Fitting in: Interior Design Sets the Stage for Accessible Play Spaces for Children with Disabilities

Holly Kihm
Jackie Didier
Southeastern Louisiana University

Though the prevalence of childhood obesity has leveled off in the recent two years, it remains unacceptably high and places children at risk for several health and psychosocial-related outcomes. To decrease the incidence of obesity, children are encouraged to spend at least 60 minutes per day, 6 days a week, participating in vigorous physical activity. While most children have access to inviting play spaces, children with disabilities oftentimes do not. The purpose of the project, "Fitting In," was to encourage students to research a specific disability, and then to develop, design, and present a play space that promotes physical activity participation among children with disabilities. The project was developed to meet several content and competency standards set forth by the National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences (NASAFACS). Because of the overall success of the project, it may be considered a "Promising Practice" among educators within Family and Consumer Sciences.

Overweight status and obesity continue to be a significant health threat among children in the United States. For children of the same sex and age, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines overweight status as having a body mass index (BMI) at or above the 85th percentile and lower than the 95th percentile, and obesity as having a BMI at or above the 95th percentile (CDC, 2014a; CDC 2014b). For typically developing children ages 2-17, an estimated 30% are overweight, and 16% of those children are obese. For children with disabilities, the rate of overweight status and obesity is significantly higher. Each year the Special Olympics committee measures the BMI of their participants. In 2012 they measured over 5400 athletes (under age 22) and found that 16% of them were overweight and 33% were obese (Corbin, 2012).

There are significant consequences related to overweight status and obesity with regards to physical health and psychosocial well being. The CDC cites several negative health-related outcomes including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, fatty liver, high blood pressure, joint strain, asthma, and sleep apnea (CDC, 2014). Psychosocial outcomes include: depression and anxiety, decreased self-esteem, poor body image, and an increased risk for suicide attempts (Eisenberg & Neumark-Sztainer, 2003; Griffiths & Page, 2008; Neumark-Sztainer, Falkner, & Story, 2008; Libbey, Story, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2008; Strauss & Pollack, 2003; Swahn et al., 2009).

Researchers, clinicians, and community educators have developed an array of programs for children that emphasize healthy eating and regular physical activity. For example, the "Let's Move" initiative was spear-headed by Michelle Obama and addressed many aspects of obesity including nutrition, food insecurity, and physical activity (Let's Move, 2010). The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) also launched a campaign titled "Taking it to the Streets" in which members are encouraged to share their knowledge on a variety of issues, including childhood obesity, with their local communities. At the high school

and university levels, educators are encouraged to participate in translational research projects that benefit not only student learning, but the community as a whole.

As a result and with the acknowledgment that obesity remains problematic among children, in particular children with disabilities, a service-learning project was developed with collaboration between the fashion merchandising faculty and child and family studies faculty at the university. The purpose of the project was to create a learning experience in which students researched the various needs of children with disabilities and then created a play space that was inviting, accessible, and fun in order to encourage children's participation in vigorous physical activity. The project was developed to meet content and competency standards set by the National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences (NASAFACS) which aims to ensure high-quality projects (NASAFACS, 2008).

Project Background

Content Standard 11.6 states that successful students should be able to "evaluate client's needs, goals and resources in creating design plans for housing, interiors and furnishings." For this project, students were charged with creating user friendly play spaces to accommodate children with disabilities and promote their participation in physical activity. Students were introduced to the challenge early in the semester and provided with an assignment timeline which detailed the expectations for each phase of the project. Work time was divided between in class workdays, independent research, practice, and presentation.

Students were expected to present the results of their efforts to one of two audiences: 1) children aged 5-10 in an interactive elementary school setting, or 2) poster session for educators, counselors and parents at a community life conference. Feedback from both settings was recorded and incorporated into an evaluative discussion at the end of the semester. The flyers and picture examples of visual displays represented an assortment of disabilities selected by students for the project. The significance of personal interviews and printed resources, the application of the design process for play space planning, and the approach to problem solving relative to human needs in interiors was reflected in the students' work. One flyer for each project was printed on cardstock and displayed in a sign holder at the time of presentation. Printed take-away handouts were provided for observer reference.

Project Details

Because of the magnitude of the project, it was broken down into six phases. The students completed each phase within the course of a semester. Time was allotted during class for research and consultation; however, the majority of the project was completed outside of class. Breaking the project down into phases allowed for in-depth conversations of each component, and helped to ensure that students met each standard as they progressed toward their finished project.

Phase one. The purpose of phase one was to introduce the project to the students. An effective way to introduce the project was to use both a lecture and outline format. It was necessary to provide time for in class discussion regarding expectations for research, selection of audience, quality of presentation, grading, due dates, benchmark timeline, mechanics (size, length, time, artwork, references), working in groups, and methods of evaluating the project.

Phase two. The purpose of phase two addressed two competencies: Competency 11.6.1, which states that students should be able to "assess human needs, safety and technology as they

relate to housing and interior design goods," and Competency 11.6.3, which states that students should be able to "assess a variety of available resources for housing and interior design, including ergonomic and anthropometric data." To meet both of the competencies, students researched their topic and gathered information on the overall topic of special needs. They selected a specific type of disability and chose a target audience. Suggested research venues included: personal interviews, journal articles, textbooks, websites and design software programs. Students then submitted a brief proposal which identified and described the disability of choice, listed the considerations for design with regard to the disability, and provided a reference list. See Table 1 for specifications.

Table 1

Specifications for Phase Two

Research the Topic: Competencies 11.6.1 and 11.6.3
• Select a disability (physical, emotional, other). • Develop a plan for the play space in which a disabled child would be able to participate, feel comfortable, and fit into the activities of the larger group. • Create a resource list representative of the path traveled to arrive at project decisions. • Compose a research summary and explanation for class discussion.

Phase three. The purpose of phase three was to design the play space. Referring back to competency 11.6.3., students focused on play space planning details and selected and arranged components in accordance with the identified disability. Components included: elements and principles of design, play space planning guidelines, and safety code specifications for selected systems (Jones, 2009). With this information, students composed a written explanation of the process. See Table 2 for specifications.

Table 2

Specifications for Phase Three

Select Play Space Components**:** Competency 11.6.3
• Size (dimensions) and 3D characteristics • Color scheme (monochromatic, complimentary, analogous) • Style (ornamental, structural) • Type of designs (natural, stylized, abstract) • Rhythm (repetition, transition, progression) • Balance (symmetrical, asymmetrical, radial)

Phase four. The purpose of phase four was to develop a schematic design of the play space. Students created a diagram, model, game, PowerPoint, or other prop to illustrate the play space and the way in which accommodations for the selected disability might be incorporated. See Table 3 for specifications.

Table 3

Specifications for Phase Four

Develop a Display of the Play Space

- Bubble diagrams, template , blocking diagrams, or computer generated plans
- 3-D model(s)
- Video/PowerPoint or other interactive setup(s)
- Other age and disability appropriate representations

Reminders:

- Physical measurements of interior height, width, length, depth, and weight are important, but accurate attention to scale is not required.
- Consider the target audience. For the interactive audience the display must be large enough to be seen, handled, and understood by children ages 5-10. For the professional audience the display should provide in-depth information and current resources.
- This is an independent exercise. Group work requires instructor approval.
- In-class workdays for this project are listed on the course calendar.

Phase five. The purpose of phase five was for students to present their projects to one of two audiences: 1) children aged 5-10 in an interactive elementary school setting, or 2) poster session for educators, counselors, and parents at a community life conference. Students practiced the presentation in class and submitted a one page, printed flyer to be displayed with the project and distributed as a handout. Students then attended the selected event and interacted with the audience. See Table 4 for specifications.

Table 4

Specifications for Phase Five

Presentation

- Select an event to attend and plan to explain or demonstrate the project.
- Create a one page, event flyer/handout with these parts:
  - Title (Identify the disability and the play space.)
  - Statement of the problem
  - Solution
  - Discussion
  - Resources
- Bring a printed copy of the flyer/handout to class for discussion

Reminder: Aesthetics are important; consider color, graphics, legible font, interesting arrangement of components, and target audience.

Phase six. The purpose of phase six was for students and their instructor to evaluate the projects. Students wrote evaluations and discussed their experiences at a wrap-up class meeting. To facilitate a rich dialog, the instructors included discussions on the challenges children with disabilities encounter, some viable solutions to those challenges, and observer comments, successes, and suggestions for future projects of this nature. The instructor also evaluated the

project by developing an evaluation tool that assessed the student's quality of research, conciseness of their objectives, accountability and ethics, selection of materials, construction, presentation details, and observer comments with suggestions for improvement.

Auxiliary Planning and Execution Details

1. Storage. Designate a secure and adequate play space for storage of projects during construction. Some work will be completed outside of class, but most students prefer to leave their 'work-in-progress' at school.
2. Transportation. Projects should be clearly labeled, packaged to withstand movement incurred during transit to the event facility, and require minimal setup time.
3. Instructor checklist. Management of the details from the instructor perspective may be facilitated with the creation of a checklist for required documentation regarding student participation and travel to the event(s), student attendance and participation on work days, project notes, supply lists, and comments.
4. Project requirements. The project constitutes a major portion of the semester grade. Due dates, class workdays, attendance requirements, and point value of exercises should be clearly stated.
5. Time requirements. Five in class work sessions of 1 hr and 15 min each were distributed over the length of the semester to introduce the project, share topic research, discuss component selection relevant to the selected disability, build props, construct displays, and share observations and evaluations. The time out of class was variable to cover topic research, material collection, prop development, written assignments, and attendance at the event(s).
6. Cost. A lab fee was required by the department for this project. This fee was used to purchase paper, props, writing and drawing materials, poster boards, and ink cartridges.
7. Materials. The following suggested tools and materials were on hand, purchased, or required of students to supply:

    • paint, markers, colored pencils
    • adhesives: glue gun, glue, double sided tape, stapler, staples
    • samples of wallpaper, paint chips, fabric, flooring
    • sketch paper, poster board, cardboard boxes, trifold boards, lettering
    • cardstock, printing of flyers
    • prefab scrapbooking/doll house items such as windows, furniture, figures, accessories
    • small display easels for flyers
    • paper cutter, scissors, box cutter, hole punch, awl, cutting mats, hammer, finishing nails
    • protective work area for glue gun and iron

Evaluation

Based on the university's evaluation tool, the "Student Opinion of Teaching," the project was well-received by the students and their chosen audiences. The students appreciated the opportunity to blend their knowledge from two areas of family and consumer sciences (i.e., design, child and family studies) to create a meaningful project. The students were particularly

excited, and somewhat overwhelmed, by the positive feedback they received from their audiences. The children enjoyed learning about how their playground could be transformed into an area where their friends with disabilities could play with them too.

Students who presented their work to adult audiences shared similar feedback. The adults were impressed by the students' creativity and thoughtfulness in developing their projects. They were also impressed because the students researched various disabilities and provided information on how the modified play spaces could accommodate different needs. Course instructors plan on gathering quantitative data to measure more specific outcomes related to the project when the class is next taught. For example, it would be interesting to assess student knowledge regarding disabilities and inclusion, knowledge of project planning and implementation, and knowledge of community resources that promote inclusion.

Conclusion

The "Fitting In" project was a meaningful learning experience not only for the students, but for their instructors and audience members. The project showcased the student's research abilities, and their ability to apply what they learned to design and present their work. The collaborative effort between the areas of FCS highlighted the ways in which a holistic approach to learning may be forged. As a result, students were able to see how their knowledge base in FCS allowed them to address several cross cutting themes in order to better educate their community on childhood disabilities and the importance of inclusion and play space accessibility. In the continuous battle against childhood obesity, it is imperative that all children have access to areas which promote physical activity. Projects such as this aim to build awareness of the challenges that children with disabilities encounter while trying to be active in play spaces, and aim to generate innovative ideas to help communities build, or modify, play spaces that benefit every child.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014a). Disability and health: Overweight and obesity. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov.ncbddd/disabilityand health/obesity.html.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014b). Healthy youth: Childhood obesity. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/.

Corbin, S. (2012). Retrieved from http://www.abilitypath.org.

Eisenberg, M., Neumark-Sztainer, D., & Story, M. T. (2003). Associations of weight-based teasing and emotional well-being among adolescents. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 157*(8), 733–738.

Griffiths, L., & Page, A. (2008). The impact of weight-related victimization on peer relationships: The female adolescent perspective. *Obesity, 16*(Suppl. 2), S39–S45.

Jones, L. (2009). Beginnings of interior environments. (10th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Let's Move. (2010). Learn the facts. Retrieved from http://www.letsmove.gov/learnthefacts.php.

Libbey, H., Story, M., & Neumark-Sztainer, D. (2008). Teasing, disordered eating behaviors, and psychological morbidities among overweight adolescents. *Obesity 16*(Suppl. 2), S24–S29.

National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences. (2008). National standards for family and consumer sciences education. Retrieved from http://www.http://www.nasafacs.org/national-standards-home.html.

Neumark-Sztainer, D., Falkner, N., & Story, M. (2008). Weight-teasing among adolescents: Correlations with weight status and disordered eating behaviors. *International Journal of Obesity, 26*(1), 123–131.

Strauss R., & Pollack H. (2003). Social marginalization of overweight children. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 157*(8), 746–752.

Swahn, M. H., Ali, B., Bossarte, R. M., Van Dulmen, M., Crosby, A., Jones, A. C., & Schinka, K. C. (2012). Self-harm and suicide attempts among high-risk, urban youth in the U.S.: Shared and unique risk and protective factors. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 9*, 178-191. doi:10.3390/ijerph9010178

About the Authors

Holly Kihm is an assistant professor of Family and Consumer Sciences in the Department of Health and Human Sciences at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana.

