

CANVAS Meeting Minutes, 1-14-21

Thurs, January 14, 2021 | 2pm Eastern time

Participants in Attendance

- Amanda Wynter (Purchase College)
- Anita Rehberg (Harper College)
- Annette Bade (Nova Southeastern University)
- Bella Kofner (College of Staten Island)
- Ben Schwartzman (Vanderbilt University)
- Bertrand Monthubert (Aspie-Friendly program, University of Toulouse, France)
- Brett Ranon Nachman (UW-Madison | College Autism Network)
- Brianne Tomaszewski (UNC Chapel Hill TEACCH Autism Program)
- Cheryl Widman (University of Illinois at Chicago)
- Christina Longcorc (Seattle Pacific University)
- Christy Giambastiani (Sonoma State University)
- Dawn Allison (Austin Community College)
- Emily Raclaw (Marquette University)
- Eric Endlich (Top College Consultants)
- Fletcher Scott (Western Washington University)
- Henry Tsai (Austin Community College)
- Jennifer Williamson (University of Calgary)
- Joyce Pope-Cain (Austin Community College)
- Kathryn Szechy (Wayne State University)
- Katie McDermott
- Kelci Archibald (University of Toronto)
- Ken Gobbo (Landmark College)
- Kim Jameson (Christian Brothers University)
- Kim Johnson (Lesley University)
- Kristen Gillespie-Lynch (CUNY)
- Laurie Ackles (Rochester Institute of Technology)
- Lee Williams (College Autism Network)
- Lindsay Blankenship
- Lindsay Hill (Michigan State University)
- Mary Baker-Ericzen (San Diego State University)
- MaryEllen Stephens (University of Delaware)
- Matthew Mortimer (College of Mount Saint Vincent)
- Natalie Lilien (Cornell University ILR School)
- Nicky Lord (University of Toronto)
- Patrick Dwyer (UC-Davis)
- Reese Brinkley (University of Texas-Austin)
- Sarah Mooney (University of Denver)
- Summer West (Universität Kassel, Germany)
- Tom Beeson (Clemson University)

CANVAS Updates

- Join our CANVAS list-serv - Our primary means of connecting, sharing info
 1. Click [here to join](#)
 2. Send email to the list by emailing can-canvas@collegeautismnetwork.org
 3. Updating college autism programs list
- Resources/Items to Share with Community
 1. [Special issue of Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability features articles addressing autism](#) (Nachman)
 2. New article in [Journal of Autism and Adulthood](#) on reducing apprehension related to driving: (Mary Baker-Ericzen)
 3. Upcoming Universal Design for Learning [conference this February](#) (Summer West)

Research Presentation

“Teaching Adults with Autism to Successfully Navigate Job Interviews Via Remote Instruction”
Presented by Courtney Butler (Program Coordinator, College Support Program; Rutgers University)

Notes:

- The purpose of the current investigation was to use BST delivered via a web-based video teach young adults with autism.
- Prior research has focused on how autistic individuals have a lower likelihood to be employed. Preparation has been noted by Black et al. (2019) as being a key factor in shaping autistic individuals’ success in attaining employment. Job interviews are often difficult for autistic people because of entailing much nonverbal communication.
- The training, involving many staff at Rutgers University, wasn’t able to be conducted in person due to starting at the onset of the pandemic.
- Participants entailed 4 undergrad college students with autism, ages 21, 23, 23, and 25. All had expressed interest in improving their interview skills; they had various levels of experience, though three had at least a year-and-a-half of some work. Interviews were conducted via WebEx.
- The main dependent variables were how participants answered and asked questions, each scored 0-3 points. Each student was presented with the same first question "tell me about yourself," the last question "do you have any questions," and with 4 novel, common interview questions in between these two repeated questions. The institution’s career exploration and success (career services) office helped provide ideas of different questions. The notion of “do you have any questions” was useful for students to come up with potential prompts to pose to employers. None of the students had a specific job in mind, but were asked to treat the mock interview as if it were for a true position they would be interested in applying for.
- The research team employed a concurrent multiple baseline design across participants. They wanted to ensure that their intervention, and not other factors, were responsible for any changes in how students approached interview skills.

