



TLEF Project – Final Report

Report Completion Date: (2023/07/14)

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1. General Information

Project Title:	Developing a program of teaching and assessment using simulation in child welfare training		
Principal Investigator:	Barbara Lee		
Report Submitted By:	Barbara Lee		
Project Initiation Date:	2018	Project Completion Date:	2023*
Project Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Large Transformation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> UDL Fellows Program <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid and Multi-access Course Redesign Project <input type="checkbox"/> Other: [please specify]		

*The project was originally funded for 2-years, but was given extensions due to medical leaves and COVID-19.

1.2. Project Focus Areas – Please select all the areas that describe your project.

- Resource development (e.g., learning materials, media)
- Infrastructure development (e.g., management tools, repositories, learning spaces)
- Pedagogies for student learning and/or engagement (e.g., active learning)
- Innovative assessments (e.g., two-stage exams, student peer-assessment)
- Teaching roles and training (e.g., teaching practice development, TA roles)
- Curriculum (e.g., program development/implementation, learning communities)
- Student experience outside the classroom (e.g., wellbeing, social inclusion)
- Experiential and work-integrated learning (e.g., co-op, community service learning)
- Indigenous-focused curricula and ways of knowing
- Diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning contexts
- Open educational resources
- Other: [please specify]



1.3. Final Project Summary – *What did you do/change with this project? Explain how the project contributed toward the enhancement of teaching and learning for UBC students.*

The original project proposal aimed at developing, implementing, and evaluating a program of teaching and assessment using simulation in social work with a focus on children and families. The first phase of the project aimed to implement simulation as course-based learning, as well as, voluntary training workshops for students. The second phase was aimed at developing and piloting the Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE) for child welfare training.

Overall, simulation-based learning was offered in 5 social work courses reaching a total of 159 students and 10 voluntary training workshops with a total of 57 student participating from 3rd year, 4th year, and graduate students.

The project involved 5 research assistants with the 3 PhD research assistants contributing to peer review conference presentations (total of 12), invited presentations (1 webinar) and co-authored publications (1 published, 3 in preparation).

While a pilot OSCE was not implemented due to curriculum and resource constraints, simulation was expanded to additional core undergraduate social work courses and addressed multiple practice areas including working with children, adolescents, families, and immigrants.

The development and implementation of simulation-based learning has enhanced the teaching and learning opportunities overall for faculty, instructors, undergraduate and graduate students in UBC School of Social Work.

1.4. Team Members – *Please fill in the following table and include students, undergraduate and/or graduate, who participated in your project.*

Name	Title/Affiliation	Responsibilities/Roles
Michelle O’Kane	Project Coordinator/ UBC, School of Social Work	Project Coordination
Daniel Ji	Research Assistant/ UBC, School of Social Work	RA in Phase 1
Trinh Nguyen	Research Assistant/ UBC, SoTL Specialist	Assist with survey creation
Zachary Foote	Research Assistant/ UBC, Library and Information Studies	Assist with virtual simulation development online
Natalie Beltrano	Research Assistant/ University of Windsor, School of Social Work	RA in Phase 2


1.5. Courses Reached – Please fill in the following table with **past** and **current** courses (e.g., HIST 101, 2017/2018) that have been reached by your project, including courses not included in your original proposal (you may adapt this section to the context of your project as necessary).

Course	Academic Year
SOWK 572	2018
SOWK 405	2019
SOWK 441	2021
SOWK 441	2022
SOWK 310	2023
SOWK 305	2023
SOWK 337	2023

Workshops	Academic Year
3 rd year BSW, 4 th year BSW, MSW	2018
3 rd year BSW, 4 th year BSW, MSW	2019
3 rd year BSW, 4 th year BSW	2021

2. OUTPUTS AND/OR PRODUCTS

2.1. Please **list** project outputs and/or products (e.g., resources, infrastructure, new courses/programs). Indicate a URL, if applicable.

Output(s)/Product(s):	URL (if applicable):
Lee, B. (online). Structured Reflective Decision-making Through Video Simulation. Open Education Resource.	http://blogs.ubc.ca/socialworkeducation/
Resources that can convert a classroom into a one-bedroom apartment for simulation. Classroom 	
Seven simulation case vignettes (four families and three individual youth) spanning six ethno-cultural identities. The case vignettes include 16 character profiles and semi-scripted content for standardized clients.	
Measurement scales and evaluation templates	



2.2. Item(s) Not Met – Please list intended project outputs and/or products that were not completed and the reason(s) for this.

