The Method behind the Madness:
Embracing Constructivism in Making a Documentary Video

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview and summary of the conceptual framework, process, and outcomes in making a documentary video using constructivist instruction in an undergraduate educational psychology course. Thirty-eight students in seven groups created seven documentary videos examining perspectives from students, teachers, and parents about underachieving adolescents. Clips from all seven were edited and synthesized to create one final film that was presented and well-received by the requesting High School and the surrounding community. This paper details both quantitative and qualitative analyses, including student surveys with likert-scale, true false and constructed-response questions. The results are positive and encouraging, and showcase constructivism as an effective, meaningful pedagogy for teacher education.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview and summary of the conceptual framework, process, and outcomes in making a documentary video using constructivist instruction with an undergraduate educational psychology course. Thirty-eight students in seven groups created seven documentary videos examining perspectives from students, teachers, and parents of underachieving adolescents. Clips from all seven were edited and synthesized to create one final film that was presented and well-received by the requesting high school, the community, and eventually cable television network.

"Come to the edge," he said.

They said, "We are afraid."

"Come to the edge," he said.

He pushed them.

And they flew.

~Apollinaire

One of the most difficult challenges professors face is not how to teach basic technology, but rather how to use basic technology to create meaningful learning experiences for students. Almost every college student comes to class virtually armed with exceptional skills in texting, e-mailing, and instant messaging. But how often do these young technogeeks use their craft to empower their learning? Better yet, how often do you suppose that savvy energy is harnessed and infused to create active experimentation and innovation?

Another challenge with which professors struggle is facilitating the development of thoughtful, critical thinking skills. At no other time in history have youth been privy to round-the-clock, hand-held internet access, allowing them behind-the-scene glimpses into celebrities' lives, "Reality" hoaxes, and live play- by- play webcamming and/or videostreaming into people's lives. This opportunity to explore alternative meanings and question truths behind images and messages requires students to decipher content and recognize bias on a daily, if not continual basis. So, the question that comes to mind is*: If students are already expending such an exorbitant amount of energy keeping up with their technogeek "Joneses," how can educators tap into that energy and turn it into meaningful, critical learning?*

And so it began. A local high school's *School-Family-Community Partnership* wanted expertise on the topic of underachievement. As the notion of motivation (and lack thereof) is one of the basic topics of educational psychology, a nearby university was asked to assist. The group wanted to put together an informational presentation for the community in about eight weeks' time. Specifically, they wanted 1. preventative measures, 2. signs to look for in students, and 3. "fix-its" for parents. I decided this was an opportunity to pounce on students' technology skills and guide them in a direction of a topic I knew well. The university's Educational Psychology students would make a documentary using constructivist principles.

On the first day of the spring semester, the syllabus was distributed as usual. Basic course objectives were covered and finally the time came to discuss this new assignment: Making a Documentary Video on Underachievement (Appendix D). As the undergraduates reviewed all the details which include carefully placed deadlines and clear expectations, the overachievers hurriedly raced to the all-important "How Your Grade Is Calculated" section of the syllabus. Half of them stared like deer in headlights and half of them became excited, ready to assign themselves jobs. They were slyly texting their friends and plotting scams to place themselves into groups. It was working. They were making a documentary video. It was time to talk constructivism.

Perspective/ Theoretical Framework

Constructivism is a theory of cognitive growth and life-long development built on a philosophy of pragmatism (Dewey, 1916). In the context of higher or formal education, frequently it is used as a pedagogical label for activities that include inquiry, problem-solving, exploration and hands-on/ minds on learning (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992). In the literature, it has been argued that it is the opposite (if not the antithesis) of direct instruction, where students are told specifically what to do or learn. Constructivism is a broad vision of learning. It is more than an approach to instruction. It is the notion that students enable their abilities to create new knowledge to continue to grow after they've left their professor's guidance and structure in a college setting. As Dewey (1916) stated, "the aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education…the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth." (p.117) Hence, a constructivist –tailored assignment (such as the making of a documentary video on underachievement) has the potential to examine students' abilities and motivations to construct new knowledge, particularly students in a teacher preparation program. In essence, for the purpose of the course the assignment was an assessment of the students' learning on the topic of motivation and/ or underachievement as it related to the course, the assignment, and to the students ability to contribute to group work.

