

All, Some or None: Synchronous or Asynchronous: Creating a climate to meet your students' needs

Thursday, April 12, 2018, from 9:00-9:45 AM

Trish Cox, Rachel Schwartz, and Matthea Marquart

Zoom <https://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/j/XXX>

SOCIAL WORK DISTANCE EDUCATION CONFERENCE



Advancing Social and Economic Justice Through Innovation

Agenda

1	Welcome and introduction
2	Program 1: Asynchronous program
3	Program 2: Synchronous program
4	Program 3: Combined synchronous-asynchronous program
5	Your turn: Q&A, and sharing challenges and solutions
6	Wrap-up and thank you

Introduction to this panel

As Online MSW programs emerge, there are a variety of methods in the online teaching world that direct programs in how they approach the synchronous vs asynchronous conversation. It is important to consider selecting a format that is the right fit for the school, faculty and the desired student population.

The panel will present case studies from three online programs (sharing experiences from asynchronous, synchronous and a blended asynchronous-synchronous program), explore the pros and cons of these options, and discuss the debates that their programs explored to come to their decision in their models they chose for their three Online MSW Programs.

This interactive panel will include opportunities for participants to ask questions and share their own challenges and solutions.

Your presenters



Trish Cox, MSW, M.S.Ed., CCLS

Clinical Assistant Professor

Master of Social Work Online MSW Coordinator

University of New Hampshire



Rachel Schwartz, MSW

Director of Online MSW Education

Assistant Professor of Teaching

Rutgers University School of Social Work



Matthea Marquart, MSW

Director of Administration, Online Campus

Lecturer

Columbia University School of Social Work

Asynchronous Program: Rutgers University School of Social Work

- Program started Fall 2013
 - Currently have approximately 400 students
 - Students come from 33 states across the country (approved in all states)
- 3 year, part-time program for MSW, 3 starting points (Fall, Spring, Summer);
1.5 year part-time program for Advanced Standing MSW (Fall start)
- Program is asynchronous
 - Courses are taught from a master course shell – typically includes a video and/or written lecture, readings, media viewings, discussion boards and larger assignments throughout the semester. Students have time within each week to complete work (with regular due dates) and are not expected to be online live at any particular time.

Creating engagement in an asynchronous program

- Live meetings/workshops for online students
 - Orientation, cohort meetings, workshops, field work
- Live streaming of events
 - Allows students to gain access to same events as on-campus students; creates feeling of inclusion to greater campus
- Advising Hours
 - Students can schedule private phone appointments; encourage faculty to do same for office hours

Creating engagement in an asynchronous program

- Use of Social Media
 - Program Facebook page; Student Resource Center in LMS
- Classroom opportunities
 - Group projects, role plays, video presentations, discussion boards, faculty office hours, group meetings with students
- Training for Faculty
 - Personalized training on course development, technology and pedagogy; continued communication with faculty from program

Asynchronous program: Pros and Cons

Pros/benefits

- **Students have the flexibility of completing work each week on a schedule that works for them**
- **Curriculum flexibility**
- **Program meets the needs of students across the country, in different time zones without needing additional resources**

Cons/challenges

- **Students may be more at risk for feeling isolated, requires more initiative from the student to interact and engage in their community**
- **Differences in faculty engagement styles**
- **Meeting the needs of students who want greater engagement or synchronous opportunities**

Synchronous Program Context:

Columbia University School of Social Work

Online campus launched in Fall 2015; First graduates in May 2017

- Currently about 200 students

Program options: 1) Clinical, 2) Social Enterprise Administration, 3) Policy (new in Fall 2018)

- Fall start only for full time programs: Two-year program or Advanced standing program (one year for qualifying BSWs)
- Fall or spring start for programs that start part time, without fieldwork: Extended program or Reduced residency program

Residential & online campuses are fully integrated

- Residential students can take up to 2 online courses per semester, and vice versa
- Students can transfer between the residential and online campuses



Source: Twitter #CSSW2017

Synchronous Program Model:

Columbia University School of Social Work

Majority of courses are synchronous:

- Asynchronous homework in Canvas
- Synchronous weekly class sessions in Adobe Connect

Piloting other modes:

- Asynchronous
- Remote Live Participation via Kubi robot or via Zoom

Instructional team for each synchronous course:

- Instructor
- Associate or TA
- Live Support Specialist (alumni who took at least one online course at CSSW)



Prof Steven Schinke won the international [2015 Excellence in Online Teaching Award](#) from the Online Learning Consortium

Synchronous Program: Pros and cons

Columbia University School of Social Work

Pros/benefits	Cons/challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Synchronous class sessions offer the opportunity for community-building and accountability● Synchronous class sessions lessen the burden on instructors to respond to all student questions individually, as questions can be addressed in class, and lessen the pressure for perfect course sites● Students develop varied professional skills● Strong alumni involvement -- many potential roles● Reconnect with past residential instructors & advisors who moved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Scheduling classes for students across time zones, with competing priorities● Scheduling instructors● Managing expectations of students who graduated from asynchronous programs● Students need tech training & support● Time-intensive to train potential members of the instructional team:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 5-week Institute on Pedagogy and Technology for Online Courses○ 2-week Institute on Technical Skills for Online Events + shadowing & mentoring