Jackie Didier is a part-time instructor of Family and Consumer Sciences in the Department of Health and Human Sciences at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana.

Citation

Kihm, H., & Didier, J. (2015). Fitting in: Interior design sets the stage for accessible play spaces for children with disabilities. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 32*(1), 1-7. Available at http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v32no1/v32no1KihmFitting.pdf.

Perceptions of FCCLA as Reported by Advising and Non-Advising Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers

Karen L. Alexander
Texas Tech University

Kimberlee Davis
Texas State University at San Marcos

Sharon R. Pierce
Texas Association Family, Career and Community Leaders of America

While Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) memberships and numbers of chapters have declined since 1966, family and consumer sciences (FCS) course offerings in Grades 9-12 have increased. The purpose of this study was to determine why FCS teachers in Texas high schools are not becoming advisers of FCCLA and affiliating chapters of FCCLA in schools. Family and consumer sciences teachers were surveyed to identify their perceptions of FCCLA and the potential barriers to establishing local chapters. The sample consisted of FCS teachers in Texas high schools (N = 405). Slightly more than half (n = 209) reported no participation in FCCLA. Some of the barriers examined included subjects' perceptions of time available for involvement in an FCCLA chapter, whether chapters were curricular or co-curricular, whether FCCLA met the needs of students, the details involved in managing a chapter, the organization's focus on competitions, and funding sources.

Introduction

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is one of eleven career and technical education student organizations (CTSOs) that are federally funded through the *Carl D. Perkins IV Career and Technical Education Act of 2005* (Association for Career and Technical Education, 2011). As such, FCCLA should be integral to every high school's family and consumer sciences (FCS) education program. According to the Association for Career and Technical Education (2011), CTSOs represent more than 1.5 million high school students across all organizations and are designed to enhance classroom instruction of career and technical education (CTE) programs.

There are four common organizational goals associated with all CTSOs:

- leadership development;
- academic and career achievement;
- professional development; and
- community service (Association for Career and Technical Education, 2011).

While addressing these four goals appears to be paramount to the success of any local FCS program, the affiliation of chapters and chapter members seems to be on a continual decline. Nationally, FCCLA organizational membership peaked in 1966 with 607,175 members. Since then, membership has experienced a decline to its current level of 227,000 members (FCCLA,

2013a). Likewise, Texas has lost membership over the previous decades. However, since 2005 the state affiliate's membership has held steady at approximately 18,000 members. In 2014-2015 school year, the membership increased to 19,335 with 553 chapters (FCCLA, 2013a). In contrast to the state FCCLA membership, there were approximately 7,235 FCS courses (Grades 9-12) taught in Texas in 2010-11 by 2,948 teachers (Davis & Alexander, 2013). Each of these teachers could be a chapter adviser and affiliate a chapter.

The purpose of this study was to identify reasons why FCS teachers in Texas are not affiliating members with FCCLA. Family and consumer sciences teachers were surveyed to identify their perceptions of FCCLA and the potential barriers to having local chapters. Specifically, this exploratory study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the differences between FCS teachers who are FCCLA Chapter Advisors and those teachers who are not advisors in terms of their opinions regarding (a) barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, (b) campus scheduling conflicts, and (c) purpose(s) of FCCLA?
2. Does implementation of FCCLA during class time (i.e. "co-curricular") or after school (i.e. "extra-curricular") predict teachers' opinions regarding (a) barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, (b) campus scheduling conflicts, and (c) purpose(s) of FCCLA?
3. Do teachers' opinions of FCCLA regarding (a) the barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, (b) campus scheduling conflicts, and (c) purpose(s) of FCCLA predict whether a teacher is or is not willing to start a chapter?
4. Does the funding source of FCCLA chapter activities predict the programs in which chapters participate?

Review of Related Literature

Since its establishment in 1945, FCCLA—originally named Future Homemakers of America—was designed to be an integral component of the FCS curriculum. The mission of FCCLA is to promote personal growth and leadership development through FCS education (FCCLA, 2013b). Additionally, FCCLA is the only in-school student organization with the family as its central focus.

Because advising an FCCLA chapter is often an expected responsibility of FCS teachers, training to be a new adviser is provided in many FCS university teacher preparation programs. The *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* (National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences [NATEFACS], 2004) addresses the advising expectation through Standard 10, "integrate the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America student organization into the program to foster students' academic growth, application of family and consumer sciences content, leadership, service learning, and career development." Specifically, new teachers should be prepared to justify the use of FCCLA programs to foster the development of their students and integrate those FCCLA programs to enhance their students' learning of FCS (NATEFACS, 2007).

Benefits of FCCLA Membership

Research has shown that CTSOs, including FCCLA, add value to students' educational experiences. Alfred, Hansen, Aragon, and Stone (2006) conducted a longitudinal study of all CTSOs and the findings indicated that students who participated in CTSOs had higher levels of academic engagement, civic engagement, career self-efficacy, employment skills, and motivation than those who did not. The level of participation by students also mattered with regard to high

school success indicators. Students who participated in CTSO activities were found to have higher academic motivation, academic engagement, grades, and college aspirations when compared to students who did not participate in CTSO activities (Alfred et al., 2006). Further, Alfred et al. (2006) determined that participation in CTSO activities that were focused on professional development, competitive events, and community service had positive impacts on student success. Specifically, competitive events had significant positive effects on academic engagement and career self-efficacy.

In collaboration with the National Research Center for College & University Admissions, FCCLA conducted a national study of FCS teachers and FCCLA members in 2010. The sample included 87,994 students and was deemed representative of the FCS student community (FCCLA, 2011). Leadership, communication, social and relationship skills were benefits that nearly 40% of students thought they received from being members. The majority of students (56%) said that FCCLA/FCS had a positive or very positive impact on their academic performance.

Classroom Integration of FCCLA and Student Participation

Prior research indicated that CTSOs that were co-curricular rather than extra-curricular played a role in keeping adolescents in school (Plank, 2001; Plank, Deluca, & Estacion, 2005). For FCCLA, the level of integration may vary from adviser to adviser. Ninety-four percent of surveyed FCCLA advisers said they integrated FCCLA into at least some of their lesson plans; while nearly 42% said that they integrated FCCLA throughout their curricula (FCCLA, 2011). Sixty-three percent of the surveyed non-advisers integrated FCCLA into at least some of their lesson plans. Six percent of surveyed FCCLA advisers indicated they had not integrated FCCLA into their FCS courses. Sixty-six percent of surveyed FCCLA advisors reported that *Community Service* was the FCCLA program most integrated among the FCS classrooms. Around half of the surveyed FCCLA advisers integrated *Power of One* and *Career Connection* programs, and 45% of theses advisers used the *Families First* program. Almost one-third of the FCCLA advisers integrated *Financial Fitness*, while 22% integrated *Dynamic Leadership*. Fewer than 20% of advisers integrated *Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety* (FACTS) or *Leaders at Work* in their FCS courses (FCCLA, 2011).

A large majority (72%) of surveyed FCS students reported that they did not participate in FCCLA activities and events (FCCLA, 2011). Students indicated other activities that vied for their attention as follows: sports (48%), other extracurricular activities (43%), academic or hobby clubs (19%), service clubs and honor societies (11%), and student government (4%). Fewer than 3% of students participated in other CTSOs.

FCCLA Chapter Adviser Challenges

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America advisers believed that the greatest problem facing their FCS programs was lack of time, while educators who were not FCCLA advisers said that lack of money was the primary issue (FCCLA, 2011). More than half of FCCLA advisers indicated that lack of money was a problem facing their FCS programs. Family and consumer sciences educators agreed that other factors, such as scheduling, curricular changes and lack of interest influenced their programs.

Methodology

Participants were solicited using two methods. The first method was implemented during the summer of 2011 at the Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Association of Texas

(FCSTAT) Professional Development Conference. Approximately 700 attendees were asked to participate by filling out a paper and pencil form of the survey. Approximately 15% of them (*n*=104) took part. Then, in the fall of 2011 a solicitation via email was circulated by FCSTAT to its 3,000 members asking them to participate in an on-line version of the survey administered via SurveyMonkey (*n*=301). A total of 405 useable surveys were completed by current secondary FCS teachers, which constituted a response rate of approximately 14%. Data were analyzed with *IBM SPSS Version 21*.

The instrument used in this study was developed by two FCS teacher educators teaching in FCS teacher preparation programs in Texas along with the expert input of the current Texas FCCLA executive director. The instrument consisted of demographic items and limited choice items analyzed with descriptive statistics. The instrument also contained 26 Likert scale items that identified issues related to local chapter advising. These 26 items were generated from a focus group of current and past advisers. The focus group was convened by the current executive director for FCCLA to discuss issues related to advising FCCLA chapters.

Sample

Of the sample (*N* = 405), slightly more than half (*n* = 209) indicated they did not have a local FCCLA chapter (Table 1). Of those teachers self-reporting that they had a local chapter (n = 229), 114 reported the chapter as extra-curricular (after school) and 115 reported the chapter as co-curricular (during class time). While the total number of teachers (*n* = 229) reporting their chapter implementation style is larger than the total reporting advising a chapter, it is important to note that there is no clear explanation for this discrepancy. However, the respondents may have had a combination type chapter that utilizes time after school and during class to meet with members. The response option of "combination chapter" was not available on the instrument, and the respondents were not limited in their response options on this instrument item.

Further, some in the sample reported that they advise other CTSO organizations including Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE), Future Farmers of America (FFA), and Skills USA. Sixty-four respondents indicated their willingness to start an FCCLA chapter with assistance.

Results

The 26 Likert scale items that identified opinions of FCCLA-related issues were analyzed with a mean analysis (Table 2). For those teachers who did not advise an FCCLA chapter, 45.9% either agreed or strongly agreed that advising a chapter takes too much time; whereas, teachers who sponsored a local chapter disagreed or strongly disagreed (58.6%) that advising a chapter takes too much time.

Opinions on the cost of advising a chapter were mixed. For the non-advising teachers, 48.8% either agreed or strongly agreed that FCCLA participation costs too much to operate, while 32.6% of this group either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the cost factor. The teachers who advised a chapter varied in their opinions on this item with 38.2% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that FCCLA costs too much money, while 31.6% either agreed or strongly agreed.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Sample (N = 405)

Characteristic	*n*	%
FCCLA Chapter Advisor Status		
Current FCCLA Chapter Advisor	196	48.4
Not a Current FCCLA Chapter Advisor	209	51.6
Other CTSO Sponsorship		
TAFE	46	11.4
Skills USA	5	1.2
FFA	3	0.7
None	351	86.7
Willingness to Start a Chapter with Assistance		
Yes	64	15.8
No	146	36.0
Not applicable	195	48.1
FCCLA Implementation Style		
Extra-curricular	114	28.2
Co-curricular	115	28.4
Not Applicable	176	43.4

There was also disagreement within and between the groups of teachers regarding the lack of interest in FCCLA by their students. Specifically, teachers advising a chapter disagreed or strongly disagreed (41.8%) with the issue that students lacked interest in joining FCCLA, while 38.2 % of those teachers strongly agreed or agreed that their students lacked interest in joining a chapter, leaving 20% of the respondents undecided. Of those teachers who did not affiliate a chapter, 32.5% either strongly disagreed or disagreed that students lacked interest in the organization, and 47.4% either agreed or strongly agreed that students lacked interest, leaving 20.1% of the respondents undecided.

In other issues related to local implementation, both groups of teachers indicated that they knew how to start a chapter. However, those teachers who were not advising a chapter reported varying views on whether the following issues were barriers: (a) organization is confusing, (b) do not know how to implement a chapter within the regular school day, (c) organization is too focused on competition, i.e. STAR Events, (d) too many programs, process for participation is too complicated, (e) recent FCS state-level curriculum changes make implementation too difficult, and (f) lack of support from community. Conversely, the majority of those teachers who advised chapters disagreed that the latter issues were barriers to advising chapters.

One problematic issue agreed upon by both groups was that scheduling conflicts prevented student participation in FCCLA, and teachers advising a local chapter indicated that required academic courses prevented student participation (58.6%). Interestingly, the majority of non-advising teachers did not see academic course conflicts as an issue (53.6%).