3

By spring-boarding a discussion on metacognition, students honed their focus to how they learn, what motivated them, and how they could capture their facts and turn them into a production. Ironically, given the topic assigned (underachievement), several students recognized familiar patterns of behavior (or misbehavior) and offered more personal insight to the student characters' plight than others (those of the teacher or parent). In fact, it became a common in-class joke to hear about their "lack of motivation" and how that came to be. On one occasion, a student threw out the "e" word - epistemology. Evidence of transfer such as this supports the notion (like Swartz, *et. al.,* 2009) that constructivist assignments and assessments can and do facilitate the development of continued learning by identifying and connecting to the elements of learning.

It also became evident how important it is to be clear regarding outcome measures when evaluating constructivist instruction and assignments. Students and the instructor co-created clear, tangible rubrics before much of the learning took place. They needed project objectives with purpose, guidelines for the project's timeline and content appropriateness, and legal requirements concerning parental consent for the interviewing and videotaping of children. It also became clear that the students' motivation must be engaged and sustained in order to ensure high levels of participation for this project, which hopefully demonstrated the importance of motivation for lifelong achievement and learning (Kuhn, 2007). Some students were excited to simply create. Some took advantage of the opportunity to be heard. Some valued the group work and the camaraderie of other students. Some wanted to be the best in the class. Some were happy to have an excuse to spend hours on YouTube and to text friends under the guise of "investigating." Like typical college students, this group varied greatly in their motivation.

Method

The assignment was clear with a simple framework: first, students were to find and review two empirical articles related to their new found perspective as a result of

being assigned the role of student, teacher, or parent, and share them with their group. Second, students were to respond to specific questions from expert perspectives (Appendix A) as a result of their findings with real people they had contacted via Internet, texting, e-mail, or interviewing in the community. Third, they were to create a video documentary focusing on three pieces: definition and characteristics of underachievement; causes of underachievement; and strategies to help underachieving students. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Elements of the Students' Documentary Videos
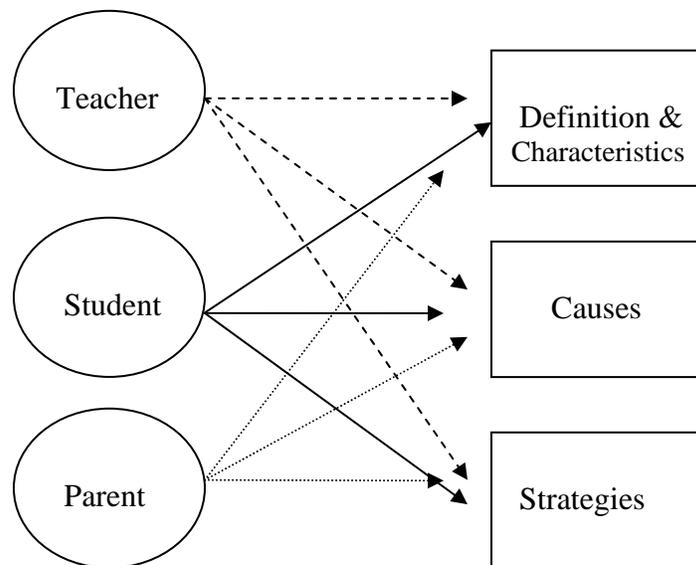
The students were to create and abide by a particular timeline agreed to by the group, and to share their finished product in-class in six weeks time. The group with the chosen documentary (voted by the class, the professor, and an administrator from the requesting high school) would escape the dreaded final exam. Finally, the documentary would be shown to the public as presented by the *School-Family-Community Partnership.* So, not only was there an individual grade, but a group grade, and the final grade for the deliverable - the DVD. It was a smorgasbord of incentives designed to entice and persist throughout the project until they had all reached their goal. One way or another, the students were hooked and they were creating their own learning.

