

Case Based Learning: Approach to Teaching Online Advanced Practice Courses

A Roundtable Discussion
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Social Work Distance Education Conference
April 14, 2015

Defining Case Based Learning

What is a case?

- ▶ According to Shulman (1992), a set of events that unfolds over time.
- ▶ A detailed description of a person or group which produces rich qualitative information

What is case based learning?

- ▶ "An instructional method commonly used in teaching law, business, engineering, education, and medicine, but can be modified to most any curriculum" (Hong & Choy, 2007)
- ▶ Guided by cognitive, behavioral, and constructivist theories
- ▶ Case based learning uses situations to reflect realities that may be encountered by practitioners in the field.

How is case based learning used?

- ▶ Using the facts presented in the case, students engage in guided discussion through use of purposeful open ended questions (provided by the instructor or peers) related to the topic area being studied
- ▶ Students must conceptualize the significance of the information, interpret the information, create ideas, find solutions, and identify the best way to implement the solutions
- ▶ By using this level of analysis, students start to understand the broader concepts as well as gain insight by providing evidence for their conclusions

What the literature says

- ▶ Cases should be timely, based on real life situations, and offer the opportunity to develop multiple perspectives
- ▶ Engaging students in case based learning allows them to gain skills to work in groups, apply theory to practice, critically assess and analyze information, and apply a planned change model
- ▶ Challenges students by simulating practice situations with diverse populations and in a variety of contexts (i.e. contextualizes knowledge)
- ▶ Enables students to "think like social workers"
- ▶ Case based learning is believed to be a useful strategy to develop critical thinking skills and prepare students to analyze problems in the real world
- ▶ Need more empirical literature specifically focused on social work

Our experiences using case based learning

- ▶ Concentration Advanced Practice with Individuals course
- ▶ Concentration Psychopathology course



Questions for Discussion

- ▶ Tell us your experiences with case based learning including
 - ▶ Benefits
 - ▶ Limitations
 - ▶ Student satisfaction
 - ▶ Demands on the instructor
- ▶ Talk about your experiences with teaching online social work practice courses
- ▶ What are your thoughts about the appropriateness of using case based learning in advanced level courses, especially in hybrid and online formats?



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