How to Use Web Videoconferencing to Teach Social Work Practice Skills

Dale Fitch

Michael Kaplan

University of Missouri

Overview

- Role plays have served an instrumental role in social work education by providing opportunities to acquire counseling skills

- This workshop will teach instructors how to use video conferencing tools to conduct role play exercises for students who, due to living in different locations, can only practice role plays online.

Learning Objectives

How to:

1. Use the Zoom video conferencing software

2. Uploading videos to YouTube

3. Link the videos to videoANT, a video annotation tool that instructors can use to provide feedback on skills acquired

4. Also "lessons learned" about how doing online role plays compares to classroom role plays

Background

- Acquiring and practicing interaction skills is a perceived challenge as the social work profession embraces online education

- Social work online education will continue to grow and develop, in large part, by the extent social work educators are successful in helping students acquire interaction skills

- Whether the interaction skill is as basic as engaging a client, or up to and through the ability to support a client in dealing with the ramifications of a traumatic event, all such capabilities hinge on our abilities as social work educators to provide a learning environment that is accessible and effective in acquiring interaction skills for online students

Technology solution needed to address feasibility, cost, and scalability

- Had to work across various hardware components, e.g., PCs, laptops, smartphones
- It needed to be accomplished at no- or low-cost
- It needed to be implementable in classes across the curriculum whether online or on campus
- Key in our formulation of the technology solution is that the technology needed to align with our profession's commitment to training students with face-to-face interactions whenever possible
  - One misconception with online education is that students do not get to interact with real people
  - Prior research likely contributes to this misconception, e.g., studies in which role plays were evaluated by listening to taped phone conversations (see, for example, (Rakovshik et al., 2013), or occurred through text-only discussion forums (Levine, 2013)
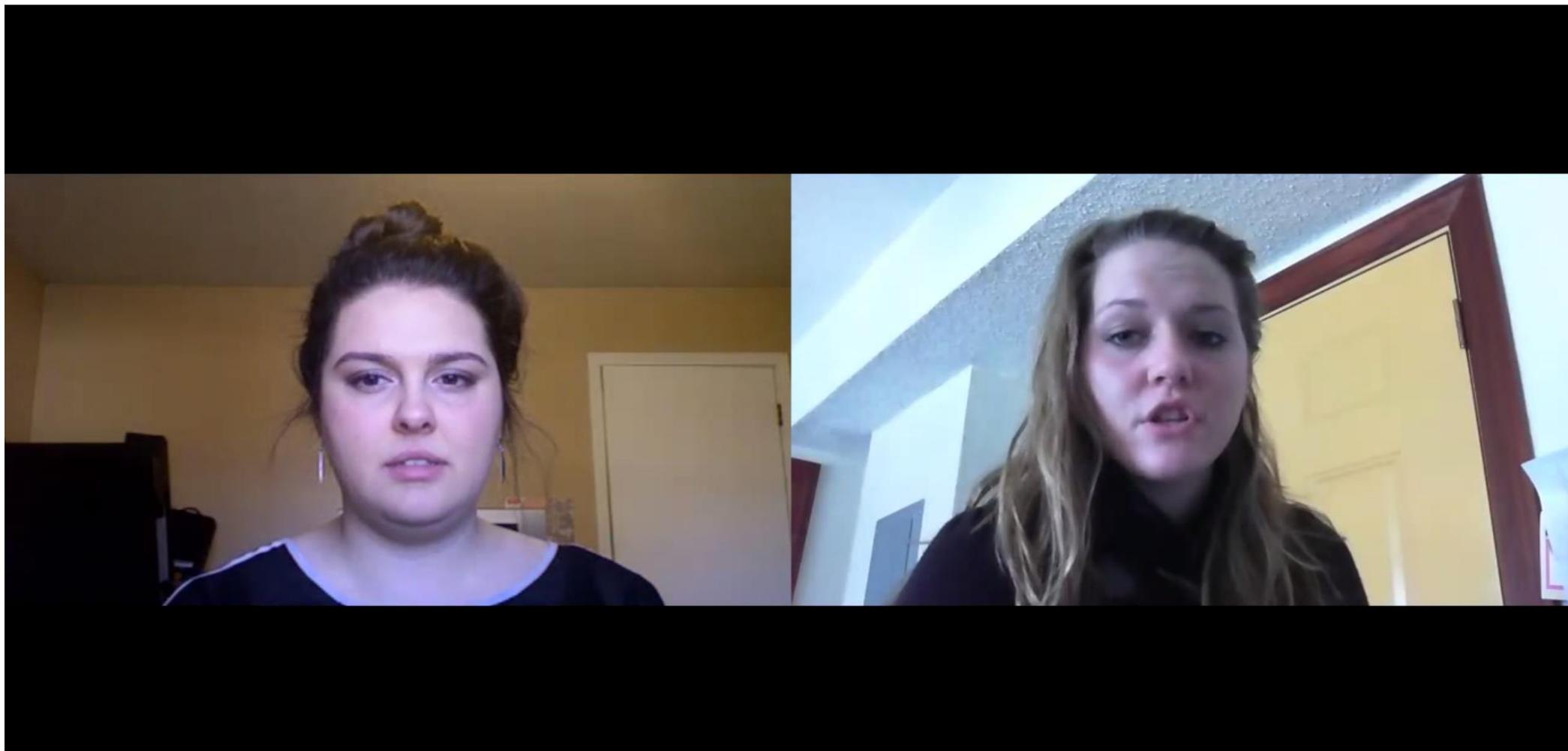
Prior Studies