Item(s) Not Met:	Reason:
Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE) in Child Welfare	<p>There are two primary reasons the OSCE was not completed as part of the project:</p> <p>1) The Advanced Family Practice with Children and Families course (SOWK 572) I was originally teaching was cancelled and I do not teach the undergraduate child welfare course. Based on Phase 1 experience with offering voluntary simulation workshops, it is hard to recruit sufficient number of participants if it is not required course-based learning.</p> <p>3) Embedding simulation-based learning in a course allows for scaffolding and building upon the student’s learning throughout the academic term. Simulation serves as a formative process, and the OSCEs as a summative evaluation at the end of the course. Without course and curriculum support, it is not feasible to pursue.</p>

3. PROJECT IMPACT

3.1. Project Impact Areas – Please select all the areas where your project made an impact.

- Student learning and knowledge
- Student engagement and attitudes
- Instructional team-satisfaction
- Teaching practices
- Student wellbeing, social inclusion
- Awareness and capacity around strategic areas (Indigenous, equity and diversity)
- Unit operations and processes
- Other: [please specify]



3.2. Please provide details on each of the impact areas you selected in 3.1. – For example, explain in which ways your teaching practices changed; how student wellbeing was impacted; how students wellbeing benefited from your project, etc.

Below are students feedback of the simulation workshops in relation to the following project impact areas:

Student learning and knowledge

Simulation-based learning presented novel experiences for social work students to practice and learn:

- “I learned about working with youth in a cultural setting because I have never had experience with immigrants or youth. I have mostly had experience with adults in counselling sessions, but I learned through observation how to approach situations with a youth client”.

Students indicated the simulation-based learning help build their confidence and skills for their practicum placement:

- “This experience is VERY helpful and I would love more opportunities to practice the skills because I don’t feel confident in my skills going into practicum. This is where the UBC social work program is lacking, we need more practice simulations to do well in practice”.
- “It helped me build confidence for future interactions”.

The simulation experiences provided a foundational learning for student to build upon:

- “I will definitely reflect on this experience in the future when working with youth”.
- “I just feel more prepared and I feel like I have something to go off of now. A big learning for me is the cultural component. Having been born and raised in Vancouver, I am naive when it comes to the experiences of immigrants. We have learned about the importance of cultural considerations, but that is not necessarily helpful when it is only in theory. Having done this session, I now feel I have a better idea of how I might do so in practice. This learning experience was very important”.

Student engagement and attitudes

Some students participated in voluntary simulation training workshops. The students found the learning to be incredibly valuable and advocated for simulation-based learning in other social work courses:

- “I found it extremely helpful. This was the only micro-skills practice I have had during this term and I am grateful to have had the opportunity”.
- “I cannot believe it was not a requirement for me to finish my training. EVERY UBC Social Work student should take at least one of these workshops, this one was so beneficial for me”.
- “If you take this workshop, you will feel more prepared going into your practicum and even your future practice as a social worker. Practice is what helps make me feel more prepared, so what better way to learn?”

 Teaching practices

The evaluation of simulation-based learning has offered empirical evidence of the positive impact on student learning. Students recognized the rare opportunity to practice and take risks with standardized clients, in ways that they would not be able to in their practice with vulnerable clients:

- “I think experiential learning is super beneficial. I think we need more of it.”
- “We will never really have the chance to practice our skills and approaches in an emotionally safe context. After this program we will have direct and possible long-lasting impacts on real clients and so working through our anxieties and nerves now is important”

In Phase 1, simulations were initially offered for students who wanted to actively practice their skills as a social worker, however, in Phase 2 we expanded to include student observation. Student indicated that they learned a lot through observation of their peers:

- “Even as an observer, there was a lot to learn that was insightful for future practice”.
- “Observing counselling sessions is really helpful for me because it shows different styles and ways to ask questions”.
- “I really enjoyed seeing the different approaches my classmates took to their interviews”.

In Phase 2, we tested and evaluated student preference in class format because we received antidotal feedback about how class size impacted their participation.

- “I was more nervous to participate in the seminar classes because they are smaller”.
- “I know it's likely difficult to break the class up into smaller session, but I think that would facilitate participation greatly”.

Three different class sizes and formats were tested: large class (approx. 50 students), small class (approx. 18 students), and large class (approx. 50 students) working in smaller teams (5-6 students) to pre-plan before the simulation. Majority of students indicated preference for simulation in a small class (73%) or working in smaller teams (27%) with no students endorsing preference for simulation in a large class.

 Instructional team-satisfaction

We were able to expand simulation into a required undergraduate social work course for all 3rd year students in the BSW program. The instructors had positive feedback and have plans to continue offering simulation for students.

“I just wanted to thank you both for all of your work in bringing the family simulation experience to the students of SOWK 310 as well as SOWK 305. I really think the students got a lot out of it”.

“I really appreciated getting to witness the simulation and the students in my section spoke positively about the experience. Thanks for providing the opportunity!” -



3.3. How do you know that the impacts listed in 3.1/3.2 occurred? – Describe how you evaluated changes/impacts (e.g., collected survey data, conducted focus groups/interviews, learning analytics, etc.) and what was learned about your project from the evaluation. You are encouraged to include graphical representations of data and/or scenarios or quotes to represent and illustrate key themes.

Simulation was offered as learning activities but also included a voluntary research component to evaluate student’s learning. The feedback from the participants were entirely positive.