Overall, both groups of teachers indicated that the organization met the needs of their students, reflected diversity, and the image of FCCLA was one of respect. Finally, the issues

that reflected the highest levels of agreement with both groups of teachers related to FCCLA promoting the eight purposes of the organization—the last eight items on Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2

Opinions of Teachers Not Advising an FCCLA Chapter on Advising Issues

Issue	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Takes too much time	13	6.2	55	26.3	45	22	77	36.8	19	9.1
Cost too much	10	4.8	58	27.8	39	19	62	29.7	40	19
Organization's membership lacks diversity	37	17.7	83	39.7	60	29	22	10.5	7	3.3
Programs do not meet the needs of the students I teach	39	18.7	77	36.8	42	20	40	19.1	11	5.3
Do not know how to start a chapter	47	22.5	95	45.5	29	14	21	10	17	8.1
Organization is confusing	26	12.4	76	36.4	50	24	46	22	11	5.3
Do not know how to implement FCCLA within the regular school day	23	11	67	32.1	37	18	65	31.1	17	8.1
School district administration will not support FCCLA activities	25	12	74	35.4	54	26	42	20.1	14	6.7
Too focused on competitions (STAR Events)	19	9.1	57	27.3	59	28	47	22.5	27	13
Too many programs	16	7.7	62	29.7	68	33	39	18.7	24	12
Process for participation is too complicated	17	8.1	54	25.8	54	26	61	29.2	23	11
FCS curriculum changes makes implementation difficult	19	9.1	47	22.5	59	28	64	30.6	20	9.6
Lack of support from community	14	6.7	46	22	76	36	59	28.2	14	6.7
Image of FCCLA is one of respect	4	1.9	17	8.1	46	22	78	37.3	64	31
Lack of interest by students	22	10.5	46	22	42	20	75	35.9	24	12
Required academic courses prevent student participation	59	28.2	53	25.4	0	0	64	30.6	33	16
Scheduling conflicts prevent student participation	8	3.8	31	14.8	40	19	79	37.8	51	24
Provides opportunities for personal development and preparation for adult life	3	1.4	6	2.9	19	9.1	90	43.1	91	44
Strengthens the family as a basic unit of society	6	2.9	11	5.3	44	21	83	39.7	65	31
Encourages democracy through cooperative action in the home and community	5	2.4	8	3.8	43	21	94	45	59	28

Encourages individual and group involvement in helping achieve global cooperation and harmony	3	1.4	11	5.3	38	18	101	48.3	56	27
Promotes greater understanding between youth and adults	0	0	19	9.1	42	20	102	48.8	46	22
Providing opportunities for making decisions and for assuming responsibilities	6	2.9	19	9.1	30	14	93	44.5	61	29
Promotes FCS and related occupations	3	1.4	8	3.8	34	16	102	48.8	62	30
Prepares for the multiple roles of men and women in today's society	4	1.9	15	7.2	36	17	92	44	62	30

Table 3

Opinions of FCCLA Chapter Advisers on Advising Issues

Issue	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not Sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Takes too much time	22	11.2	93	47.4	19	9.7	53	27	9	4.6
Cost too much	12	6.1	63	32.1	32	16	53	27	9	4.6
Organization's membership lacks diversity	56	28.6	116	59.2	14	7.1	9	4.6	1	0.5
Programs do not meet the needs of the students I teach	58	29.6	105	53.6	10	5.1	16	8.2	7	3.6
Do not know how to start a chapter	99	50.5	72	36.7	13	6.6	9	4.6	3	1.5
Organization is confusing	40	20.4	91	46.4	16	8.2	37	18.9	12	6.1
Do not know how to implement FCCLA within the regular school day	51	26	83	42.3	11	5.6	43	21.9	8	4.1
School district administration will not support FCCLA activities	55	28.1	104	53.1	14	7.1	21	10.7	2	1
Too focused on competitions (STAR Events)	29	14.8	72	36.7	35	18	53	27	7	3.6
Too many programs	27	13.8	78	39.8	34	17	38	19.4	19	9.7
Process for participation is too complicated	25	12.8	83	42.3	22	11	47	24	19	9.7
FCS curriculum changes makes implementation difficult	29	14.8	71	36.2	34	17	50	25.5	12	6.1
Lack of support from community	24	12.2	84	42.9	37	19	42	21.4	9	4.6
Image of FCCLA is one of respect	0	0	12	6.1	32	16	92	46.9	60	31
Lack of interest by students	23	11.7	59	30.1	39	20	53	27	22	11
Required academic courses prevent student participation	0	0	51	26	30	15	82	41.8	33	17

Scheduling conflicts prevent student participation	6	3.1	34	17.3	14	7.1	101	51.5	41	21
Provides opportunities for personal development and preparation for adult life	6	3.1	4	2	6	3.1	69	35.2	111	57
Strengthens the family as a basic unit of society	3	1.5	9	4.6	28	14	81	41.3	75	38
Encourages democracy through cooperative action in the home and community	1	0.5	7	3.6	28	14	91	46.4	69	35
Encourages individual and group involvement in helping achieve global cooperation and harmony	5	2.6	10	5.1	24	12	94	48	63	32
Promotes greater understanding between youth and adults	0	0	17	8.7	16	8.2	95	48.5	68	35
Provide opportunities for making decisions and for assuming responsibilities	1	0.5	30	15.3	4	2	75	38.3	86	44
Promotes FCS and related occupations	1	0.5	9	32.7	18	9.2	104	53.1	64	9.2
Prepares for the multiple roles of men and women in today's society	0	0	12	6.1	21	11	94	48	69	35

Factor Analysis

Data concerning opinions of FCCLA-related issues were analyzed by factor analysis to determine commonality of the issues. The following criteria were used to determine the number of factors to rotate: (a) the a priori hypothesis that the measure was unidimensional, (b) the scree test, and (c) the interpretability of the factor solution. The scree plot indicated that our initial hypothesis of unidimensionality was incorrect. Based on the plot, three factors were rotated using the Promax with Kaiser Normalization procedure. Three items were eliminated based on their eigen values > 0.25. The rotation solution of the remaining 23 items yielded three interpretable factors (Table 4): (a) barriers to the implementation of an FCCLA chapter, (b) whether school scheduling impaired the implementation of FCCLA chapters, and (c) statements relating to the purpose of FCCLA participation. As the factors were correlated, sums of squared loadings could not be added to obtain a total variance.

The skewness and kurtosis of the three factors were within a tolerable range for assuming a normal distribution, and examination of the histograms suggested that the distribution looked approximately normal (Table 5). Thus, the data were deemed suitable for parametric statistical analyses.

In answering the first research question, a one-way MANOVA was conducted to determine the effect of the three independent variables (a) the barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, (b) campus scheduling conflicts, and (c) the purpose(s) of FCCLA on the dependent variable— FCCLA Chapter Advisors and those teachers who are not advisors. Significant differences were found among the three independent variables on the dependent variable, Wilks's $\Lambda = 0.88$, $F(3, 401) = 18.08$, $p < 0.01$.

Table 4

Factor Loadings for Exploratory Factor Analysis Using Promax with Kaiser Normalization

Issues	Factors		
	Barriers	Purposes of FCCLA	School Schedules
Takes too much time	0.680	0.055	-0.066
Costs too much	0.596	0.063	0.071
Organization's membership lacks diversity	0.462	-0.146	-0.081
Programs do not meet the needs of the students I teach	0.503	-0.210	-0.021
Do not know how to start a chapter	0.382	0.008	-0.133
Organization is confusing	0.725	0.026	-0.045
Do not know how to implement FCCLA within the regular school day	0.432	0.028	0.016
Too focused on competitions (STAR Events)	0.657	0.067	0.024
Too many programs	0.740	0.071	-0.010
Process for participation is too complicated	0.817	0.098	0.025
FCS curriculum changes make implementation difficult	0.544	-0.054	0.174
Lack of support from community	0.403	-0.085	0.159
Required academic courses prevent student participation	-0.098	-0.026	0.871
Scheduling conflicts prevent student participation	0.084	0.056	0.775
Provides opportunities for personal development and preparation for adult life	0.048	0.556	-0.073
Strengthens the family as a basic unit of society	-0.093	0.649	0.049
Encourages democracy through cooperative action in the home and community	0.046	0.770	-0.047
Encourages individual and group involvement in helping achieve global cooperation and harmony	-0.025	0.716	0.011
Promotes greater understanding between youth and adults	-0.191	0.656	0.044
Provides opportunities for making decisions and for assuming responsibilities	0.203	0.728	0.124
Prepares for the multiple roles of men and women in today's society	-0.055	0.778	-0.016
Image of FCCLA is one of respect	-0.018	0.567	-0.111
Promotes FCS and related occupations	0.057	0.731	-0.033

To further explain the differences, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. Results of the ANOVA were significant for the barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, $F(1, 403) = 37.0$, $p < 0.01$, and the purpose(s) of FCCLA, $F(1, 403) = 7.09$, $p < .01$. However, the variable, campus scheduling conflicts was found to be non-significant, $F(1, 403) = 1.19$, $p = 0.28$.

To answer research question two, a one-way MANOVA was conducted to determine the effect of the three independent variables (a) the barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, (b) the purpose(s) of FCCLA, and (c) campus scheduling conflicts, on the dependent variable--whether an FCCLA program is implemented as part of a class (i.e. "co-curricular") or after school (i.e. "extra-curricular"). Significant differences were found among the three independent variables on the dependent variable, Wilks's $\Lambda = 0.94$, $F(3, 225) = 4.71$, $p < 0.01$.

These differences were further analyzed with a one-way ANOVA. Results were significant for the barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, $F(1, 227) = 9.85$, $p < 0.01$. However, purpose(s) of FCCLA, $F(1, 227) = 0.39$, $p = 0.53$ and campus scheduling conflicts were found to be non-significant, $F(1, 227) = 0.13$, $p = 0.72$.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics of the factors: Barriers, FCCLA Purposes, and School Schedule (N=405)

Factor	# of items	M (SD)	Skewness	Kurtosis	Alpha
Barriers	12	39.6 (8.69)	0.157	-0.452	0.82
School Schedules	2	4.9 (2.07)	0.457	-0.468	0.83
Purposes of FCCLA	9	17.5 (5.94)	0.365	-0.278	0.90

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between whether a FCS teacher is willing to start a FCCLA chapter and the teacher's opinions regarding each of the following: (a) barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters, (b) the purpose(s) of FCCLA, and (c) campus scheduling conflicts. There was a significant negative correlation between willingness to start an FCCLA chapter and barriers to implementation of FCCLA chapters: $r = -0.27$, $n = 405$, $p = 0.00$. A significant positive correlation between willingness to start an FCCLA chapter and purposes was found: $r = 014$, $n = 405$, $p = 0.01$. There was no significant relationship between willingness to start an FCCLA chapter and campus scheduling conflicts: $r = 0.04$, $n = 405$, $p = 0.39$.

For the purposes of answering the fourth research question, the results are based upon the surveys submitted by those teachers who self-reported advising a chapter (n=196). A correlation was used to answer whether or not the funding source of FCCLA chapter activities predicts the programs in which chapters participate. First, the number and percentage of participation in FCCLA programs was determined (Table 6).

Second, the methods for funding chapter activities were determined as follows: fund raising (n=224, 96.1%), local school funds (n=102, 43.8%), private donations (n=41, 17.6%), and corporate or business donations (n=27, 11.6%). Finally, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationships between the nature of FCCLA Chapter funding of activities and the programs in which chapters participated (Table 7).

Table 6

FCCLA Program Participation

Program	*N*	%
STAR Events		
Yes	129	65.8
No	67	34.2
Career Connections		
Yes	25	12.8
No	171	87.2
Community Service		
Yes	124	63.3
No	72	37.3
Dynamic Leadership		
Yes	14	7.1
No	182	92.9
FACTS-Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety		
Yes	43	21.9
No	153	78.1
Families First		
Yes	38	19.4
No	158	80.6
Financial Fitness		
Yes	24	12.3
No	172	87.8
Japanese Exchange		
Yes	3	2.5
No	193	98.5
Leaders at Work		
Yes	13	6.6
No	183	93.4
Power of One		
Yes	73	37.2
No	123	62.8
STOP the Violence		
Yes	44	22.4
No	152	77.6
Student Body		
Yes	42	21.4
No	154	78.6
Leadership Enhancement Opportunities		
Yes	100	51.0
No	96	49.0

Table 7

Correlations Between Measures

Activities	Fund raising		Local school funds		Private donations		Corporate or business donations	
STAR Events	0.20	**	0.25	**	0.26	**	0.20	**
Career Connections	0.09		0.00		0.16	*	0.15	*
Community Service	0.27	**	0.11		0.08		0.05	
Dynamic Leadership	0.07		0.23	**	0.25	**	0.08	
FACTS - Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety	0.02		0.25	**	0.33	**	0.31	**
Families First	0.12		0.16	*	0.27	**	0.18	*
Financial Fitness	0.09		0.20	**	0.30	**	0.30	**
Japanese Exchange	0.03		0.06		0.06		0.08	
Leaders at Work	0.07		0.05		0.27	**	0.22	**
Power of One	0.10		0.31	**	0.29	**	0.18	*
STOP the Violence	0.03		0.31	**	0.33	**	0.30	**
Student Body	0.13		0.16	*	0.34	**	0.27	**
Leadership Enhancement Opportunities	0.21	**	0.20	**	0.18	**	0.10	

Note. *p < .01, **p < .001

Discussion and Conclusions

The opinions regarding the barriers to advising FCCLA chapters were mixed between the two groups of teachers, and these findings were support by the results of the ANOVA and Pearson product-moment correlations. The majority of the teachers who advise a chapter did not view the time it takes to advise a chapter as a major barrier. Many of those teachers may have learned how to effectively manage a chapter. For instance, the majority of advising teachers indicated that they knew how to implement a chapter within the regular school day. In contrast, the majority the teachers who did not advise a chapter reported that they agreed or were unsure if the time involved was a major barrier to advising. For many teachers, the time involved with advising may be a deterrent to maintaining a chapter. Results of the national FCCLA survey cited earlier revealed that nearly half of non-advising teachers participated in an academic/hobby club which takes away available time for FCCLA.

There was a mixed perception by both groups of teachers that their students lacked interest in FCCLA. The results indicated that this perception was more evident with the non-advising teachers; however, a little over 38% of the advising teachers agreed that there was a lack of interest in FCCLA. Interest in FCCLA by the students could be impacted by the level of enthusiasm for FCCLA that is expressed by the teachers. Further, the interest level might also be impacted by the relevance that students apply to their current and future lives. If teachers are able to connect the benefits of membership to students' overall preparation for college and career opportunities, for instance, then students' interest levels in joining the organization might be more evident.