@ MIZZOU

Findings fell within eight domains

- User interface
- Technical issues
- Costs
- Support needs
- Time and effort
- Skill acquisition
- Privacy issues
- Evidence for transfer of learning

User interface

Apps | BB | Email | Violin Tuner | CNN | Server 5: Off | Dropbox | Box | FB | G Bookmarks | G Scholar | KBIA | KBIA2 | MU Research | Trib | MU Libraries | myZou | myhr | VoiceMail | SI | ROBLOX | »

videoANT Annotation Editor

New ANT **+**   **&** Dale Fitch ▾

role play 3 strengths

0:12 Engagement   ▾

Good job acknowledging the client

& Dale Fitch   0 comments ▾   5/1/15 8:50am

0:45 Open ended question

Good use of open ended questioning here

& Brianna Ziegler   0 comments ▾   4/10/15 7:35pm

1:02 clarity

Good job repeating his answer back to him using different words to clarify meaning.

& Brianna Ziegler   0 comments ▾   4/10/15 7:36pm

1:32 Need to explore these topics

Lars has mentioned that his father died, and his brother moved into the house, but the social worker did not explore why these situations lead to Lars

Add an Annotation **+**

⏱ 0:01 / 10:09

Annotations ≡   Share ⬀   Embed </>   Export 🖹

Terms and Conditions | About VideoANT | Developer Feedback

Technical Issues

- Individuals with older laptops (6+ years) reported the technologies worked well

- Users with smartphones were also able to use Zoom with ease

- There were some occasional audio problems:
  1) Users needing to check their default microphone configurations
  2) Latency (the audio and video images were not in sync), but easily remedied by having the users wear headsets
  3) Other latency were associated with the time of day the role plays occurred with 7:00pm to 9:00pm being the most problematic
  4) Whether there was sufficient lighting on the participants contributed to latency

- **Most important to our project, even students living in rural areas with no or limited broadband access were able to use their smartphones and reported a high quality user experience with the technology**

Costs

- For Zoom and videoANT, the software costs were **0$**
- Zoom is free for up to 25 (50) participants
- Zoom is also a browser add-on so there is no software to manually install and no administrative privileges are needed to use it on university-owned equipment
- The videoANT software also had no cost since it is offered freely by the University of Minnesota.
- Paid versions of Zoom are available that can provide additional privacy controls
- The videoANT software, likewise, while still freely available, can be installed on a university's secure server for enhanced privacy protections

Support

- Started out with written directions – rarely read
- Once online tutorials were introduced, no technical issues arose

Time and Effort

- Several students reported they would not have been able to do the role play if not for online videoconferencing due to travel barriers and employment obligations:

"There might be a little less time involved as it was completed without having to travel to a mutual location. It was very convenient for a single mother, someone out of town, and one traveling out of town for other appointments to coordinate a time to complete the assignment."

- Similarly, a second student comments,

"After I get off work and drive an hour+ Columbia I don't feel like I can give the proper amount of attention to an assignment after class. This is a great tool to overcome that problem and still have an effective educational experience."

Privacy

- Students were instructed on how to change the default Privacy settings for YouTube from Public to Unlisted

- videoANT settings are Public, but videoANT is not indexed by any search engines and can only be accessed with the specific link

- Disclaimers:
  - "The following is a fictional role play - all names, places, and events are fabricated."
  - During the role play the social worker and client referred to each other with fictional names.
  - At the conclusion of the role play, the person playing the role of the social worker says: "The preceding was a fictional role play- all names, places, and events were fabricated."

Evidence for transfer of learning

- Very unexpected were the connections some students made from this project to the future of social work practice. As one student noted:

"What a great way to provide counseling to those in remote locations (servicemen and women overseas?)!"

Skill Acquisition

- Feedback was much more directed and time-stamped to specific instances
- Learning professional decorum with the online setting
- Students were less nervous and appeared better prepared
- The most unintended result of observing all of the role plays was the sheer amount of time it took (115 videos over 5 weeks in a 15 week semester)
- "I do think the students will leave with comparable skills. I actually believe that the practice session part of the class was strengthened due to my ability to view and offer direct feedback to every student on every session. When the students are splitting up and going into different rooms to practice, it's hard to know how much they're really getting out of it. Of course, the main drawback was the loss of sitting directly across from your client, being in their presence. The traditionalist in me considers this a drawback, but maybe practicing online therapy is actually a plus? If we're heading in this direction, then students will benefit from having practiced. For people like me, it's going to be on-the-job training!"

What the future might bring…

- Not only did the students in our pilot project point out the possible contribution online therapy might make for clients who cannot access services otherwise, randomized control trials from other fields show that online therapy has demonstrated efficacy for:

    a) Depression (Andersson et al., 2005; Andersson et al., 2013; Griffiths et al., 2012; Preschl, Maercker, & Wagner, 2011)
    b) Social phobias (Berger, Hohl, & Caspar, 2009)
    c) Anxiety (Ellis, Campbell, Sethi, & O'Dea, 2011; Hedman et al., 2014)
    d) Eating disorders (Heinicke, Paxton, McLean, & Wertheim, 2007)

Clips and Tutorials

- https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrLx7BqYnCdTRNeZfO7TMWGszxXgiODob
- Or
- http://bit.ly/1N4JgDk

Questions?

Dale Fitch, PhD, MSSW

Associate Professor

Associate Director, School of Social Work

fitchd@missouri.edu

Michael Kaplan, MSW, LCSW

Adjunct Clinical Instructor

kaplanm@missouri.edu

The **Secret** Code....

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