5

While some students are more intrinsically interested in learning, others are more interested in competing and outperforming their peers (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). Achievement goal theory provides one way of perceiving motivation in instruction. Goal theory centers around the idea that the purposes students bring to learning critically relate to their behaviors and cognitions (Ames, 1992). From the first day of this documentary assignment, these notions became visible and obvious. Each group was to have five members, and students were told to sign up for a specific job: one expert representing the student perspective, one expert representing the parent perspective, one representing the teacher perspectives; a camera/recording person; and a supervisor for the group. As the sign-up sheet was passed around the room, one could feel the tension rise. Some students were panicking they wouldn't be with their friends. Some were worried they'd be stuck with all the work. Some were sickened at the thought that their grade depended on the fate of the group. Slowly but surely, they began to recognize their own sense of motivation to get the job done. The learned information that began as theory was now taking on real life with real consequences and opportunities. Motivation, fear, and underachievement were becoming a reality as I guided the discussion dropping subtle hints and teasing those already threatening procrastination. By the end of the lesson, they were released to battle over the last few blank jobs available.

It was a perfect frenzy: they had been physically given a real-life example on motivation, in-class, in real time, and they recognized it. Some snickered and grinned as they collected their belongings. Some texted smiley faces to their friends and gave each other the thumbs up sign as they readied themselves to go. Some dared to bribe their new friends for trades. They all shuffled out of the room headed to the library to investigate empirical articles to support their newly constructed knowledge and beliefs on why students may behave they way they do. Having been given the theory in such a context the students had to accept, internalize and make meaningful in such a short period of time was just the right amount of kindling needed for their own motivation to

ignite. Not only were they curious, but markedly captivated because they now had a vested interest in the project outcome.

Individual differences and the resulting dynamics that arose mattered in numerous ways. Both Bandura (1997) and Kuhn (2007) stress the reciprocal relationship between the motivation-related beliefs students bring to class, the learning itself, and the learning behaviors in which the students engage. Maroulis & Gomez (2008) agree that social networks within and across a class even have an impact on learning. With this in mind, careful attention to groups and jobs within groups was appropriate and well-deserved. With the class input, a group work rubric was created so that everyone understood the goals and outcomes (see Appendix B).

At mid-project time, students had the opportunity to grade themselves and each other in their respective groups. By reviewing and critiquing each other's work, students entertained others' perceptions of what the assignment meant to them. Categories included contributions, attitude, working with others, time-management, and problem solving. Self-scores were worth 10 points and their peers' average total for each student was worth 10 points, thus totaling a possible 20 points. This constituted 20% of the project grade. For the most part, nearly all students graded themselves and their group members very high. Those few with low scores met with the instructor and planned for improvement. Their excuses varied, but it's important to note that there were personal issues hindering their entire academic career, not just this project. For example, one student had difficulty speaking English and her group members unintentionally took over her responsibilities rather than work with her. As the instructor, I empathized with the time element and urgency of the group, but also recognized the necessity of whole group inclusion. With minimal guidance, the group reconvened, reworked their roles, and was satisfied once everyone's strengths were included and allowed.

At that time, the Documentary Presentation Rubric was distributed (see Appendix C). It originally contained five categories: Point of View/ Purpose; Accuracy of Facts; Research; Group Professionalism; and Visuals/ Creativity. After careful deliberation,

the class deemed it inappropriate to include Group Professionalism, as that was covered in the other rubric; so that category was eliminated. Instead of a total of 20 points on this rubric, it was now 16. So, assignment number four was to watch each group's final product and place an X in each category to grade up to a total of 16 points for each group, sixteen percent toward the score of the project.

The Day of Judgment finally came. It was exciting and the room smelled of coffee and doughnuts brought in for the special occasion. Students smiled, pointed at the treats and labeled them as "extrinsic motivation" as they loaded their plates with snacks. Another mentioned "operant conditioning." These off-handed references reinforce the internal argument that constructivist instruction may be the pole opposite of inert knowledge. These vocabulary words and theories were not inert; they were far from placed on a shelf in the students' brains, waiting specifically for a quiz or a direct prompt. These words weren't gathering dust; they had active, applied meaning. Students were anxiously preparing their media, arguing who should get to present first. The lights went out and the videos began. They were recognizable examples of active, social and creative learning - just what the professor was hoping to see.