The majority of both groups of teachers agreed that FCCLA met the needs of their students and that they knew how to a start a chapter. These are concerning results. If the organization meets the needs of students and the majority of teachers know how to start a chapter, then the question arises, why are not more teachers advising chapters? Some of the varying views on the issues identified below should be examined to help answer that question because the majority of those advising did not indicate that the following were barriers:

- organization is confusing,
- do not know how to implement a chapter within the regular school day,
- organization is too focused on competition, i.e. STAR Events,
- too many programs,
- process for participation is too complicated,
- recent FCS state-level curriculum changes make implementation too difficult, and
- lack of support from community.

While the descriptive statistics indicated that overall both groups of teachers agreed the organization promoted the eight purposes of FCCLA, the ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference between the advising teachers and non-advising teachers with this variable. Further, there was a positive correlation between the variables willingness to start a chapter and the purposes of the organization. For those teachers who are willing to start a chapter, this finding may indicate that there is agreement that the organization is consistent in promoting and supporting its purposes.

To increase the number of chapters and student participation, issues related to scheduling might need to be addressed with the local counselors and school administration. The majority of those teachers who were advising agreed that issues such as enrollment in required academic courses, and the organization of the overall school schedule prevented student participation in local chapters.

There is a significant relationship between participation in STAR Events and all four types of funding for local chapter activities. The Texas-specific activity, Leadership Enhancement Opportunities (LEOs), had a significant relationship with each of three funding sources (fund raising, local school funds, and private donations). Both STAR Events and LEOs require a registration fee for participation and are therefore more expensive than all other activities. Because these activities require more funds for participation, advisers might seek all possible sources of funding to support the members' participation.

There was also a significant relationship between three sources of funding (local school funds, private donations, and corporate or business donations) and the chapter activities that are consideration peer education projects, e.g. *FACTS*, *Families First*, *Financial Fitness*, *STOP the Violence*, and *Student Body*. Interestingly, the variable, community service activities, was significantly correlated with fund raising, only. It is possible that chapters elect to use fundraising solely for community service because chapters are taking action to contribute to their communities, and other sources of funding may diminish the chapters' contributions.

Additionally, there was a significant correlation between the two activities that focus on career education (*Career Connection, Leaders at Work*) and private donations and corporate or business donations. These areas are connected to the career education experiences of FCCLA members including work-based learning, mentoring, job shadowing, internships, etc., and are more likely to be supported with business and industry partnerships. While it is impossible to be certain of the reasons for these relationships from this study, these relationships warrant further exploration in future studies focused on FCS and/or FCCLA.

Recommendations

Since the majority of teachers surveyed indicated that they knew how to start a chapter, professional development focused on FCCLA may be better received if it addresses some of the other barriers that teachers indicated are problematic such as the cost involved, complicated participation processes, and changes in state-level FCS curriculum. Support is also needed to help teachers show the relevance and/or benefits of the organization to potential members.

The results of chapter fundraising data can be helpful for local chapter advisers in planning a yearly budget for chapter activities and for justifying the need for local chapter fundraisers. School principals may be more willing to provide support for these fundraisers and/or additional financial support for local chapters if they know that two of the three most common activities for chapters require registration fees for participation.

Further, several implications can be applied to FCS teacher education programs. First, dedicating instructional time to understanding the history and relevance of FCCLA is critical to the development of new teachers because many new teachers may not be familiar with the organization or may not have had the opportunity to actively participate at the local level. Second, teacher education programs need to integrate FCCLA projects and activities in teacher preparation courses to expose future teachers to FCCLA and to model the importance of a co-curricular learning experience. Third, FCCLA connections should be reflected in local curriculum and lesson planning assignments and should be implemented during the student teaching and/or internship experience. Fourth, teacher preparation programs can promote attendance of university students at meetings such as National Cluster Meetings where pre-adviser trainings occur as well as their respective regional and state meetings where the students can volunteer to judge STAR Events and other competitive activities. Finally, teacher educators need to enthusiastically embrace the organization and stress that FCCLA is a resource for classroom instruction. These suggestions might result in more enthusiasm for advising a local chapter (Ambrose & Goar, 2009; DeBates & Pickard, 2008).

This was the first application of this instrument in a research study, and while the items were developed from a focus group, reviewed by a panel of FCS content experts, and reflect high levels of reliability (Table 4), further investigation of the instrument is recommended. This instrument could be used with other groups of FCS teachers and data could be compared on national or state levels.

A follow-up qualitative study could be helpful in providing more insight into the barriers to chapter advising. For instance, a focus group of teachers could help to identify where the participation process is too complicated and provide recommendations for streamlining guidelines. Other barriers could also be discussed in the focus group sessions.

Limitations

This study used the self-reported data from a convenience sample of FCS teachers in one state. Interpretation of results should be limited to this sample of teachers because it is not representative of the population of all FCS teachers. Further, caution should be used when interpreting the results of self-reported data. In this case, participants may have responded to the items in a way they felt was professionally acceptable rather than honestly responding to the items. The researchers have no way to determine the respondents' reasons for their responses with this instrument.

References

Alfred, C., Hansen, D.M., Aragon, S. R., & Stone, J. R., III. (2006). Inside the black box: Exploring the value added by career and technical student organizations to students' high school experience. *Career and Technical Education Research, 31*(3), 121-155.

Ambrose, W., & Goar, L. (2009). Student organization integration: Initiatives for positive youth development—the ultimate leadership experience. *Journal of Family Consumer Sciences Education,* 27, 65-83. Retrieved from http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v27standards5/v27standards5Ambrose.pdf

Association for Career and Technology Education. (2011). *Expanding career readiness through career and technical student organizations*. Retrieved from https://www.acteonline.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2116

Davis, K., & Alexander, K. (2013). Secondary family and consumer sciences programs in the state of Texas: A descriptive study of the teachers and courses. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 31*(1), 1-13. Retrieved from http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v31no1/v31no1Davis.pdf

DeBates, D., & Pickard, M. (2008). Student organization integration: Comparison of two models for implementing FCCLA in teacher preparation. *Journal of Family Consumer Sciences Education, 26,* 50-65. Retrieved from http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v26Standards3/v26Standards3DeBates.pdf

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. (2011). *2011 Annual report: Cooperative research program.* Retrieved from http://www.aafcs.org/res/Essential_Tools/FCCLA_Annual_Report_2011.pdf

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. (2013a). *Annual membership report 2012-2013*. Retrieved from http://www.fcclainc.org/assets/files/pdf/membership/2012-2013_MembershipReport.pdf

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. (2013b). *Bylaws 2013*. Retrieved from https://www.fcclainc.org/assets/files/2013%20Bylaws.pdf

National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences. (2004). *National standards for teachers of family and consumer sciences*. Retrieved from http://www.natefacs.org/nationalstandards.htm

National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences (NATEFACS). (2007). *Expectation statements for the national standards for teachers of family and consumer sciences* (2nd Ed.). Working paper developed at the 2007 Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Education Conference, Indianapolis, IN. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 27, National Teacher Standards 5,* 94-96. Retrieved from http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v27standards5/v27standards5ExpectationsStatements2007NSTFCS.pdf

Plank, S. B. (2001). A question of balance: CTE, academic courses, high school persistence, and student achievement. *Journal of Vocational Education Research, 26*(3), 279–327.

Plank, S., DeLuca, S., & Estacion, A. (2005, October). *Dropping out of high school and the place of career and technical education: A survival analysis of surviving high school.* St.

Paul, MN: National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, University of Minnesota. Retrieved from http://www.nrccte.org/sites/default/files/publication-files/droppingout-plank.pdf

About the Authors

Karen L. Alexander is an Associate Professor and Program Director of Family and Consumer Sciences Education at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas.

Kimberlee Davis is an Associate Professor of Consumer Affairs and Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies and Online Education in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

Sharon R. Pierce is the State Advisor for the Texas Association Family, Career and Community Leaders of America in Austin, Texas.

Citation

Alexander, K. L., Davis, K. & Pierce, S. R. (2015). Perceptions of FCCLA as reported by advising and non-advising family and consumer sciences teachers. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 32*(1), 8-23. Available at http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v32no1/v32no1Alexander.pdf

The Poverty Simulator: Experiential Learning for Family and Consumer Sciences Students

Holly Kihm
Southeastern Louisiana University

Summer Knapp
University of Pittsburgh

Experiential learning has been identified as a powerful teaching tool to enhance learning among university students. To foster a greater understanding of individuals and families who live in poverty, and their daily struggles and stressors, students had the opportunity to participate in the "Community Action Poverty Simulation" (CAPS). The positive outcomes of the project were measured by verbal and written feedback from faculty and students. Students reported having an increased awareness of the prevalence of poverty, a greater understanding of how various social service and government agencies aim to assist those in poverty, and a deeper awareness of how poverty affects family functioning. Based on the success of the project, CAPS may be considered a "Promising Practice."

The field of Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) encompasses a broad range of areas aimed at improving the lives of individuals and their families. Family and consumer sciences students can gain knowledge through traditional classroom learning; however, experiential learning experiences can help to show how principles apply in real world settings. Such experiences help students meet Standard 2 set forth by the National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences. Standard 2 states students should "use resources responsibly to address the diverse needs and goals of individuals, families, and communities in family and consumer sciences areas such as resource management, consumer economics, financial literacy, living environments, and textiles and apparel" (Erickson, Fox & Stewart, 2010, p. 75). The purpose of CAPS was twofold: First, to use experiential learning help students appreciate the struggles of those who live in poverty, and second, to introduce students to the variety of resources available to help those who live in poverty.

Literature Review

Carl Rogers and H. Jerome Freiberg, supporters of the humanistic approach, believed that experiential learning is necessary for subjective conversion and personal growth and that all humans have the natural propensity to learn (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). In order for this type of learning to be most beneficial, the principles of experiential learning must be incorporated into the carefully chosen program.

According to the Association of Experiential Education [AEE], experiential learning principles should begin with the structure of the program. The structure must force the student to decide on, and be responsible for, moral choices. Next, the experience must be supported by the acute examination of one's personal reflection. The student must consistently be engaged in problem solving and creativity, as well as being able to place meaning to what they have learned. The student must also perceive the scenario tasks as realistic and this can only be done if they are

actively experiencing emotional, social, and logical stimulation. Last, the educator must remember outcomes won't always turn out as predicted, but the experience will give everyone an opportunity to explore their own pre-conceived values, biases, and attitudes (AEE, n.d.).

In the United States, where Americans seem to have become desensitized to, and have created pre-conceptions of, people who live in poverty, this is especially important. Those who have never faced having insufficient basic life necessities have begun to label poverty's ever changing struggles and needs as insignificant. The face of poverty is not just the "drunk bum" on the corner, or the "drug addict" up the street, or even the family that grew up on welfare and continues because it is "easier" than working (Castillo & Becerra, 2012). In reality, according to 2013 census data, there are 45.3 million people in the United States who are at or under the poverty level and, of them, 19.9 percent (9.02 million) are children (United States Census Bureau, 2014). Family models of every distinction have been severely affected by the current recession. This phenomenon has created a new group, the working poor. According to Bishaw (2012), there are 10.4 million working people and families still living below the poverty level. Because there is a significant number of families living in poverty, it is important that students understand the realities of poverty so that they may better help those in need.

Experiential Learning Experience-The Poverty Simulation

Overview

Though the CAPS simulation (Missouri Association for Community Action, 2012) takes approximately four hours to complete, it is necessary to spend time planning and preparing for the event. For example, the simulation may accommodate hundreds of individuals, and on a large scale, may take several weeks to secure volunteers, participants, and a venue to hold the simulation. For this classroom-based simulation, time spent preparing for the simulation was considerably less. On the day of the simulation, students are first assigned a role as part of a family. They can either be an "adult" or a "child." The students also receive a written description of their particular family situation, including their family's income, housing, debts and budget. Roles include those who are more likely to live with poverty, such as a single mother with several children, a disabled Veteran, an elderly couple on a fixed income, recovering addicts, a father with a chronically ill child, a woman with no education, and a man caring for his mentally handicapped sibling.

Throughout four 15-minute "weeks," the students must seek services from various social service agencies, churches, schools, banks, stores and pawn shops in order to maintain their homes and family life. During this time, the students become aware of the struggles and stressor of living in poverty, those in the role of "child" will learn the difficulties of living with the uncertainty and peer pressure of poverty.

At the end of the fourth "week," students gathered to discuss their experiences. Topics of discussion included: how they were treated by the various service providers, how they felt when services were closed, ideas of how they wanted to make their particular situations better, and how they, as students, may have changed their perception of poverty.

Participants

Students and faculty (N=42) were assigned to one of two types of participants in the simulation. The first were those who lived in poverty, and the second were those who provided services to the people in poverty, or other community representatives. Community representatives included: social service workers, clinical social workers, police officers, bill

collectors, teachers, and health care professionals. Each service provider had instructions on what their role was, how to do their job, and when to open and close their stations. The service providers were also able to decide how they wanted to behave. For example, some service providers chose to behave with empathy toward the families, while others projected a very harsh and negative attitude. Students assumed the roles of adults and children in poverty, and faculty members assumed the roles of service providers and community representatives.

Running the Simulation

Students were told that their goal was to maintain their home and family life throughout 4- 15 minutes "weeks." First, they received a name tag with their fictitious name, age, gender, and their picture. The entire family also received a packet of information that was used to simulate their lives. The information noted things such as if they owned vehicles, had bank accounts (and how much money was in the accounts), owned appliances, furniture, jewelry, etc. Some families may also have had "money" in their packets, while others received unemployment or disability checks, or participated in social service programs such as "Women Infants and Children (WIC) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). All of these "assets" could have been sold or pawned if needed. Other families may have been homeless, single parents, teen parents, or any other demographic that struggled with low income. Also, as in any daily life, there were "Luck of the Draw Cards" which were handed out at random and either made a family's life better or worse. For example, a card may have told the family they were being evicted, their car broke down, they incurred a medical expense, or a family member turned to drugs. The packets also contained lists, forms, or applications, homework, paychecks, opportunity or bad news cards, "guns," "handcuffs," "drugs," or "medical supplies."

