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Student-Identified Strengths and Challenges of Using Blackboard for Group Projects in a Social Work Course

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Abstract

Blackboard (TM) provides social work educators integrated online communication tools that they can employ to facilitate student learning through features such as e-mail, discussion forums, file exchange, virtual classroom, and links to online resources. This study describes students' experiences using Blackboard (TM) to support a group project assignment. The majority of students found it easy to use and useful for the project, and indicated that they would like to use it in other courses. In addition, students gained technical skills as a result of the group project. Students' group project grades and final course grades were comparable to those in other sections of the same course taught by this investigator.

The findings of this study suggest that online technology can be used to facilitate group assignments for MSW students. The benefits include increased efficiency of group functioning and increased accountability of group members. The challenges include technical problems and student resistance to using the technology.

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