These obvious, meaningful connections and references also parallel a study from the Harvard Family Research Project (2004). The article described the EVC (Educational Video Center's) documentary workshop as a successful program that teaches skills to youth in New York City in an effort to encourage civic engagement. Its success derives from empowering youth by giving them video technology and teaching them to use the visual, sound, and text languages of media to document their world. Most importantly, they learn to take a critical, questioning approach to the taken-for-granted problems in their communities and engage with individuals to improve them. In other words, learning becomes fun.   It's active and energizing, and it yields deeper understanding (Schwartz, *et. al.*, 2005). And such it was with these students' comments that day.

8

Results

Philosopher D.C. Phillips (1995) has identified three distinct roles in constructivism, and (like Perkins, 1999), he refers to them as the active learner, the social learner, and the creative learner. Instead of just listening, reading and working through routine exercises, active learners discuss, hypothesize, investigate, and in this case, become an expert on a particular viewpoint of a common theme. Social learners construct knowledge in a highly social environment, often in dialogue with others. And creative learners acquire understanding as it is created or recreated. The professor's job was to guide the students to rediscover theories or perspectives on motivation to enable them to reconstruct strong understandings of why and how people learn the way that they do.

The instructor conducted a survey of all 38 students at the end of the course to ascertain the impact of the strategies employed throughout the course on student learning and student attitudes. The survey and its results are presented in full in Appendix E. The overall outcomes of the survey indicate that this video documentary project engaged all three of the roles suggested by Phillips, and the project can be considered a success. In fact, in the end, it was unanimously decided by the class to edit and highlight pieces of all seven documentaries to create the final product. All of the videos were very good, and each provided at least one exceptional piece to contribute to the final product.

The literature warns however that it is not always possible to engage active, social, and creative learners fully. As Perkins (1992) has pointed out, constructivist learning experiences can exert high cognitive demands on learners, and not all students respond well to the challenge. The end-of-course survey indicates that this was the case for one student's overall opinion of the course, and although this single dissenting perception comprised only 3% of the students, it confirms Perkins' point. In this specific case, I spoke to this international student, and she relayed that this method of learning was very different than what she was accustomed to and made her uncomfortable. She

preferred lecture- based instruction and individual assessment, and was very leery of the social networking required for this project.

In the **Techniques of Instruction** section of the survey, 95% of the students rated simulations or interviews and movies/ documentary projects to be very helpful, 74% rated other constructivist approaches as very helpful, and 84% rated in-class group work as very helpful. None of the students rated any of these strategies as "not helpful." These findings reflect highly positive attitudes toward the use of student-centered, hands-on, project-based learning strategies for educational psychology, which in turn supports the logic in literature that constructivist instruction can and should be applied in teacher preparatory programs.

Unanimously, all 38 students (100%) agreed that they perceive a correlation between the techniques they believe to be helpful as also more fun and more motivating. This is also evidenced in the qualitative responses where students enthusiastically advised the instructor to keep up the hands-on and minds-on projects, simulations, and other constructivist approaches.

All but one student thought these techniques are useful to college students as well as K-12 students (97%). Interestingly, while this one participant was consistent with more negative responses throughout the survey, s/he did not offer any suggestions for future techniques or other suggestions for teaching the course in the narrative prompt.

In the **Methods of Assessment** section of the survey, 66% viewed the documentary project as very helpful, 21% somewhat helpful, and 13% not helpful.

When asked ***"Do you like the multiple opportunities to earn your grade?"*** respondents were unanimous in answering "Yes." Students will apparently rise to a challenge with more stamina and cooperation if given a multitude of opportunities to show their growth. In this educational psychology class, there were twenty-two opportunities for grades.