The simulation facilitator kept track of the time, and blew a whistle to signal the beginning of a new "week." The facilitator answered questions throughout the simulation, but did not provide advice or guidance to the "adults" or "children," in order to help the simulation be as real as possible.

At the end of the "fourth week," the facilitator signaled the end of the simulation and the beginning of the debriefing and discussion process. Students spent approximately one hour discussing various elements of the simulation with a faculty member. Students and faculty also completed evaluative tools to assess the effectiveness of the simulation.

Evaluation, Outcomes and Conclusion

In order to evaluate the process and outcomes of the simulator, students and faculty were asked to complete informal, anonymous, pre and post-simulator questionnaires that were developed by the simulator's facilitator. Because the questionnaires were intended to be an informal assessment of the simulator, they were very basic in design and asked only two questions: (1) individuals who live in poverty are not trying hard enough to better their lives, and (2) my community has enough resources to help individuals living in poverty better their lives. Each statement was answered as "reflects or somewhat reflects what I believe," "doesn't reflect what I believe," or "don't know." Because the simulator was used as a semester classroom-based project, IRB approval was not necessary; however, faculty plan to run the simulator with a larger number of students and community members in the future. At that time, a more detailed assessment tool will be developed and IRB approval will be secured prior to the event. Faculty look forward to having more data to share in the near future.

During the current simulation, many respondents (n= 38) changed their perception of poverty from the beginning of the simulation to the end of the simulation. Eighty-nine percent of respondents (n=34) indicated having a better understanding of the challenges associated with living in poverty after the simulation, such as having to choose between paying a doctor's bill and paying for electricity. Students shared they developed an understanding of the economy and how supportive programs, such as WIC and SNAP are administered. Students left the simulation feeling more educated about poverty and what they could do to manage their personal resources better.

All students and faculty indicated they learned a lot about poverty from the simulation. One faculty member stated that the simulation "truly opened her eyes" about the challenges associated with living in poverty. Another faculty member shared that because of the simulation, he wanted to "get out there and help the community." One student shared that she would no longer "look down" on people who use assistance to purchase groceries because she now understood the purpose and limitations of those programs.

The poverty simulation was an effective learning experience, not only for students, but for faculty and community members. By using an experiential learning experience to reinforce classroom teaching, students became more informed about the hardships associated with poverty and services available to those who struggle with poverty.

References

Association of Experiential Education (n.d.). *What is experiential education?* Retrieved from http://www.aee.org/what-is-ee

Bishaw, A. (2012, September). Poverty: 2010 and 2011. *American Community Survey Briefs*: *U.S. Census Bureau.* Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/acsbr11-01.pdf

Castillo, J. T. & Becerra, D. (2012). The perception of poverty and social welfare policies among undergraduate and graduate social work students in the United States. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 22*(4), 375-391. doi:10.1080/10911359.2012.664499.

Erickson, P.M., Fox, W. S., & Stewart, D. (Eds.). (2010). *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences: Research, implementation, and resources*. Published electronically by the National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences. Available at http://www.natefacs.org/JFCSE/Standards_eBook/Standards_eBook.pdf

Missouri Association for Community Action. (2010). *Community Action Poverty Simulation*. MACA. Retrieved October 15, 2012. http://www.communityaction.org/poverty%20simulation.aspx

Rogers, C.R. & Freiberg, H.J. (1994). Freedom to learn (3rd Ed). Columbus, OH: Merrill/Macmillan.

United States Census Bureau. (2014, September 16). *Poverty: 2013 highlights.* Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/#1

About the Authors

Holly Kihm is an Assistant Professor of Family and Consumer Sciences at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana.

Summer Knapp is a graduate student with expertise in Human Development and Family Studies at University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Citation

Kihm, H. & Knapp, S. (2015). The poverty simulator: Experiential learning for family and consumer sciences students. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 31*(2), 24-28. Available at http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v32no1/v32no1KihmSimulator.pdf

A Dilemma-based Approach to Teaching Ethics: Life Lessons for Family and Consumer Sciences College Seniors

Molly J. Dahm
Lamar University

In a capstone course for family and consumer sciences (FCS) college seniors, students used a dilemma-based approach to evaluate and articulate their personal and professional values as well as those of others. Qualitative data were collected across four years to examine the impact of course content and pedagogical approach on student definitions of the terms "ethics" and "morals" as well as their identification of personal and professional values. Content analysis of data suggests that students may adopt more complex social values and demonstrate an improved ability to articulate their values as an outgrowth of their involvement in ethics education. The pedagogical framework appears to have increased student appreciation for diverse opinions, openness to alternative positions in the reasoning process, and a more invested sense of professional and social responsibility.

Recently, widespread professional misconduct has signaled a general decline in professional ethical standards (Allen, Bacdayan, Kowalski & Roy, 2005; Callahan, 2004). Further, cheating has increased in high schools and universities (Graves, 2008; Josephson Institute of Ethics, 2011; Mangan, 2006; McCabe, 2005). Universities have long been charged with the professional preparation of students (Farnsworth & Kleiner, 2003). Such evidence suggests a mandate to integrate ethics as a required curriculum component.

Review of the Literature

Unethical Behaviors among Students

Unethical behavior in college is understandable because many children today are taught from a very early age to win at all costs (Callahan, 2004; Giacalone & Promislo, 2013). Peer pressure and readily available technology prompt students as early as junior high to do whatever is necessary to conform to peer group expectations (Norquist, 2005). High school students cheat to gain entrance to prestigious universities: "The evidence is that a willingness to cheat has become the norm" (Josephson, as cited in Callahan 2004, p. 203). Galloway (2012) reported 93% of high school students in an upper middle class community had cheated at least once, while in another study, 80% of high-achieving students admitted to some form of academic dishonesty (Who's Who Among American High School Students, 2000).

Confusion about what behaviors are considered unethical may constitute part of the problem (Jones, 2011). In one study, a majority of high school students recognized unethical situations and identified ethically appropriate behaviors; however, more than one-fourth of the students did not recognize unethical situations, and 44% of students indicated they would participate in unethical behavior (Vincent & Meche, 2001). Hard and Conway (2006) proposed that academic misconduct is multi-dimensional, ranging from the form of work submitted (research papers, final examinations) to misconduct that is spontaneous or pre-planned to students receiving or providing assistance. Given this multi-dimensionality, it is understandable that students may be confused about exactly what constitutes unethical behavior.

A majority of college undergraduates and graduates have cheated (Mangan, 2006; McCabe, 2005; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001; Simkin & McLeod, 2010). In a study of 1051 undergraduate and graduate business students, Nonis and Swift (2001) noted that: (a) students who believed that cheating or dishonest acts were acceptable were more likely to engage in such behaviors; and (b) students who engaged in dishonest acts in college were more likely to engage in such acts in the workplace. This suggests that cheating may have become normative behavior for today's student. Therefore, it is important to increase students' awareness and understanding of unethical behavior in order to foster academic and, ultimately, workplace integrity (Graves, 2008; Shurden, Santandreu & Shurden, 2010). Also, practice-based examples may enable students to freely express their viewpoints on ethical situations (Randall, Mitstifer, Brandes & Collins, 2007).

By way of context, in 1998, the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) approved the *Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Family Scientists*, a formal code of ethics for the family science discipline (Adams, Dollahite, Gilbert & Keim, 2001; Adams, Keim & Dollahite, 1997). Adams et al. (2001) investigated the positions of 357 family scientists on ethical issues associated with the adopted principles and concluded there was a fundamental need for better education regarding ethical principles and guidelines and a strong desire among family life professionals for ethical guidance.

Academic Debate over Ethics Education

Scholars disagree about the effectiveness of ethics education (Daehlen, 2005; Leo, 2002; Nesselroade, Williams, Nam & McBride, 2006; Rasche, Gilbert, & Schedel, 2013) as well as the effectiveness of approaches to teaching ethics (Allen et al., 2005; Carroll, 2005; Kayes, 2002). Traditionally, ethics has been taught in the fields of medicine, nursing, healthcare and counseling. New empirical evidence shows that students benefit from and appreciate ethics education (Lau, Caracciolo, Roddenberry & Scroggins, 2011). Consequently, business schools and other disciplines that prepare students for professional careers have introduced ethics into their curriculum (Adams et al., 2001; Carroll, 2005; Farnsworth & Kleiner, 2003; Humbarger & DeVaney, 2005; Paulins & Lombardy, 2005; Roubanis, Garner & Purcell, 2006; Rasche et al., 2013).

Wilson (1999) argued that ethics education better prepared female nursing students to resolve ethical dilemmas. In her study, as a consequence of ethics training, females who exhibited an ethic of care orientation incorporated the male-oriented ethic of justice reasoning into their evaluation of ethical dilemmas. However, teaching ethics aimed at forcing life sciences students to accept certain values may create problems (Clarkeburn, 2002). The focus should, perhaps, be on the process of moral decision-making as well as ethical sensitivity. Further, teachers must help students to understand the concept of ethics while modeling professional ethical behavior (Anderson, 2005). Nonetheless, Rasche et al. (2013) warned of a gap between "upbeat rhetoric" about ethics education and the actual integration of ethics concepts into required curriculum.

Ethics education should also be tailored to students who reason at different levels of understanding. In one study, students in an introductory ethics course learned about ethics; however, the students' personal values remained essentially unchanged (Klugman & Stump, 2006). The authors concluded that introductory classes caused students to reflect on their choices concerning right and wrong without necessarily prompting changes in moral position. Older students experience a natural progression in understanding and reasoning abilities

(Clarkeburn, Downie, Gray & Matthew, 2003; Davis & Welton, 1991), so discussions of ethical dilemmas may be more effective for upper-level students who can look beyond the basic tenets of ethics to their practical application in moral reasoning (Shurden et al., 2010).

Woogara (2005) expressed concern that teaching ethics in large, diverse classrooms may be counterproductive because students enter the classroom espousing different cultures and beliefs. Leo (2002) blamed postmodernism, suggesting that we have arrived at an era of moral relativism in which individuals, as products of a modern culture, are encouraged to view their own cultural norms as universal standards. Truth, then, becomes "whatever the tribe or individual says it is" (Leo, 2002, p. 14). Postmodernists might suggest that there are no universal ethical standards. Conversely, ethics education may enhance an individual's ability to reason on a moral level regardless of cultural norms (Klugman & Stump, 2006).

In a study of the impact of ethics training on student perceptions of Maccoby's instrumental values, Allen et al. (2005) found that increased emphasis on ethics in the curriculum did not significantly change perceptions of the importance of "head" (thinking aspects) and "heart" (feeling aspects) values. The authors suggested this was a consequence of the emphasis on logic and reasoning in the curriculum. Daehlen (2005) also found minimal changes in students' ratings of intrinsic and extrinsic job values as a result of higher education, and Etzioni (2002) concluded that business education not only fails to improve moral character, but weakens it. Still, in a recent study of education students, researchers found that principled moral reasoning can improve through educational intervention, even in the short span of a single college semester (Cummings, Maddux, Cladianos, & Richmond, 2010).

In sum, requiring ethics education may help bridge the gap in trust and legitimacy experienced by businesses and professions. Moreover, acquiring skills to recognize and analyze ethical issues elicits a sense of moral obligation and personal responsibility and permits tolerance of moral disagreement and ambiguity (Farnsworth & Kleiner, 2003). Universities are already charged with conveying discipline-based core values and with socializing students to oversee and maintain such values. The issue, then, may not be *whether* ethics is taught, rather *how* it is taught.

A Dilemma-based Approach

Kayes (2002) summarized three historical approaches to teaching values and ethics. The values clarification approach (Rokeach, 1973) helps students understand their own values orientation, providing an increased level of self-awareness, causing them to confront inconsistencies. Kohlberg's (1981) moral reasoning approach incorporates critical thinking and the application of values to outcomes, requiring students to defend their values position using progressive developmental stages. Thus, Kohlberg shifts emphasis from identifying values to applying those values to a situation requiring action. The third approach, the ethics instruction approach, emphasizes application of normative models of decision-making in applied settings, including utilitarianism, the Kantian categorical imperative, and Aristotelian virtue ethics (Kayes, 2002).

Method

The NCFR code of ethics for FCS professionals encourages teachers to emphasize the role of ethics in the related professions while maintaining a vested interest in the student (Roubanis, Garner & Purcell, 2008). An AAFCS conference-based Roundtable on Ethics (2005) invoked the following principles for FCS professionals: professional competence, respect for

diversity, scholarship and research, confidentiality, conflict of interest, and responsibility to the profession. McGregor (2005) extended this thinking to the workforce, suggesting that FCS professionals strive to produce research and acquire higher education so as to maintain proficiency, accept changes in leadership, and work to sustain the profession. Following is a description of a university course that prepares FCS students to address and accommodate professional ethics.

For the instant course, the author found merit in all three of Kaye's (2002) approaches, incorporating them into a pedagogical constructivist framework to create an environment in which students draw upon personal experiences to build new knowledge (Paulins & Lombardy, 2005). It might be argued that integrating different reasoning approaches enhanced the value of differing opinions and decision processes. Finally, the varied analytical approaches grounded the new knowledge that resulted from evaluations and discussions of the ethical dilemmas.

