Offline Learning: Making space for group strategies

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Overview of Presentation

• Importance of Group work

• Recognizing the shift to online teaching

• Group work strategies to support learners

• Methods used to enhance learning in groups
Importance of Group Work in Social Work

- Group work is what we do

- Understanding and working with human behavior happens in groups

- Teaching students to work in groups must happen when they are practicing to be group members and group facilitators themselves
Recognizing the shift to Online Learning

- Students are now engaged in communicating and learning online
- Millennial students
  - Want to be a part of decision making
  - “any work handed in deserves a pass” (Hill, 2002, p.62)
  - “…has to be immediately relevant to be important” (Sheahan, 2005, p.12)
  - typically under-prepared and need specific directions
  - exposed to vast information but not experienced to explore subjects in depth (Strauss & Howe, 2000)
Methods use to support learning in groups online

- Assign support groups
- Devise group protocols
- Schedule private chat rooms
- Offer reading reviews with summaries
Assign Support Groups

- Assign students to groups
- Ask them to rotate leadership
- Ask them to meet weekly via chat/twitter/IM
  - When they meet, the leader should have an agenda, review upcoming course assignments, review due dates, and keep members accountable
- Ask them to assign a spokesperson
Develop Group Protocols

- Should 1st graded group assignment
  - Talk about one self, fears, expectations, and ambivalent feelings about working in groups
  - Identify group goals
  - Purpose and benefits of group
  - Rules/Consequences
  - Interactional Guidelines
  - When instructor will intervene

- Discuss the importance of this
Schedule Private Chat Rooms

- If your course structure allows:
  - Develop private chat rooms for each group
  - Offer instructor “office hours” in the chat room in the evenings around the time the groups meet online (8pm is good)
  - Create a group email so that members can click on one email for their entire group members
  - Respond to individual email but send to ALL
  - Ask groups to share questions, answers, etc.
  - Remind them to celebrate
  - Be available for 3-way conversation or meeting with groups
Offer Reading Reviews using forums/discussion rooms

- Part of ensuring groups work is to give them work
  - Assign each student a reading for the semester
  - Ask them to read and post a summary of the chapter at least 1 week before it is due
  - At the end of the summary, ask them to write a discussion question and post on forum
  - Student should respond to discussion question
Explore Indiana university Oncourse course site

Questions and Answers