When asked how **This Course Compared to Most**, 79% indicated that this professor taught with "much more" ***simulations*** and 63% "much more" ***constructive approaches***, while 47% indicated "much more" with regard to ***In-class group work*** and 39% with "much more" to

open discussion with classmates. In addition, 100% of the students answered that they *felt more likely to use these techniques in their future classroom/ profession as a result of their personal experience learning with them*.   This is good news. Students came out of their comfort zones, worked together to create something meaningful to the community and were proud sharing it. Having accomplished that, they were not only prepared to accept similar future projects, but lead their own classrooms someday as well.

As far as **Student Characteristics** were concerned in the survey, all but one student (97%) *felt comfortable presenting or expressing his/her thoughts in class; felt engaged in class- felt comfortable; felt welcome to ask the professor questions regarding the course content;* and *felt the professor has high expectations for students' abilities.* It is likely that the outlier in this case was a foreign student whose experience and schema for college-level instruction may have been significantly different from the other students.

Influences posed another extremely positive result with 100% reporting that they *would refer the class or the projects to a friend to learn educational psychology.* All but one student claimed s/he *felt better about skills in critical thinking and problem-solving issues regarding children's development*; and *felt better about skills in awareness of media/ marketing biases and influences & their effects on kids.* 89% of the class *felt better about skills in multicultural/ inclusive teaching and diversity/ disability/ awareness.*

Conclusions

Understandably, these results have limitations. A larger number of students likely could yield better insight into students' perceptions of the course. It will be interesting to compare this one semester's class feedback regarding learning with that of previous and post semester's feedback. Also, one must keep in mind that this course is consistently taught with constructivist teaching, and the documentary was just one piece of the semester. The results do show hope for the argument that constructivism can and does serve as an effective methodology in teaching educational psychology. Perhaps this paper can serve as a

contribution to the literature wherein Collins (1991) proposed that learning environments should have ways to incorporate demonstrations on how to solve problems. This professor has come to agree with Collins that textbooks usually provide worked-out solutions that fail to show the false starts and dead end that real-world problem solving entails. By constructing problems such as making a documentary, learners can benefit by "seeing" the process at work.

As Perkins (1999) points out, the learners become active in problem-solving with knowledge that makes connections to their world. They confront discrepancies in their initial theories or logical discrepancies and extend their thinking (Clement, 1993). The students in this educational psychology course utilized their basic technology skills while engaging with active, social and creative learning. They learned with meaning and reported that they will use these skills in their own classrooms someday, as a result of constructing these experiences.

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Appendix A

Ed Psych Underachievement Project Assignment #2

Ok, you've had just over three weeks to get into the project, and you've read and contributed ideas from two articles. You've met with your group and shared some insight on your expert position (student, parent, or teacher). Now it's time to share some of your expert findings on the following questions.

- This assignment is worth 20 points and due Feb 10th, (Tuesday).
- Be neat, clear and concise. 2 page minimum.

Student Expert- please respond as your student would to:
1. How does it feel to be an underachiever? (fine, frustrating, cool)
2. What is the one thing that you wish your parents would know about you as a student and your abilities?
3. What is one thing that you wish your teachers knew about you as a student and your abilities?
4. If you could snap your fingers and change your situation, would you? What would you change? (motivation, ease in studying, more time, better teachers)

Parent Expert- please respond as your parent would to:
1. How does it feel to have an underachieving student?
2. What is the one thing that you wish your child would know about your feelings toward their underachievement?
3. What is the hardest part about trying to help your underachieving student succeed?
4. If you could snap your fingers and change your child's situation, would you? What would you change? (motivation, ease in studying, more study time, better teachers)

Teacher Expert— please respond as your teacher would to:
1. How does it feel to have an underachieving student in class?
2. What is the one thing that you wish your student would know about you as a teacher and your responsibilities?
3. What is one thing that you wish your student's parents knew about you as a teacher and your responsibilities?
4. If you could snap your fingers and change your student's situation, would you? What would you change? (motivation, ease in studying, more study time, more helpful/ concerned parents)

Supervisor— Provide a list/description of what you have found to be **five recurring myths** on why students underachieve. Cite your resources APA style (use the articles your group members shared with you for the last assignment and/ or others). You might choose to collaborate with the videographer on this.