Indeed, this paper has two purposes: (a) to present the reconceptualized content and pedagogical approach of an FCS capstone ethics course, and (b) to determine, using a before-and after research design and qualitative analysis, whether this course impacted students' articulation of personal and professional values and their understanding of "ethics" and "morals" over the term of a semester.

Course Structure and Study

The FCS Department of the southeastern university at which this course was taught houses several professional programs: Nutrition & Dietetics, Hospitality Administration, Interior Design, Fashion & Retail Merchandising, Family Studies, and FCS Generalist and Teaching Certification. All student majors must successfully complete *Senior Seminar for FCS Professionals*. Course content was developed to convey the basic tenets of ethics and moral reasoning through topical readings and structured analysis of ethical dilemmas with an aim to better prepare students to address future professional issues.

In the first half of each semester, students read about and discussed ethics. Readings included *The Cheating Culture* by David Callahan (2004), *How Good People Make Tough Choices* by Rushworth Kidder (2009), short news articles, and business-related excerpts. Daily, students formed small groups to discuss dilemmas and solutions, after which they informally presented their analyses, prompting further class discussion. The analytical structure followed Kayes (2002, p. 310):

1. Think critically about the problems,
2. account for the multiple competing values that arise during decision making,
3. recognize and explicate personal values and their influence on decision making, and
4. apply ethical decisions by analogy.

Students learned fundamental philosophical approaches to resolving dilemmas: utilitarianism, Kantian categorical imperative, and Aristotelian virtue ethics, along with Kohlberg's (1981) moral reasoning stages. They practiced applying each of these types of reasoning so that (a) alternative solution processes were explored, and (b) different opinions were acknowledged and appreciated. Students conducted analyses both in groups and individually, orally and in writing.

Initially, dilemmas of a general nature provoked discussion and encouraged students to openly express opinions and explore personal moral positions. The teacher played the role of

facilitator, encouraging debate, prompting explications, and ensuring that all students had a chance to voice their opinions. Dilemma content then progressed to professional situations, including topics such as client confidentiality, discrimination, and business tactics. Having previously examined personal values, students were thus prompted to explore those values in a professional context. Dilemmas that invoked social and moral responsibility at both group and individual levels were also introduced, encouraging students to consider aspects of moral responsibility to their profession and to society.

Another course requirement was the submission of weekly reflection journals. The instructor responded to all submissions, creating a private dialogue that allowed students to elaborate upon classroom discussions. For example, students offered personal thoughts about dilemmas or related issues –reflections perhaps not fully communicated in the class or that resulted from further thought. Students often discussed issues in their personal life. Many drew upon dilemma resolution structures in order to work their way through an issue.

In the present study, qualitative data were collected over four years (eight class preparations). Students answered the following questions in their first journal, and again as part of their semester-end journal:

1. Define the term "ethics."
2. Define the term "morals."
3. What are five personal values you think are important?
4. What are five professional values you think are important?

The aim of the study was to determine the impact of the course content and instruction method on student perceptions. Content analysis of responses was conducted to: (a) extract general themes, and (b) identify changes that occurred during the semester as a result of course exposure and pedagogical approach.

In a concerted effort to integrate dictates of naturalistic inquiry as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility and dependability were achieved through the collection of data over a prolonged period (four years) from every student who took the course. Further, journal responses were directly transcribed (trustworthiness) and became the text from which the analysis was conducted. Transcriptions provided thick description (rigor) from which thematic analysis could be conducted. Moreover, study outcomes were discussed and enriched using actual quotes from student entries. A final methodological step addressed confirmability when two small groups of students were selected to review the proposed themes derived from the content analysis, then to reflect upon conclusions drawn.

Study Outcomes and Evaluation

A total of 254 students completed the course during the four-year period, with an average class size of 30 students. For analysis, all student responses to each journal question were transcribed and grouped as either Beginning-of-Semester (BOS) or End-of-Semester (EOS) comments. Once grouped, the responses were analyzed in order to identify prominent themes (using repeated key words or phrases) associated with each question. Finally, BOS findings were compared to EOS findings for each question.

In general, the greatest changes in student responses occurred in the definition of the term "ethics" and, to a lesser extent, in the definition of the term "morals." While important distinctions were evident between student identifications of personal and professional values,

there was less change across the semester in values cited for either domain. The discussion that follows integrates direct quotes from students in order to best reflect and support study conclusions.

Definition of ethics. At the beginning of the semester, common themes in response to the definition of ethics question were (a) the role of society (law) in determining right and wrong; (b) the logic or set of principles applied to determining actions; (c) the importance of morals as a reasoning premise; (d) the link, even interchangeability, between morals and ethics; and, (e) the underlying role of personal and professional values.

Initially, students defined ethics as rules "dictated more by what society deems as correct, proper, acceptable, and appropriate." Often, students suggested that ethics were a result of the group's (society's) decision of what was right and wrong, culturally accepted, and a guide to individual actions. Repeatedly, students referred to ethics as "guidelines," "standards," "principles," even "laws" used to guide both individual and group behavior.

One student defined ethics as "a set of *reasons*, or the *basis* behind how I make decisions." Another wrote that ethics were "a person's rationale about different situations and their key to answering difficult questions." Students viewed ethics as fundamental to existential action. "I think ethics has to do with our choices based on what we would do when put in a dilemma or situation. This defines who we are." Some saw no difference between ethics and morals. Both concepts were viewed as values, or beliefs, perceived as logically compatible. In other words, ethics and morals could not be distinguished. Students also perceived a link between personal and professional ethics. For example, honesty was the value most often cited for both personal and professional values. Integrity was also identified as important in both domains (Tables 1 and 2). One student said, "My personal values are similar to my professional values, but, in a way, the people in your professional life can be like your family." Another student noted, "My job is who I am."

End-of-Semester (EOS) responses revealed that students were better able to distinguish a difference between ethics and morals, describing ethics as socially constructed standards. Explanations evoked the following themes: (a) conscious choice of principles, actions; (b) social code of values; (c) underlying importance of morals; (d) appreciation of varying points of view; and, (e) importance to a professional standard of conduct.

One student wrote that ethics are "the ability and choice to do the right thing by a set of standards that have been established," while another stated that ethics permitted one "to know how to deal with situations in the most positive way and to try and benefit both sides in the workplace and in everyday life-- being able to identify both positive and negative outcomes that arise, and knowing how to handle them in the best possible way." In other words, students expressed more investment in ethical standards. While some continued to acknowledge society's role in providing guidelines for behavior, many more felt increased personal accountability.

Morals were still included in some definitions of ethics, often in reference to a "code of values" that underlies the standard by which one behaves. One student defined ethics as the "system of morals and values." Another stated, "Ethics is having morals." But, many more had teased apart the two definitions, identifying ethics as individually determined, but socially enacted.

A marked EOS change was the valuing of differing viewpoints. "Ethics is what comes after you know where you are standing in life on certain situations. You have to take into account that there are different ways to look at situations even though you do not feel the same way." Students recognized not only the importance of appreciating differences of opinion, but also of

inclusiveness in making choices. One student wrote that ethics had to do with "the way you rationalize situations, how you derive your answer, which is how we come up with multiple answers. There is never one way to solve things." Such responses indicate the effect of the pedagogical dilemma approach. Clearly, students understood the importance of diverse positions.

The changed understanding of ethics has implications for professional applications. "Ethics are the values and standards we use in our decision making process without giving certain types of people priority over others." One student identified ethics as "the backbone to the professional side of life." Students appeared better equipped to set and abide by ethical standards in their respective professions.

Definition of morals. Beginning-of-semester themes in student definitions of the term, morals, were succinct. Students viewed morals as personal, internalized and derived primarily from family values. Morals were characterized as the guidelines for personal conduct, for knowing what was right and wrong, serving as the foundation of one's character.

"Morals are more personal" wrote one student. They are "what is inside of each individual." "There are no rights or wrongs because morals are personal." Students described morals as a personal code of conduct, "standards of human conduct, a set of convictions that guide me in decision making." Morals are grounded in family values, instilled at a very young age, possibly even extending to include culture and "surrounding environments." Many viewed morals as the foundation for personal judgments of what is right and wrong and as providing direction for future actions. One student wrote that, "morals are what builds good and bad character."

End-of-semester definitions of morals followed similar themes, emphasizing family as the source of acquired, internalized values. Students continued to view morals as the underlying codes by which an individual judges right and wrong. Many distinguished a difference between morals and ethics, but also acknowledged an important connection between the two.

One student defined morals as a set of "internal laws that people *want* to obey," connected with one's inner circle – family and friends. Morals are personal beliefs that guide individuals in their choices, such as "doing something good to help someone, being kind." Morals define and reify the individual. "Certain things don't have a price tag, cannot be replaced or taken away. These are your morals. They hold intangible value and define a person's personality, not the way they think, but why they feel that way. Morals are the depth of your conscience. They are the reason, concern, heart and soul of your mind." In EOS statements, there was new evidence, however, that the basis of such beliefs could and should be reevaluated, or at least expanded.

In conclusion, one student cautioned, "Remember that ethics and morals are intertwined." Another stated, "I still do not know how to explain the difference between the two. I do know there is a difference though." Such comments, while tentative, suggest a different understanding of ethics and morals as a result of class interactions. While students better articulated the change in their understanding of ethics, they also better understood that morals and ethics are different, yet complementary. It *is* difficult to discuss ethics without introducing the notion of morals and values and, by contrast, it is difficult to discuss morals and values without inferences about ethical principles and belief systems. Class discussions appear to have enhanced reflection.

Personal and professional values. Several conclusions may be drawn from student responses to questions about their personal and professional values (See Tables 1 and 2). First, with the exception of "honesty" and "integrity," there were few instances in which students identified the same personal and professional values. Second, there was little change over the

semester in the personal values articulated by students with the exception of increased EOS social consciousness. Finally, BOS professional values included commonly recognized values such as respect, accuracy, punctuality, ambition, and commitment. These values were reiterated at the end of the semester but several more complex values such as accountability and sense of accomplishment were introduced.

The marked delineation between personal and professional values was intriguing. If students view values as internalized codes of conduct that frame individual behavior, personal values should underpin professional behavior. Conversely, if students view the two domains as entirely separate, then it makes sense they would articulate different value sets. Class discussions identified conflicts that may arise when individuals bring differing sets of values to the workplace. Students may not yet appreciate the associated implications.

Several personal values identified by students were spiritual (Table 1). Such a finding was not surprising given the demographics of the student population in this southeastern university. Other values emphasized family and the importance of relationships, love, and honesty or trustworthiness. Many values recalled such accepted institutional codes of conduct as the Boy/Girl Scouts: reliability, obedience, courage. All of these values were restated at the end of the semester.

Table 1

Most Frequently Identified Personal Values at Beginning- and End-of-Semester

Personal Values	BOS	EOS
Honesty/Trustworthy[a]	109	98
Family	83	66
Church/God	70	50
Loyalty	39	45
Friends	42	39
Respect	29	29
Love	26	24
Integrity	19	22
Education	19	15

Note: BOS = Beginning-of Semester and EOS=End-of-Semester

[a]The author concluded that these terms held similar meanings; therefore, responses were tabulated together.

The finding of few EOS differences in personal values is congruent with Klugman and Stump's (2006) findings among college seniors versus freshmen. Perhaps student values were reified by exposure to class content. Importantly, though, students identified more social, or global, values at the end of the semester. For example, EOS personal values included conscientiousness, selflessness, generosity, and responsibility. It may be that the course emphasis on personal and professional responsibility encouraged reflection and integration of new values. Such a conclusion parallels the finding that the course prompted students to reevaluate and modify their definition of ethics.

Many BOS professional values were re-identified as important at the end of the semester (Table 2), including leadership, drive, ability to communicate effectively, quality, and punctuality. This suggests that upper-level students have acquired the “language”

Table 2

Ranking of Repeated Professional Values and Values Cited Only on BOS or EOS

Repeated Professional Values[a]	BOS Only[b]	EOS Only[c]
Honesty, Trust	Independence	Communication
Respect	Wisdom	Creativity
Punctuality	Skills/Competence	Problem-solver
Integrity/Dignity	Respect for Authority	Resourceful
Hardworking	Consistency/Accuracy	Compromise
Team Player	Cleanliness	Ability to Motivate
Other Values:		
Dedication/Commitment	Patience	Honor
Responsibility/Accountability		

Note: BOS = Beginning of Semester; EOS = End of Semester

[a]Column indicates values that were most often repeated from BOS to EOS. They are ranked based on the number of times repeated.

[b,c]Columns indicate those values cited only at BOS or at EOS. Not ranked.

of the professional workplace, articulating values viewed as important by their professions. Students recognized the importance of skill, competence, efficiency and creativity, but new EOS values included problem solver, sense of accomplishment, ethical conduct, and compromise. Again, these new values indicate a broader and deeper understanding of just what values may be relevant in the professional work environment. Certainly, understanding the importance of compromise reinforced EOS comments about ethics, i.e., that alternative points of view should be acknowledged and appreciated.

Implications for FCS Educators and Researchers

Despite scholarly disagreement about ethics education at the university level, there can be no disagreement that professional misconduct is of increasing concern. In the service-based professions characteristic of the FCS discipline, there is a real need to protect and nurture individual and social well-being. Adams et al. (2001) articulated as much in concluding that FCS professionals would be receptive to ongoing professional ethical guidance and better education about ethical principles.

