

CANVAS Meeting Minutes, 4-26-24

Participants in Attendance:

- Amy Tavares (Carnegie Mellon University)
- Beth Felsen (Spectrum Transition Coaching)
- Bill Todd
- Colleen Grillo
- Deana Delp (Arizona State University)
- Elinor Lim (University of Portsmouth)
- Emily Campagna (CSU-Channel Islands)
- Erik Brenner (Northeastern University)
- Gina Hoagland (University of Maryland-Baltimore County)
- Hilary Meyer (Triton College)
- Jae Edelstein (Berklee College of Music and Boston Conservatory)
- Jeanne Kramer (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)
- Kathy Szechy (University of Windsor)
- Katie McDermott
- Kay Rivers Rollis (Yavapai College)
- Ken Gobbo (Landmark College)
- Lars Veerhoff (Radboud University)
- Lauren Lestremau Allen (SUNY Empire State University)
- Lee Williams (College Autism Network)
- Megan Riedl (SUNY Canton)
- Mikala King
- Mindy Thornton (Marshall University)
- Rachel Schuck (San Diego State University)
- Sabrina
- Sasha Zeedyk (California State Fullerton)
- Steven Isaacson (Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee)
- Susan Hedges (Appalachian State University)
- Tanya Miller (Missouri State University)
- TC Waisman (Autism Training Academy)

Meeting Plan

CANVAS Updates

- Join our CANVAS list-serv - Our primary means of connecting, sharing info
 - Click [here to join](#)
 - Send email to the list
<https://groups.google.com/a/collegeautismnetwork.org/forum/#!forum/can-canvas/join> by emailing can-canvas@collegeautismnetwork.org
 - [CAN Membership Details](#) We appreciate the support your membership provides to help us offer CANVAS and other opportunities.
 - College Autism Summit (call for proposals is open):
[https://collegeautismnetwork.joynconference.com/v2/!](https://collegeautismnetwork.joynconference.com/v2/)

- **Share a Resource!** Are you conducting any research studies that you'd like the community to know about? Read an interesting article recently? Discovered a cool resource? This is your chance to briefly share that news with the CANVAS group! List your name and any relevant links below so others may access it at their convenience!
 - [Autism Grown Up](#)
 1. Remarkable good resource with toolkits and info guides and all sorts of resources; functions out of Raleigh, NC, US.
 - ["Someone You Can Build a Nest In"](#)
 1. New fantasy book by neurodivergent author presenting neurodivergent character perspective (a little on the graphic side in terms of violence)
 - Steven Isaacson and colleagues [staged an NIMH event](#) regarding the documentary "Soundtracks." Steven mentioned their work with the Inter-Agency Autism Coordinating Committee, which links efforts related to autism in governmental spaces.
 - Gina: "Some of us at UMBC are forming a Neurodiverse Faculty/Staff group and would love suggestions to get us started."
 - TC: "If you're going to INSAR Melbourne come check out our SIG on Indigenous Autism in Global Contexts"
 - Katie: "I presented at 2024 CUNY Neurodiversity Conference last week at LaGuardia Community College and I had the chance to see representatives from CUNY's Project REACH (autism-specific college support program) and it was great to be in community there with researchers, faculty, college staff, and students!"

Presentation Details

Presenter: Dr. Mark Tapia (Ph.D. in Special Education from UT-Austin) (Researcher)

Presentation Title: Self-Advocacy at the University Level: Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder to Advocate for Their Needs

Notes:

- Mark recognized the variability in person- and identity-first language.
- Mark shared how education research has not explored much about the effects of academic accomplishments on autistic college students.
- There is sometimes a disparity between self-advocacy (meeting one's needs) and self-determination (taking steps to meet goals).
- Mark's study entailed an intervention featuring video modeling, task analysis, and role-playing to teach undergraduate autistic students to self-advocacy.
- Video modeling focused on topics including requesting accommodations, locating supports on campus and in the community, disclosing accommodations to a professor, and handling situations where a professor is not recognizing the student's accommodations.
- To participate in the study, students were undergrads and had a confirmed autism diagnosis (formal or self in nature).

- Four students from UT-Austin's Longhorn TIES program participated in the study.
- Mark drew on many materials to conduct this single-subject design study that utilized a complex reversal design format.
- Participants completed questionnaires about self-advocacy (the first and last session meeting), which involved a variety of tools.
- Mark collected baseline data from each participant through them taking the self-advocacy questionnaire.
- Participants assessed all four scenarios through the video modeling.
- In the intervention phase, the participant watched videos related to the four components of self-advocacy. Following watching the video, they reviewed the video content with the interventionist. They had to reach mastery level to continue.
- Participants took the self-advocacy questionnaire again after final study session. They then completed one- and three-month follow-up sessions that assessed self-advocacy skills across the scenarios. Participants were asked 16 questions in the questionnaire.
- Three of the four participants experienced increases in the percentage of completed steps across scenarios.
- Mark shared how this study uniquely examined autistic undergraduate students' self-advocacy skills.
- The study findings show that treatment effects were maintained over time.
- Limitations included the lack of consistent control across participants (by virtue of carrying over generalizing skills across conditions), the nature of the pilot study, and motivational component that some participants may have experienced through participating in a voluntary student support organization.
- Mark recommends that future researchers replicate this work in other contexts, as well as examine other components of autism/self-advocacy (e.g., housing).
- Participants found the task analysis activity was very helpful in remembering self-advocacy skills; Mark suggests that other researchers determine which study elements are most helpful for participants.
- Implications for practice include the necessity to teach self-advocacy throughout the lifespan, training about these topics in disability services spaces, and revising methods to match situations outside of postsecondary education settings.
- Mark mentioned being an autistic self-advocate who is invested in this line of work.

Q&A

- Question from TC: "Excellent research Dr. Tapia. Questions: Can you tell us what you required for proof of self-diagnosis? Also, can you share one of the scenarios you used? How long were the scenarios?"
 - Answer: Self diagnosis was incorporated to expand participant experiences.
- Question from Katie: "Could you share more about the questionnaire for self-advocacy? What was the format and length for this questionnaire?"
 - Answer: There were 16 questions across several parts of self-advocacy, including recognition of wants/needs, locating campus services, and personal decision making.
- Question from Kathy: "This is a great study Mark. Thank you for sharing it with us! Do you have plans to publish it?"

- Answer: Mark is hopeful that he can produce a paper based on this data in a publication.
- Question from Lee: “How do autistic students perceive how they are identified by others?”
 - Answer: Mark did not pose that question to participants.
- Question from Steven: What did you learn about your own self-advocacy through this process?
 - Answer: He has advocated for himself throughout his life; Master’s work at Mizzou kick started these efforts more formally.

- Mark’s email address: mtapid0805@gmail.com

Upcoming Meetings

Date: Tues, May 7 at 2pm EST

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5235660844?omn=82847969742>

Presenters: Dr. Cindi May (Professor of Psychology, College of Charleston) and Dr. Christopher E. Whelpley (Assistant Professor of Management, Virginia Commonwealth University)

Presentation Title: Biases in the Hiring Process for Job Candidates with Autism...and Solutions That Might Help Level the Playing Field

Short Description: Our research demonstrates a clear bias against prospective employees with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the job interview process. This bias stems from differences in social style and interaction rather than the perceived competence or qualifications of candidates with ASD. We consider different approaches to addressing this bias, and recommend two steps for leveling the playing field for candidates with ASD. Our approach emphasizes educating employers rather than masking employees’ autistic traits.