Videographer—Provide a list/ description of what you have found to be **five practical strategies** parents and teachers can try to help their underachieving student. Cite your resources APA style (use the articles your group members shared with you for the last

assignment and/ or others). You might want to collaborate with the videographer on this.

Editors—
1. Provide a list of top five dos and don'ts when creating a documentary;
2. Describe how long a typical public informational piece should be (appropriate for this venue); how much is edited out, attention span of audience, etc.
3. Discuss any issues that may occur regarding public showing and confidentiality;
4. Discuss any issues that may occur regarding ownership upon project completion;
5. Discuss any issues that may occur regarding copyright and how those are handled.
6. Please include resources- highlighted, but not necessarily cited in paper.

Appendix B

Underachievement Group Work Rubric

Spring 2009: Clarke

Student Name: _____

| CATEGORY	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt
Contributions	Routinely provides useful ideas when participating in the group and in classroom discussion. A definite leader who contributes regularly	Usually provides useful ideas when participating in the group and in classroom discussion. A strong group member who tries hard!	Sometimes provides useful ideas when participating in the group and in classroom discussion. Satisfactory member- does required	Rarely provides useful ideas when participating in the group and in classroom discussion. May refuse to participate.
Attitude	Never is publicly critical of the project or the work of others. Always has a positive attitude about the task(s).	Rarely is publicly critical of the project or the work of others. Often has a positive attitude about the task(s).	Occasionally is publicly critical of the project or the work of other members of the group. Usually has a positive attitude about the task(s).	Often is publicly critical of the project or the work of other members of the group. Often has a negative attitude about the task(s).
Working with Others	Almost always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Tries to keep people working well together.	Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Does not cause "waves" in the group.	Often listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others, but sometimes is not a good team member.	Rarely listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Often is not a good team player.
Time-management	Routinely uses time well throughout the project to ensure things get done on time. Group does not have to adjust deadlines or work responsibilities	Usually uses time well during project, but may have procrastinated on one thing. Group does not have to adjust deadlines or work responsibilities	Tends to procrastinate, but always gets things done by the deadlines. Group does not have to adjust deadlines or work responsibilities	Rarely gets things done by deadlines AND group has to adjust deadlines/ work responsibilities b/c of person's inadequate time mangmt
Problem-solving	Actively looks for and suggests solutions to problems.	Refines solutions suggested by others.	Does not suggest or refine solutions, but is willing to try out solutions suggested by others.	Does not try to solve problems or help others solve problems. Lets others do the work.

Total: of 20 pts

Appendix C

Underachievement Documentary Presentation Rubric

Spring 2009:
Clarke

Student Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt
Point of View - Purpose	Establishes a purpose at the beginning and maintains that focus throughout! Cohesive documentary.	Establishes a purpose at the beginning, but occasionally wanders from that focus.	The purpose is somewhat clear but many aspects of the documentary seem only slightly related.	It was difficult to figure out the purpose of the documentary.
Accuracy of Facts	All supportive facts are reported accurately (referenced appropriately & professionally)	Almost all facts are reported accurately (referenced appropriately & professionally)	One fact is reported accurately (referenced appropriately & professionally)	No facts are reported accurately OR no facts were reported appropriately & professionally
Research	Group researched the subject and integrated 3 or more "causes & strategies" from their research into their documentary.	Group researched the subject and integrated 2 "causes & strategies" from their research into their documentary.	Group researched the subject and integrated 1 "causes & strategies" from their research into their documentary.	Either no research was done or it was not clear that the group used it in the documentary.
Visuals/ Creativity	Visuals/ creativity include both informative & meaningful material and are clearly related to the topic being presented.	Visuals/ creativity include either informative or meaningful material and are clearly related to the topic being presented.	Visuals/creativity lack information and meaning and are only somewhat related to the topic being presented.	Visuals/ creativity are not related to the topic being presented.