The present study provides empirical evidence that ethics education can positively impact future FCS professionals. Specifically, the pedagogical framework of the course led to positive changes in student views, including increased appreciation for diverse opinions, openness to considering and integrating alternative positions in the reasoning process, and a more invested sense of professional and social responsibility. This finding suggests that college students who are exposed to a structured, yet reflective, review of ethics theory and moral reasoning, and who are guided through the resolution of ethical dilemmas, may be better prepared to address ethical issues in their future professions (Cummings et al., 2010).

The benefit of such critical exploration and reflection has several permutations. In many journal entries, students expressed a sense of personal growth that should, in fact, help them in the future. “I thought I was not ready for this class, [but] I have learned more about myself and I

have begun to think about others more than myself. It is probably one of the most personally beneficial classes that I have taken."

Relying upon Lincoln and Guba's (1985) position on transferability (as it relates to the conventional concept of external validity), this study utilized the full range of students who completed this course over four years, thereby providing thick description for independent interpretation. However, transferability is limited to the judgments of the "applier" (Lincoln & Guba, p. 316). Other limitations include the acknowledgment that development of themes and interpretation of raw data still remain somewhat subjective. And finally, this study did not seek to separately elicit or highlight differences in perceptions based on cultural expectations or values. Further research should compare the immediate impact of ethics education on FCS students with the long-term impact on the practices of FCS professionals. Further, it would be helpful to track evolving reasoning processes that occur as a student progresses through his/her college career. Students who took this course voiced the opinion that the course content should be addressed both at the beginning as well as the end of their college careers. Would an earlier introduction of these concepts change the responses and processes in the capstone course?

The dilemma-based approach to learning about ethics was well received. Students became very engaged in discussions. Could other pedagogical approaches be effective in teaching ethics? Additional research might investigate the reasoning behind the personal and professional values identified by students and why personal values changed so little. Finally, in this study, students identified different sets of personal and professional values. How might this impact professional behavior as well as personal well-being, even professional well-being?

Universities are charged with providing critical preparation for a student's professional career (Farnsworth & Kleiner, 2003). It makes sense, then, that university and FCS educators accept the responsibility of preparing students to recognize and effectively address the kinds of ethical dilemmas they will encounter in their chosen professions.

References

Adams, R., Dollahite, D., Gilbert, K., & Keim, R. (2001). The development and teaching of the ethical principles and guidelines for family scientists. *Family Relations, 50*(1), 41-48. DOI: 10.1111/j.1741-3729.2001.00041.x

Adams, R., Keim, R., & Dollahite, D. (1997). Ethical principles and guidelines for family scientists. *NCFR Report, 43*(3), 1-4. Retrieved from http://www.uvu.edu/besc/student/ethicalcodes/ncfrethicalguidlines.pdf

Allen, R., Bacdayan, P., Kowalski, K., & Roy, M. (2005). Examining the impact of ethics training on business student values. *Education & Training, 47*(3), 170-182. DOI: 10.1108/00400910510592220

Anderson, C. (2005). In search of ethical practice. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 97*(3), iii. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Callahan, D. (2004). *The cheating culture*. Austin, TX: Harcourt, Inc.

Carroll A. B. (2005, Jan/Feb). An ethical education. *Biz Ed*, 37-40. Retrieved from http://www.bizedmagazine.com/Archives/2001-2013/2005/janfeb.aspx

Clarkeburn, H., Downie, J., Gray, C., & Matthew, R. (2003). Measuring ethical development in life sciences students: a study using Perry's developmental model. *Studies in Higher Education*, *28*(4), 444-456. DOI: 10.1080/0307507032000122288

Clarkeburn, H. (2002). The aims and practice of ethics education in an undergraduate curriculum: Reasons for choosing a skills approach. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 26*(4), 308-315. DOI: 10.1080/0309877022000021711

Cummings, R., Maddux, C., Cladianos, A., & Richmond. A. (2010). Moral reasoning of education students: The effects of direct instruction in moral development theory and participation in moral dilemma discussion. *Teachers College Record, 112*(3), 621-644. Retrieved from http://web.ebscohost.com

Daehlen, M. (2005). Change in job values during education. *Journal of Education and Work, 8*(4), 385-400. DOI:10.1080/13639080500327774

Davis, J. R., & Welton, R. E. (1991). Professional ethics: Business students' perceptions. *Journal of Business Ethics, 10*(6), 451-464. DOI: 10.1007/BF00382829

Etzioni, A. (2002, August 4). When it comes to ethics, B-Schools get an F. *The Washington Post*, p. B4. Retrieved from http://www.gwu.edu/~ccps/etzioni/B399.html

Farnsworth, J., & Kleiner, B. (2003). Trends in ethics education at U.S. colleges and universities. *Management Research News, 26*(2-4), 130-140. DOI: 10.1108/01409170310783853

Galloway, M. (2012, Sep/Oct). Cheating in advantaged high schools: Prevalence, justifications, and possibilities for change. *Ethics & Behavior, 22*(5), 378-399. DOI: 10.1080/10508422.2012.649143

Giacolone, R., & Promislo, M. (2013). Broken when entering: The stigmatization of goodness and business ethics education. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 12*(1), 86-101. DOI: 10.5485/amle.2011.0005

Graves, S. (2008). Student cheating habits: A predictor of workplace deviance. *Journal of Diversity Management, 3*(1), 15-22. Retrieved from http://journals.cluteonline.com/index.php/JDM/article/view/4977/5069

Hard, S., & Conway, J., (2006). Faculty and college student beliefs about the frequency of student academic misconduct. *Journal of Higher Education, 77*(6), 1059-1080. DOI: 10.1353/jhe.2006.0048

Humbarger, M., & DeVaney, S. (2005). Ethical values in the classroom: How students responded. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences, 97*(3), 40-47. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Jones, D. (2011). Academic dishonesty: Are more students cheating? *Business Communication Quarterly 74*(2), 141-150. DOI: 10.1177/1080569911404059

Josephson Institute (2011). *The Ethics of American Youth: 2010: What would Honest Abe Lincoln say?* Retrieved from Josephson Institute of Ethics http://charactercounts.org/programs/reportcard/2010/installment02_report-card_honesty-integrity.html

Kayes, D. (2002). Dilemma at 29,000 feet: An exercise in ethical decision making based on the 1996 Mt. Everest climbing disaster. *Journal of Management Education, 26*(3), 307-321. DOI: 10.1177/10562902026003006

Kidder, R. M. (2009). *How good people make tough choices: Resolving the dilemmas of ethical living*. New York: Harper.

Klugman, C., & Stump, B. (2006). The effect of ethics training upon individual choice. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 30*(2), 181-192. DOI: 10.1080/03098770600617703

Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development: Moral development and the idea of justice*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Lau, L. K., Caracciolo, B., Roddenberry, S., & Scroggins, A. (2011). College students' perception of ethics. *Journal of Academic & Business Ethics*, *5*(March), 1-13. Retrieved from http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/11956.pdf

Leo, J. (2002, September 28). *Professors who see no evil*. Retrieved from http://www.aish.com/sp/ph/48923192.html

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Mangan, K. (2006). Survey finds widespread cheating in MBA programs. *Chronicle of Higher Education, 53*(6), 40. Retrieved from http://chronicle.com/daily/2006/09/2006091902n.html

McCabe, D. (2005). *Levels of cheating and plagiarism remain high*. The Center for Academic Integrity. Retrieved from http://www.academicintegrity.org/cai_research.asp

McCabe, D., Trevino, L., & Butterfield, K. (2001). Cheating in academic institutions: A decade of research. *Ethics and Behavior, 11*(3), 220-231. Retrieved from http://web.ebscohost.com

McGregor, S. (2005). Professionalism in the new world order. *Journal of Family Consumer Sciences, 97*(3), 12-14. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Nesselroade, Jr., K., Williams, J., Nam, R., & McBride, D. (2006). Self-enhancement of opinion objectivity: Effects of perceived moral weight. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity, 25*(1), 27-33. Retrieved from http://eds.b.ebscohost.com

Nonis, S., & Swift, C. (2001). An examination of the relationship between academic dishonesty and workplace dishonesty: A multicampus investigation. *Journal of Education for Business 77*(2), 69-77. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/202819331?accountid=7043

Norquist, K. (2005). Teaching ethics in Junior High. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 97*(3), 63. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Paulins, V., & Lombardy, L. (2005). Ethical dilemmas in retail merchandising: Student perceptions. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences, 97*(3), 56-64. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Randall, G., Mitstifer, D., Brandes, K., & Collins, N. (2007). A tool for educators and students: personal ethics in the FCS classroom. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 99*(4), 48-51. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Rasche, A., Gilbert, D., & Schedel, I. (2013). Cross-disciplinary ethics education in MBA programs: Rhetoric or reality? *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 12*(1), 71-85. DOI: 10.5465/amle.2011.0016A

Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values*. New York: Free Press.

Roubanis, J., Garner, S., & Purcell R. (2006). An ethical perspective model for FCS. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 98*(4), 30-33. Retrieved from http://www.aafcs.org/resources/jfcs.html

Roubanis, J., Garner, S., & Purcell, R. (2008). Professionalism: Ethical decision making as a foundation for professional practice. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 26* (National Teacher Standards 2), 44-59. Retrieved from http://www.natefacs.org/JFCSE/v26Standards2/v26Standards2Std8Roubanis.pdf

Roundtable on Ethics. (2005). Professionalism and ethical behavior: What does it mean to FCS professionals? *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 97*(3), 6-7. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Shurden, S. B., Santandreu, J., & Shurden, M. C. (2010). How student perceptions of ethics can lead to future business behavior. *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues*, *13*(1), 117-127. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/

Simkin, M., & McLeod, A. (2010). Why do college students cheat? *Journal of Business Ethics, 94*(3), 441-453. DOI: 10.1007/s10551-009-0275-x

Vincent, A. & Meche, M. (2001). Use of ethical dilemmas to contribute to the knowledge and behavior of high school students. *High School Journal*, *84*(4), 50-58. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

Who's Who Among American High School Students. (2000). Cheating and succeeding: Record numbers of top high school students take ethical shortcuts. *29th Annual Survey of High Achievers,* 1. Retrieved from http://www.whoswho-teachers.com /3attitudeANDsopinions/29.aspx

Wilson, F. (1999). Measuring morality of justice and care among Associate, Baccalaureate, and second career female nursing students. *Journal of Social Behavior & Personality*, *14*(4), 597-606. Retrieved fromhttp://web.ebscohost.com

Woogara, J. (2005). International Centre for Nursing Ethics summer school: Teaching ethics to healthcare students, 21-23 July 2004, European Institute of health and Medical sciences, University of Surrey, Guildford, UK. *Nursing Ethics*. *12*(1), 108-109. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com

About the Author

Molly J. Dahm is the Program Director of the 4-year Hospitality Management program and the Culinary Certificate program at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

Citation

Dahm, M. J. (2015). A dilemma-based approach to teaching ethics: Life lessons for family and consumer sciences college seniors. Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 32(1), 29-41. Available at http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v32no1/v32no1Dahm.pdf

A Qualitative Study of the Student Teaching Timeframe

Sally E. Arnett-Hartwick
Illinois State University

Recently, a Midwestern state university family and consumer sciences (FCS) teacher education program extended the length of student teaching from 10 to 16 weeks. To determine if the extension was a positive move for the program, a pilot study was undertaken. Interviews were conducted with university supervisors who supervised student teachers for two different timeframes: one of a 10-week duration (Spring 2013) and another of a 16-week duration (Spring 2014). Stakeholders cited the additional time available for the student teachers to progress as the most notable reason for the six-week extension. This study provides support for extending the student teaching timeframe in FCS programs.

Student teaching is considered the final clinical capstone experience in teacher education programs. This field-based assignment involves supervised teaching in a prekindergarten to 12th grade school setting and is often viewed as the most challenging, rewarding, trying, and enlightening component of student teachers' entire teacher education preparation (McMahon-Giles & Kent, 2014; Pena & Almaguer, 2007). In the United States, student teaching ranges from 10 to 15 weeks in length (National Commission for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2010).

Emphasis on teacher candidates' clinical or in-school experiences has gained attention by U.S. policymakers as a result of the need to improve the quality of teachers produced by teacher education institutions (National Council on Teacher Quality [NCTQ], 2011). Promoted as an effort to improve teacher quality, the NCTQ recommended extending the student teaching timeframe. In fact, extending the length of student teaching has become a national trend as well as a requirement of NCATE among teacher preparation programs. Some researchers, however, have not been convinced that lengthening the student teaching time will not develop more effective, thoughtful teachers; instead, they advocate for more attention to quality than quantity during the student teaching experience (Clift & Brady, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 2005; Dewey, 1938; McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996). So one question for consideration within teacher education is: Is more time necessary for student teaching?

Existing research literature related to the student teaching timeframe and its effects are limited (NCTQ, 2011; Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012) especially in the area of family and consumer sciences (FCS) teacher education. Therefore, the research objective of this pilot study was to determine the qualitative impact of extending the student teaching timeframe in the FCS teacher education program at a Midwestern state university. This study will provide qualitative evidence for program evaluation as well as a resource for other teaching areas considering the student teacher timeframe.

Review of Literature

During the typical student teaching experience, student teaching candidates must synthesize everything they have learned about teaching from their three to four years of coursework. This includes planning instruction (collecting or developing instructional materials), developing teaching lesson plans, using student learning styles/theory, establishing

and maintaining classroom management, practicing lab management (culinary, textiles, Pre-K), implementing evaluation and assessments, and meeting the expectations of the cooperating teacher and school site as well as that of the teacher education program.

