphasizes the integration of IPE during coursework to augment interprofessional (IP) learning (Interprofessional Education Collaborative, 2016). Furthermore, case studies offer a valuable learning experience by moving passive activities into hands-on approaches for students.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate OT, PT, and SW students' perceptions of their abilities to function as members of a healthcare team before and after an IPE simulation (IPE-SIM) for discharge planning. Faculty collaborated to develop a problem-based one-time IPE-SIM discharge planning meeting based on a de-identified, real-life case study. During the one-hour IPE-SIM, IP student teams created comprehensive discharge plans based on a series of questions.

Faculty-created non-standardized Likert scale pretests, posttests, and reflections were administered to all students to evaluate student confidence with discharge planning. Results indicated a significant improvement in confidence pre- to posttest for all three disciplines, with the greatest increase for SW. Students also reported that the IPE-SIM offered a valuable learning experience, promoted real-life application of classroom skills, and improved collaboration skills with other disciplines. Such results suggest that an IPE-SIM may be beneficial for preparing students for discharge planning at employment.

Madeleine Brownsey, Laura Eguia, Emily Koop, Alyssa Long, and Danielle Wilson

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Victoria Schindler and Dr. Rebecca Mannel

The Impact of a Learning Abroad trip to Colombia, S.A. on the Cultural Competence of Occupational

Therapy Students

This study initially aimed to investigate the impact of a Learning Abroad trip to Colombia, South America on the cultural competence of occupational therapy students. Originally, this study was a pre-test post-test design, but due to unforeseen circumstances of COVID-19, the trip was postponed, and therefore post-test data was unable to be obtained. Pre-test data was collected and analyzed, and a critical analysis of the assessment used to measure cultural competency, the Cultural Competence Self Assessment Checklist, was performed in place of post-test data. This self-assessment evaluated individuals in the areas of cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, and cultural skills. Upon analysis of the pre-test data, it was determined that this assessment tool was not a valid measure of this group's cultural competence due to the nature of the questions evaluating one's opinion and respect for various cultures rather than assessing one's level of cultural competence. For future research, an alternate scale of cultural competence is recommended.

Terence Marron, Erica Tenpenny, Katelyn Earles, Jessica Checinski, and Samantha Pellecchia

Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Advisor: Dr. Victoria Schindler and Dr. Rebecca Mannel

The Efficacy of the Skills for Success Program in the Acquisition of Interpersonal Behaviors and Task Skills for Students with a DSM 5 Diagnosis

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy of a supplemental support program for students with a DSM-5 diagnosis in the acquisition of task and interpersonal behavior skills.

Research question: The research question posed in this study was, "Does the Skills for Success program improve the task and interpersonal behavior skills in students enrolled in the program." Our hypothesis is that the program does in fact, improve task and interpersonal skills.

Methods: The design of this study was pre-experimental. 12 students were enrolled in the program. Participants were chosen through convenience sampling at Stockton University in the Fall 2019 semester. Participants volunteered to enter the program and were interviewed prior to admission. Eligibility criteria included a DSM-5 diagnosis and current enrollment at Stockton University.

Results: The results of the analysis displayed that there was no statistical significance between pre and post test for either the interpersonal behaviors or task skills scales and it is therefore inconclusive to say that the Skills for Success program facilitated any improvements within the participants. As a result, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the results of the data displayed that the Skills for Success program did not necessarily improve participant's interpersonal behavior or task skills. Further research should be conducted and take into account the following scenarios. Providing the task and interpersonal scales pre-test at a date that is later in the semester so that the mentors have a better rapport and understanding of their mentees behavior and work methods.

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