Total: of 16 pts
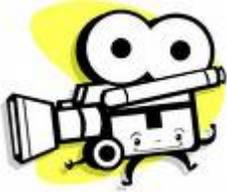
Appendix D

Underachievement Video/ DVD Interview Project
EDU 210/Psy 241
Spring 2009

Objectives/ Purpose:
Students during and completion of this assignment will:

1. demonstrate an understanding of psychological, cognitive, behavioral and social psychological theories covered in Clarke's Educational Psychology class.

2. apply different psychological theories to specific teaching or social situations via questions and/or suggestions for identifying barriers in achievement and/or motivation.

3. recognize and analyze age-level and developmental characteristics with special emphasis on the behavioral, emotional, physical, social and cognitive components of underachievement.

4. develop good questions and construct simulation experiences for each of the three dimensions of the triad relationship- underachieving student, parent, and teacher.

5. question techniques of classroom management and explore the impact of individual differences, group differences, gender and other relevant characteristics that influence learning (or lack thereof) and achievement.

6. suggest strategies to plan, design, and incorporate multiple modalities/ intelligences into a curriculum to accommodate diverse learners/ underachieving students.

7. demonstrate skill in use of relevant multimedia technology and educational internet resources.

8. collaborate with local school and parent community in order to assist in creating a community of learners.

Guidelines: Students will be assigned to groups of five. The following jobs will be distributed among each student in the group:

1. Underachieving student expert

2. Parent of underachieving student expert

3. Teacher of underachieving student expert

The above three need to become experts in their area. Take notes, find someone to interview, ask probing questions and construct ideas for positive change (see objectives). Write up your findings and turn them in. Meet as a group and discuss how

to put your efforts together to create a meaningful, moving interview/ documentary/ reflection/ inside scoop of the triad (student, parent, and teacher). If you decide to use real folks telling real stories (sharing their perspectives of what it feels to be the underachieving student, etc), work with the other experts to collaborate ideas and distribute all three perspectives evenly.

> 4. Videorecorder/ Producer - Your job is to videotape the footage and consult with the group to create an end product. You will need a digital camcorder, a tripod, and a car to get around.

> 5. Group supervisor - Your job is to make sure everyone is motivated and doing their job. You will collect the experts' info/ideas, analyze it for parallels/ cohesiveness, and guide the group through to completion. You will arrange group meetings, remind members to come and participate and keep a journal of progress. If necessary, you will inform Dr. Clarke of any questions, concerns, etc.

Each group member will be grading each other's contribution to the end product. Each group member will turn in progress reports when asked by Dr. Clarke, as well as other materials making up the grade to ensure that everyone is completing their share. Specific rubrics will be distributed at the appropriate time.

Requirements: In addition to progress reports and a few other progressive, benchmark assignments (those that encourage assimilation of theory to actual practice), the end product is due on February 19th. The videos will be shared in class and voted on for the best quality, appropriateness and overall fit for the diversity evening at NCHS. Judges will include students, faculty, and the director of the program at NCHS. The group who scores the best will be exempt from the final exam. In addition, the best DVD will be presented at the NCHS (Naperville Central High School) Diversity event on March 10th. If you are planning on videotaping actual students, parents, and teachers revealing their true stories, make sure your group supervisor turns in a signed permission slip with the DVD. These will be made available from Dr. Clarke upon request.

Special Note: Please keep in mind your audience for this movie/ documentary/ interview, etc will be students, parents and teachers in Districts 203 and 204. You must be professional, clear, and guided by positive energy to create understanding, meaning, and (hopefully) enlightenment/ change. Consider this your opportunity to make a difference. Be careful not to intentionally offend anyone, as this arena is one that supports diversity. The idea here is to have parents and teachers walk away thinking "that could have been my kid," or "I wonder if my student feels that frustrated, lonely, etc." or even a student walk away feeling finally understood. Your job is to get at the reality of those involved- the underachieving student, the parent, and the teacher. I believe once you get started on this project, you will find that all three perspectives are crucial to the success of the student, and at some point, each one feels isolated and unheard. This is your chance to give voice to those who suffer. **Make it meaningful.**

Appendix E

Ed Psych Survey on Learning (with Results)

Techniques of Instruction: What techniques did you *find helpful in learning* the content for this course? (please check one box per technique)