The duration of student teaching varies from institution to institution. While 39 states set a minimum length for student teaching, about half require that student teaching last at least 10 weeks, which is widely accepted by the field of teacher education to be the minimum acceptable duration (NCTQ, 2011). The average range for student teaching, however, is between 10 to15 weeks (NCATE, 2010). Interestingly, in international comparisons, student teaching length ranges from three to 80 weeks (NCTQ, 2011).

A report by the NCTQ (2011) found secondary school district superintendents often express dissatisfaction with the caliber of teachers coming out of many institutions. To improve the teacher quality, U.S. policymakers and educational professionals have called for teacher candidates to spend more time in the classroom, including extending the length of student teaching. Extending the time for student teaching is based on the assumption that teachers learn from experience so more experience is valuable (Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012). Some researchers, however, have found more is not inevitably better (Chambers & Hardy, 2005). Dewey (1938) cautioned that experience is not necessarily educative, and can be mis-educative if there is a lack of quality. Similar, Darling-Hammond and Cobb (2005) contended that if the interactions the candidate gains in the schools and classrooms do not enhance the quality of learning, then more is not better. To illustrate this, for example, after the "newness" wears off, the cooperating teacher eventually may revert to a status quo environment that becomes more custodial in orientation and in their supervisory role of the student teacher. The focus, then, needs to be on quality rather than quantity.

Of the limited research available regarding the student teaching timeframe in general teacher education, there have been mixed results. Chambers and Hardy (2005) found no differences among student teachers in one versus two semesters of student teaching when they examined the variables of classroom management, self-efficacy beliefs, and self-perceived teaching ability. Likewise, Ronfeldt and Reininger (2012) suggested the duration of student teaching has little effect on teacher outcomes specifically in instructional preparedness, teacher efficacy, and career persistence. While studies provide limited support for extending the student teaching timeframe, each concludes that the quality of the experience is imperative in student teaching (Clift & Brady, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 2005).

In support of more time for student teaching, Spooner, Flowers, Lambert, and Algozzine (2008) found more time and experience provided opportunities to identify areas in need of growth and development and to hone skills the supervisors identified as lacking for student teachers. Also, reported were more time to develop a relationship with the supervisors and an increased comfort level with knowing school policies and procedures. Additionally, Silvernail and Costello (1983) observed a reduction of anxiety among student teachers who participated in a semester long practicum.

Context of this Study

A Midwestern state university FCS teacher education program extended the length of student teaching from 10 to 16 weeks. To determine if the extension was a positive move for the program, a pilot qualitative research study was undertaken. University supervisors were selected as the subjects for this study because the same supervisors worked with student teachers in Spring 2013 when the required timeframe was set at 10 weeks and then in the next cycle Spring

2014 when the change was made to 16 weeks. This provided consistent subjects with working in both timeframes. Additionally, research examining the perspectives of university supervisors, in comparison to student teachers and cooperating teachers, is rather sparse and outdated (Brown & Steadman, 2011). Therefore, this study contributes to this area of the body of knowledge in teacher education.

Methodology

Objective

The research objective of this pilot study was to determine the qualitative impact of extending the student teaching timeframe in the FCS teacher education program at a Midwestern state university.

Method, Respondents, and Data Collection

A descriptive research design using interviews was implemented in this study. Interviews allow the interviewer to understand in a qualitative way the perspectives of participants (Kvale, 1996). Specifically, an in-depth interview technique with open-ended questions provided the structure for the interviews. The researcher developed a set of tailored interview questions to answer the research objective. Questions were pilot tested with two university professional educators to determine internal consistency and were revised to reflect the suggestions from the professional educators prior to data collection. Interview questions included:

1. Describe the perceived benefits for extending the student teaching timeframe for student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors.
2. Describe the perceived negatives for extending the student teaching timeframe for student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors.
3. Reflect on your thoughts about student teaching length at 10 weeks and at 16 weeks.
4. Explain your perception of the student teachers if they received the same experiences and were prepared for their own classroom at 10 weeks as those who student taught for 16 weeks.
5. Describe how you approached your role as the university supervisor from 10 weeks to 16 weeks.

Because of the small number of student teachers, data were only collected from two female FCS university supervisors who supervised student teachers in Spring 2013 for the 10-week experience and Spring 2014 for the 16-week experience. Independent interviews were conducted in the Summer of 2014. These interviews were approximately 30 minutes in length and were audio-taped. Narrative analysis was used to analyze the data. The data was transcribed and categorized then an expert panel of reviewers reviewed the established data and finally, the data was summarized and interpreted.

Findings

The research objective of this pilot study was to determine the qualitative impact of extending the student teaching timeframe in the FCS teacher education program at a Midwestern state university. The FCS teacher education program extended student teaching from 10 weeks

to 16 weeks in Spring 2014 which exceeds the national U.S. average of the student teaching timeframe (NCATE, 2010). Overall, the data collected from the university supervisors provided support of the additional time student teachers were required to complete as opposed to the previous timeframe of 10 weeks.

Respondents were asked benefits Respondents were asked to share the benefits they perceive for the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and themselves [university supervisor] related to the extension. The most common response was that the extension "allows the student teacher to start with students from the beginning of the semester." One university supervisor noted that "the extra weeks allowed for students to become more comfortable and see a regular progression with this time length because before student teaching started towards the end of February." The second University supervisor added that the extension" also allows the cooperating teacher and the student teacher to learn about each other and develop a positive comfort level before the cooperating teacher trusted the student teacher with their classes."

The perceived benefit for the time extension among cooperating teachers from the respondents was the increase in comfort or trust level with their student teacher. One supervisor explained:

> Many cooperating teachers are reluctant to release their classes in fear of the student teacher's teaching ability in content knowledge and/or delivery of essential and correct content or just plain ownership of the class. It helped the cooperating teachers that were not as comfortable passing off classes have more time to become trusting of the student teacher and pass the classes off with more ease and confidence.

The final perceived benefit of the student teaching extension was targeted at the respondents themselves. The common response was more visits were possible which allowed for time to develop and correct concerns. One supervisor commented that "there is more of an opportunity to see real growth and maturity with the student teacher. In the old method [10 weeks] we would just see the beginning of development." Although both respondents were asked to describe any negatives they perceived with the student teaching extension, neither of them thought there were any disadvantages to extending the student teaching timeframe to 16 weeks for all involved stakeholders.

With respect to the length of the student teaching experience, participating university supervisors agreed that 10 weeks was too short. One indicated:

> There was a great deal of pressure and not that much time to correct problems in 10 weeks. In 16 weeks, student teachers have a greater opportunity to bond with the students given the longer period of time. As a supervisor I have more time to see the students and deal with issues. It allowed time to explain the new process to the teachers and have time for questions and answers. I felt we had time to process everything this session.

Another noted that "students were just getting into the swing of the semester and then it was all over! The 16 weeks allow for the students to become more comfortable with the school, cooperating teacher and their students. It made an enormous difference in their comfort level."

When asked, if they felt that student teachers "received the same experience and were prepared for their own classroom at 10 weeks as those who student taught for 16 weeks", both respondents stated, "yes." However, each added an explanation for her responses. One supervisor explained, that she thought *"*some students were able to make 10 weeks work for them, but, for the most part, 16 weeks provided more experience in the classroom and the assumption is that the more time in the classroom equals more preparedness for their first year of teaching.*"* The second supervisor also clarified her response:

> I think they were prepared in both instances. I see the difference in the time for processing. The student teacher has time to absorb criticism and make corrections and see positive results. There is time for more positive reinforcement. There is time for the student teacher to evolve and succeed with the 16 weeks. They also have more experience when it comes time for job interviews.

When asked how her approach to the student teaching experience as a university supervisor differed between the 10 and 16-week experiences, one supervisor commented:

> I visited often and early in this semester [16 weeks] process to make sure 'we' were all on the same page. The last semester [10 weeks] I allowed time at the beginning for the student teacher and cooperating teacher to get to know each other. That was a mistake. I think starting early on and explaining what needs to be done keeps everyone on task and focused. In some situations I found the cooperating teacher using the student teacher to take over a bad class they couldn't even control. I realize I am here to protect the student teacher from being used. They are here to learn and not babysit a teacher's class.

Discussion

The FCS teacher education program at the Midwestern state university responded to the call from U.S. policymakers as well as dissatisfied secondary school administration to produce a more qualified teacher workforce by extending the time in the classroom, specifically the student teaching timeframe. The research objective of this pilot study was to determine the qualitative impact of extending the student teaching timeframe. The findings suggest that the extension positively impacted the program.

While findings in this pilot study, like previous research (Chambers & Hardy, 2005; Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012), indicated that more student teaching time is not necessarily needed for student teacher success, the respondents provided insight into why the extension could benefit the program. In essence, the additional time available to process, develop relationships, take on classes, correct concerns, and increased time for meaningful visits, and growth were considered important in this study. As one supervisor noted, that at end the of 10-week period, she was just beginning to witness development in one student teacher and then the experience was over. The additional time that allowed for development, corrective action, and reflection for student teachers in this study was also reported by Spooner, Flowers, Lambert, and Algozzine (2008).

Like Silvernail and Costello (1983), the extension of the student teaching timeframe also increased the comfort level between student teachers and cooperating teachers. The added weeks allowed student teachers to start at the beginning of the semester as opposed to two months into

the semester thereby giving student teachers time to bond with the students and their cooperating teachers. Although Dewey (1938) and Darling-Hammond and Cobb (2005) indicated they felt that more student teaching time is not necessary better if the quality is lacking, the respondents in this study perceived the extension was positive and quality was not an issue. As one supervisor alluded to, with the extended timeframe both parties were able to learn about each other, their roles, and the school climate which increased their comfort levels dramatically. Furthermore, this allowed cooperating teachers who were reluctant to release their classes to the student teacher feel more at ease with the transition.

Finally, for logistical purposes, responding university supervisors supported lengthening the student teaching timeframe. The six additional weeks allowed the university supervisors to strategically schedule their visits to observe progressive development. Also, meeting the cooperating teachers before the start of the semester allowed for a brief training session that reduced the 'unknowns' associated with their role.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the university supervisors involved in this study supported lengthening the student teaching timeframe from 10 to 16 weeks for the FCS teacher education program at a Midwestern state university. According to this pilot study, the time available to progress was considered the most identifiable benefit for all stakeholders (student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors). Respondents indicated they perceived the extension served positively for the FCS student teachers they observed and ultimately for the good of the program and efforts to produce quality teachers.

This research pilot study provides qualitative data to support extending the student teaching timeframe in the FCS teacher education program at a Midwestern state university. This study provides one perspective that could be considered by teacher education programs considering changes in the length of the student teacher timeframe. Additionally, this research shares the perspectives of university supervisors often absent from teacher education research.

While not previously mentioned nor the focus of this study, the new state-mandated Educational Teacher Performance Assessment (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2015), will require extensive time to implement during student teaching and the six weeks added to student teaching will be helpful in completing this assessment for the FCS teacher education program. To close, this pilot study provides some evidence that time to progress within quality conditions was beneficial for this FCS teacher education program at the Midwestern state university where the study was conducted.

References

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2015). *EdTPA.* Retrieved from http://edtpa.aacte.org/

Brown, S., & Steadman, S. (2011). Defining the job of university supervisor: A department-wide study of university supervisors' practices. *Issues in Teacher Education, 20*(1), 51-68.

Chambers, S., & Hardy, J. (2005). Length of time in student teaching: Effects on classroom control orientation and self-efficacy beliefs. *Educational Research Quarterly, 28*(3), 3-9.

Clift, R., & Brady, P. (2005). Research on methods courses and field experiences. In M. Cochran-Smith & K. Ziechner (Eds.). *Studying teacher education: The report on the*

AERA panel on research and teacher education (pp. 309-424). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Cobb, V. (2005). *Teacher preparation and professional development in APEC members: A comparative study*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, N.Y.: Touchstone.

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

McIntyre, D. J., Byrd, D., & Foxx, S. (1996). Field and laboratory experiences. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (2nd ed.). (pp. 171-193) New York: Macmillan.

McMahon-Giles, R., & Kent, A. M. (2014). An exploration of factors contributing to the perceptions of preparedness for elementary candidates in a clinically based program. *ISRN Education, 2014*, 1-6.

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2010). *Transforming teacher education through clinical practice: A national strategy to prepare effective teachers.* Report of the blue ribbon panel on clinical preparation and partnerships for improved student learning. Washington, D.C.: NCATE.

National Council on Teacher Quality. (2011, July). *Student teaching in the United States.* Available at www.nctq.org/edschoolreports/studentteaching/report.jsp

Pena, C., & Almaguer, I. (2007). Asking the right questions: Online mentoring or student teachers. *International Journal of Instructional Media, 34*(1), 105-113.

Ronfeldt, M., & Reininger, M. (2012). More or better student teaching? *Teaching and Teacher Education, 28*, 1091-1106.

Silvernail, D., & Costello, M. (1983). The impact of student teaching and internship programs on preservice teachers' pupil control perspectives, anxiety levels, and teaching concerns. *Journal of Teacher Education, 34*(4), 32-36.

Spooner, M., Flowers, C., Lambert, R., & Algozzine, B. (2008). Is more really better? Examining perceived benefits of an extended student teaching experience. *The Clearing House, 81*(6), 263-269.

About the Author

Dr. Sally Arnett-Hartwick is an Assistant Professor and Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Education Coordinator at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois.

Citation

Arnett-Hartwick, S. (2015, Spring/Summer). A Qualitative Study of the Student Teaching Timeframe. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 32*(1), 42-48. Available at http://www.natefacs.org/Pages/v32no1/v32no1Hartwick.pdf