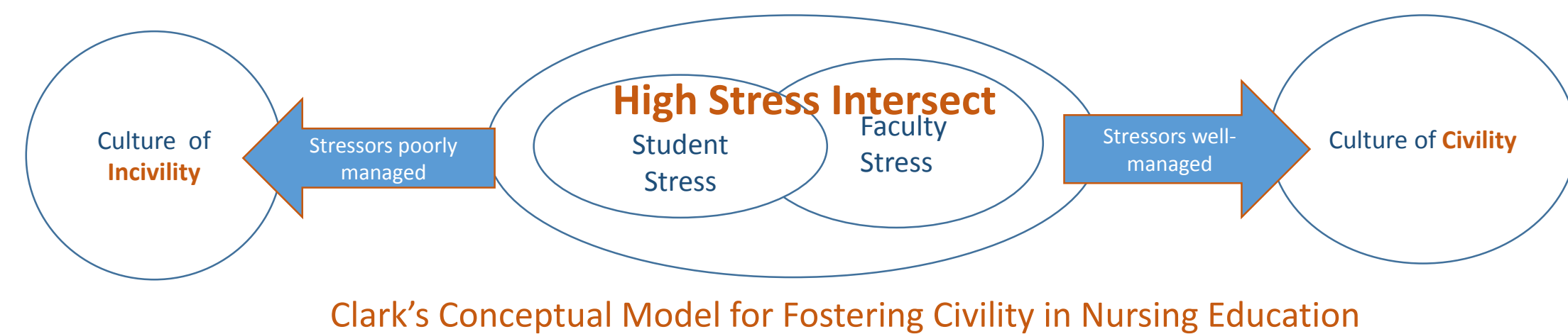


BACKGROUND

Group work was identified as a **common stressful challenge** by students in the online graduate program at UTEP School of Nursing (UTEP School of Nursing IOLE Survey, 2014; UTEP School of Nursing Graduate Student Survey, 2015)

Group Work is defined as a subset of students within a larger class assigned to work together to complete a learning activity



Uncivil behavior creates a “digital divide” between online students & interferes with learning

We wanted to identify ways to decrease stressful aspects of group work in order to decrease uncivil behavior, narrow the digital divide, & improve the learning environment.

PURPOSE

Review of best practice recommendations for successful group work in online education from a review of literature & UTEP graduate nursing students

Population: Graduate students in online programs

Issue of interest: Strategies for group work that facilitate civil & successful learning

Comparison: Current practice

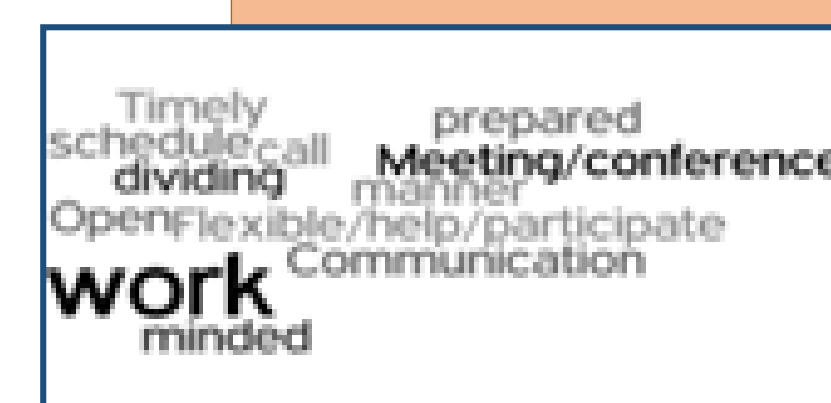
Outcomes: Recommendations for creating effective group activities

Acknowledgements: Dr. Elias Provencio-Vasquez, Dean, UTEP School of Nursing, for project support

METHODS

Inclusion Criteria: Quantitative and qualitative articles about online education & group work published 2000 & later

SEARCH TERMS	DATABASES
Online Education	CINAHL
Group Work	ERIC
Collaborative Learning	Academic Search Complete
Distance Education	Business Source Complete
Virtual Education	Education Full Text-H.W.
Evidence-Based Education	Wilson PubMed Cochrane Library



113 Articles

Excluded
100

Reviewed 13

Hand searched
reference lists

Faculty Focus
Newsletters

Campbell
Collaboration

BEME Reviews

Final
Review
20

RESULTS

Wide variation in types of evidence found did not allow for combining results, however the most common recommendations are provided below.

Before Course (Course Design)

Incorporate resources into class

Emphasize:

- Importance & benefits of group work
- Benefits of collaboration for assignment

Provide information about:

- Group process monitoring
- Team/Team member effectiveness

Provide tools for learners

- Collaborative workspaces & multiple communication methods
- Group Charter
- Evaluations (Peer, Self, & Team)

During Course

Monitor group process

Provide clear timelines/sufficient time

After Course

Evaluations (Peer, Self, & Team)

General course feedback

Group process & product included in grade

UTEP Graduate Student
Responses N=98

PREFERRED COMMUNICATION METHODS

Text- 55
Email 42
DB-30
Phone -20
Social Media 12
Face to Face -2

STUDENT- TO -STUDENT SUGGESTIONS

Be Flexible /Participate in a timely manner =44
Communicate=27
Meeting/conference call, schedule, divide work=13
Be open minded=9
Be prepared to do all the work= 6

STUDENT- TO- FACULTY SUGGESTIONS

Choose Members= 16
Roles=17
State objectives=13
Establish consequences=10
Communicate=7
Peer Evaluation=6
Create Separate Grades=4
Student contract= 2
Monitor=3

CONCLUSIONS

- UTEP student responses aligned with published resources
- Numerous resources available to decrease stressful aspects of group work
- Opportunity to decrease uncivil behavior, narrow the digital divide & improve the learning environment