- They engaged in pre-post training probes as well. A career services staff member engaged in these interviews with students, containing the same questions. Staff were asked to move on to each new question in a neutral manner, so as to not skew any results.
- The baseline interviews entailed no training and sometimes were very brief.
- Group training was simultaneously conducted with all four participants via WebEx, lasting around 35-40 minutes, and entailed content on appropriate/inappropriate aspects of interviews. Much modeling was used in videos and presentation materials to familiarize students with such interactions. Eye contact, attire, and other nonverbal components were also incorporated. The group training was not as interactive as anticipated.
- Individualized trainings consisted of PowerPoint presentations, modeling, and practice to each person. In many ways this was a refamiliarization process, but more personalized. Students did not receive feedback on their performance yet.
- Individualized trainings with delayed feedback entailed an abridged version of the PowerPoint presentation centered on areas of participants' areas of improvement. Participants watched videos of prior interviews, and found this to be useful, despite some finding it to be odd. The instructor provided feedback to students' responses (e.g., eye contact) later in the game.
- Individualized training with immediate feedback was much the same, save for the timing of feedback.
- Meanwhile, the error correction condition entailed students having three opportunities to reframe answers to questions if they scored below a "3." This was a more intrusive, albeit immersive opportunity for students to work on mastering questions. Instructors gave feedback right in the moment. This process continued until participants received a "3" or if they received multiple error corrections. The team then tried to determine how to help students experiencing such issues. Common issues students experienced entailed not addressing the question, or were more roundabout in answering them.
- Post-training interviews were the same as the pre-training interviews with the same questions presented.
- Students were given links to the evaluations, and made as easy as possible. The team wanted to ensure they could obtain good feedback. Evaluations included several Likert-scale questions, and some open-ended questions.
- Participant Ian withdrew from the training, finding that the training was rather draining.
- Participant Zane had scores increasing following the group training; eventually they were in the mastery area.
- Participant Evan had moderate scores at the baseline phase; once the individualized training with immediate feedback, he improved in his scores.
- Participant Kim experienced gradual improvements in the individualized and group trainings. Kim benefited from additional support. The error correction phase implementation amounted to Kim eventually reaching the mastery phase.
- After each interview, students completed a questionnaire where they addressed their interview performance and preparedness. Overall, participants felt they improved over the course of the study; the one question they rated themselves lower over time was in regards to their own behavior. This may have been because they thought they had the

skills and then after training, realized there may be room for improvement, and therefore rated themselves a bit lower.

Questions & Answers:

- Cheryl: “I was wondering why you chose to use a Likert-type evaluation for the individuals. Do you think a binary type interrogative might help autistic participants to better assess progress? (I’m asking this because I don’t understand Likert-type queries.)” Likert was used to gauge how students viewed their own skills, whereas binary was more along the lines of a “yes/no.” Likert allowed to show a variety of responses. A few open-ended questions allowed for students to share what they wanted to work on.
- Kelci: “Can you please talk more about your scoring and how you evaluated their interview responses.” The team used a 0-3 scale, with “0” representing that students did not interview questions whatsoever (saying “pass”), “1” entailing an attempt at addressing the question, but not quite sharing much, “2” meaning the question was not completely answered, and “3” involving a perfect answer with no need for improvement. Operational definitions are featured in the supplemental info that Courtney provided after the presentation.
- Reece: “Could you talk about some of the advantages/disadvantages found in doing group training?” The group training wasn’t quite as effective, particularly in the online context.
- Brett: “What was the most remarkable or interesting comment from students?” At the beginning, students vocalized not feeling comfortable or interested in engaging in job interviews, though over time increases were notable, albeit mixed in going up and down.

Contact Courtney: Courtney.Butler@rutgers.edu
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Upcoming CANVAS Meetings

- Thurs, Feb 11 at 2pm ET
 - **Using Formative Research to Develop HEARTS: A Healthy Relationships Promoting Intervention for Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum**
 - Presented by Dr. Laura Graham Holmes (Senior Postdoctoral Research Associate; Boston University) & Dr. Emily Rothman (Professor, Community Health Sciences; Boston University)
- Thurs, March 11 at 6pm ET
 - **Autistic Adults’ Success Factors for Employment and Beyond**
 - Presented by Dr. Craig Thompson (Curtin University) & Dr. Melissa Black (Curtin University)
- Thurs, April 22 at 12pm ET
 - **Social Skills Interventions for Young Adults: Fitting into a Neurotypical World?**
 - Presented by Dr. Jess Monahan (Research Manager, Spectrum Scholars; University of Delaware) and Dr. Brian Freedman (Associate Director, Center for

Students with Disabilities & Director, Spectrum Scholars; University of Delaware)

- Thurs, May 20 at 2pm ET
 - **Getting Ready for College: The Intersections of Neurodiversity and Other Sites of Differences**
Presented by Dr. Hyejung Kim (Assistant Professor, Teaching, Learning and Educational Leadership; Binghamton University)