	Not Helpful	**Somewhat Helpful**	**Very Helpful**
In-class group work (brainteasers, etc.)	0	16%	84%
Simulations (disability day, reinforcement/ punishment exercise) or interviews	0	5%	95%
Constructive approaches (multiple intelligence group lessons)	0	26%	74%
Movies/ doc project to reinforce ideas and offer different viewpoints on topics	0	5%	95%

- Do you believe there is a correlation between the techniques you believe as helpful also are more fun and more motivating?
  Yes: 100%   No:
- Do you believe these techniques are useful to college students as well as k-12 students?
  Yes: 97%   No: 3%*
  (* note: 3% equals one student of the thirty-eight students in the course)

Methods of Assessment:
How did each *method of assessment* help you learn the material best?

	None	**Somewhat**	**Very well**
The documentary project	13%	21%	66%

- Do you like the multiple opportunities to earn your grade?
  Yes: 100%   No: 0
- Do you believe you would have kept up with the content if there were no quizzes?
  Yes: 34%   No: 66

Student Characteristics: Please rate how you feel *in general regarding this course:*

	True	**False**
I feel I was comfortable presenting or expressing my thoughts in this class	97%	3%
I felt engaged in class: Was willing to participate	100%	
I felt engaged in class: Found highlighting/ note taking easy	95%	5%
I felt engaged in class: Found active listening easy	95%	5%
I felt engaged in class: Came to class regularly for participation points	84%	16%
I felt engaged in class: Felt comfortable	97%	3%
I felt the professor was sincere and genuine in helping students learn	100%	
I did not struggle with complicated ideas or theories	87%	13%

I felt welcome to ask the professor questions regarding course content or related topics	97%	3%
I felt the professor was sincere and genuine in helping students learn	100%	
There is a connection between effort and success in this class	92%	8%
I consider this class worthwhile	100%	
I found the instructor to be motivating and enthusiastic about ed psych	100%	

Influences:
As a result of this class, *I feel better about my skills in*

	True	False
Critical thinking and problem-solving issues regarding children's development	97%	3%
I would refer this class or the projects to a friend to learn ed psych	100%	
Multicultural/ inclusive teaching and diversity/disability/ awareness	89%	11%

This Course Compared To Most:
How would you *rate this course to other courses* in the amount of:

	Less	Same	More	Much More
Simulations (disability day, reinforcement/ punishment exercise)	0	0	21%	79%
Constructive approaches (multiple intelligence group lessons)	0	3%	34%	63%
Open discussion with classmates	8%	32%	21%	39%

- Do you feel more likely to use these techniques in your future classroom/ profession as a result of your personal experience learning with them?
  Yes: 100%   No: 0

Several qualitative survey responses provide additional insight:

Question: What technique(s) would you add to this course?

The majority of these responses were to add nothing, and change nothing. Typical responses were that the course was "*fun*," "*none- perfect as is*," "*I really enjoyed this class*," "*this is the best I've taken at this university*," "*I would not change a thing*," "*DON'T remove the hands-on days because these were the theories that stood out to me*," "*I think we covered everything really well*," "*the class was great as is*," "*you did a terrific job*," "*good balance of techniques- don't change anything*," "*wide variety*," and *"the class was amazing."*

The most rewarding response was this one: "*I feel the course material and assignments in the class did a very good job of preparing us for the work we have to come in preparing to be teachers. I would not change a thing."*

Question: Any other suggestions for teaching this course would include:

A favorite student reaction:
"*I felt the message learned from the documentary was very beneficial; however, in the end the documentary was a very large project. It was stressful because the hardest part was editing because we had to rely on other people to meet a very specific and urgent deadline therefore I was very uneasy having to rely on the schedules of others. In the end, I enjoyed watching everyone's documentary and learning the reality of underachievement in today's schools.*"

Two close runners-up:
"*The simulations and activities made the class enjoyable- not just lecture.*"

"*The techniques used in this course were helpful and it changed the way I look at certain things and it opened my eyes to teaching- I wasn't aware before.*"