More info on Columbia University School of Social Work's synchronous program

Program model

- Marquart, M., Fleming, M., Rosenthal, S., & Hibbert, M. (2016, March). Instructional Strategies for Synchronous Components of Online Courses. In S. D'Agustino (Ed.), *Creating Teacher Immediacy in Online Learning Environments*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
<https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/instructional-strategies-for-synchronous-components-of-online-courses/148897>

Logistical considerations for synchronous courses

- Marquart, M. and Fleming, M. (2014, October 29). *Supporting Successful Live Online Classes: Good Instructional Design is Not Enough*. Workshop presented at the Online Learning Consortium Conference, Orlando, FL. Slides deposited in Columbia University's Academic Commons: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7916/D8HH6HR6>
- Marquart, M. and Counselman-Carpenter, B. (2017, June 23). *Supporting the success of online students who are deaf: Lessons presented at #SWDE2017*. [blog post]
<http://www.jaureliversonhitchcock.org/2017/06/23/supporting-the-success-of-online-students-who-are-deaf-lessons-presented-at-swde2017/>

Teaching synchronous courses

- Marquart, M. (2017, June 13). Inspiring trust and risk in online discussion. Workshop presented at the Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning's 2017 Innovative Teaching Summer Institute, New York, NY. Slides deposited in Columbia University's Academic Commons: <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8CC17B0>
- Marquart, M. and Ortega, A. (2016, April 14). Sharing Synchronous Strategies for Interactive Live Virtual Class Sessions that Engage the Whole Class. Roundtable session presented at the Social Work Distance Education Conference, Indianapolis, IN. Handout deposited in Columbia University's Academic Commons: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7916/D8DN452S>
- Marquart, M. (2017, March 6). Strategies for Successfully Engaging All Students in Live Synchronous Online Classes. Poster presented at the Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning's Celebration of Teaching and Learning Symposium, New York, NY. Poster deposited in Columbia University's Academic Commons: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7916/D8B28108>
- Marquart, M. and Garay, K. (2017, April 24). Fostering student engagement & motivated participation in discussion forums: Examples from Columbia University. Workshop presented at Columbia Southern University's Education Beyond Tomorrow Virtual Conference, Online. Slides deposited in Columbia University's Academic Commons: <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8Q81KFJ>

Benefits for students

- Alzuru, M. & Marquart, M. (2015, July 6). Online students develop marketable professional skills. [Online exclusive]. *EDUCAUSE Review*.
<https://er.educause.edu/articles/2015/7/online-students-develop-marketable-professional-skills>

Combined Synchronous-Asynchronous Program: University of New Hampshire

- Program started January 2014
 - Currently have approximately 100 students
 - Students come from all over US, but primarily New England.

Program started out as 100% async but quickly the field/practice teams and the students created a movement to change it.

Piloted software, and found a balance of too much/not enough
- 24 months, full time program for MSW, 3 starting points (Fall, Spring, Summer); Hoping to start Advanced Standing Online in Fall 2020
- Program is synchronous in Field and Practice and async in other courses with optional Zooms.

Creating engagement in a sync/asynchronous program

- Field and Practice Classes: Will have one sync a week (Field and Practice alternate)
- Have learned to embed it in the gradebook
- Core content: Will offer optional zooms
- Live meetings for online students
 - Orientation, cohort meetings
- Live streaming of events
- Advising Hours

Creating engagement in a sync/async program

- It took a while to find a balance and see what students could handle.
- We model for them in the orientation and then start to weave in optional zooms.
- For example: I give an optional assignment in HBSE 2: paper vs book discussion to get them over the first time to get online.
- Work with faculty on setting up good Zoom practices for team building.
- Cohort Liaisons Model
- Social media
- MyCourses announcements and videos

Pros/benefits

- Sense of community
- Can go over housekeeping of classes in a live format
- Students develop varied professional skills
- Easy for guest presenters
- 10 courses sync/10 async: only ten to balance schedules

Cons/challenges

- Schedules are difficult
- Getting the word out
- Technology glitches: North Country
- Internship conflicts need to be navigated.

Your turn:

Q&A, and sharing challenges and solutions

Questions for you:

- How many you work with asynchronous programs? Synchronous? Combined?
- What do you consider the pros and cons of your mode of program?
- What debates did your programs engage in as you decided which mode to implement?
- What challenges have you faced? What solutions have helped?

Do you have questions for us?

Wrap-up



Contact info:

- Trish Cox -- trish.cox@unh.edu
- Rachel Schwartz -- rschwartz@ssw.rutgers.edu
- Matthea Marquart -- msm2002@columbia.edu, Twitter @MattheaMarquart