The table below summarizes the quantitative evaluation results:

Evaluation	Agree/ Strongly Agree
The simulated client was authentic in his or her role as a client	100%
Interacting in a scenario with the simulated client felt like a realistic client/ worker interaction	100%
Interviewing the simulated client was beneficial to my learning	100%
Interviewing simulated clients is more beneficial for practicing my skills of basic intervention than role playing with peers	100%
The simulation workshop has aided my development Integrate knowledge into practice	100%
Overall, I found the simulation workshop to be interesting	100%
Overall, I found the simulation workshop to be enjoyable	100%
Would you recommend participation in the simulation workshop to others in your cohort?	100%

Below are some of the overall feedback provided by student participants:

- “I would recommend this for peers in the cohort because it helps in giving a taste on the real life aspect of interviewing families. It helps with overall confidence building”.
- “I would HIGHLY recommend this workshop to my cohort members because all of my cohort, at some point in their social work career, will experience working with families and child welfare. This workshop gives a good experience on what it feels like working in that environment”.
- “It is a great experience to get a scope of social work practice in real life setting. It would be great to incorporate this simulation learning to social work courses to build and connect academics to real life experience. I feel that more of these workshops would better prepare me for my future practice as a social worker”.
- “I gained so much knowledge from this experience. No matter your social work interests there is valuable learning to be had about interviewing skills, using your judgement and collaborating with peers. The simulation was amazing for understanding what a real world situation could look and feel like”.
- “I genuinely came to learn and get a sense of exposure, and I think the workshop really did a great job in doing that. I also personally work and learn better in a setting where I can practically apply skills and get feedback from it right away, and so I would highly recommend this workshop to someone who learns the same way as I do”.
- “This is one of the best parts of my social work training so far”.



Below are some reflections of what students learned through the simulation:

- “I felt that it is important to build a therapeutic relationship with clients. Also, I learned the importance of consultation amongst other social workers when I come across a difficult situation at work”.
- “I learned how to regulate my emotions, and I learned strategies for mitigating resistance (from observing others)”.
- “This will influence my approach to other families by establishing a rapport with the family, but also being aware of my emotions because it influences the way I interact with my clients”.
- “it has taught me to take it slow, ask a lot of questions to develop familiarity and try to put myself in their shoes, because their lives are constantly evolving and shaping them into young adults”.
- “I haven't interacted with adolescents for a while so it was very refreshing and reminded me of the importance to cater to the values of people in certain age groups. I will try to understand the big influences in life during certain ages and that will inform how I build human connection and what I ask”.

4. TEACHING PRACTICES – *Please indicate if **your** teaching practices or those of **others** have changed as a result of your project. If so, in what ways. Do you see these changes as sustainable over time? Why or why not?*

Simulation-based learning was initially offered in the courses that I taught or through voluntary workshops. However, students expressed tremendous support and desire for simulation-based learning to be embedded in other social work classes. As such, I was able to guest lecture and offer simulation-based learning in other core social work courses.

As we continued to develop simulation-based learning in social work education, our educational leadership faculty supported this approach by working together to develop case scenarios that could be used and build upon from one course section to another. These were then implemented in two courses in the Winter 2023 term. At the end of the term, the educational leadership faculty indicated the desire to replicate the simulation-based learning activities and are in discussion about how to continue this.

5. PROJECT SUSTAINMENT – *Please describe the sustainment strategy for the project components. How will this be sustained and potentially expanded (e.g., over the next five years). What challenges do you foresee for project sustainment?*

The development of video simulation was a sustainment strategy to offer simulation in a cost-effective manner to a wider service user audience. While the virtual simulation was timely in meeting the needs of alternative remote learning needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, our evaluation of its deployment demonstrated that it still requires instructor facilitated learning activities and discussion to contextualize the activities and deepen learning. Future plans for the virtual simulation are to expand the educational materials to include an instructor guide, assigned readings, and lecture materials to support parallel teaching and learning.



One of the goals of the project was to demonstrate the value and positive impact of simulation-based learning in social work education so there is sustained support. The School of Social Work has committed to a simulation classroom in the new school building which is being constructed between 2023-2025 to continue simulation-based learning activities. Educational leadership faculty has course funds that can be used to continue and build upon the embedded class simulations.

To overcome the funding challenge associated with employing standardized actors, our team experimented with hiring and training ‘mock-clients’ who can portray the simulated case character and scenario. This overcame the difficulties in recruiting actors with specific cultural and language needs for the simulation. Students also reported the invaluable learning from the ‘mock-clients’ lived experiences: “Very valuable to go over a practice situation. Great to have family, individual and interpreter options. Lovely and valuable to have personal story/opinion from actors...” This is a more cost-effective alternative to hiring professional standardized clients that require more substantive training and character development in preparation for the client role.

6. DISSEMINATION – *Please provide a list of scholarly activities (e.g., publications, presentations, invited talks, etc.) in which you or anyone from your team have shared information regarding this project. Be sure to include author names, presentation title, date, and presentation forum (e.g., journal, conference name, event). These will be included on the TLEF scholarly output page.*

Publications:

Lee, B., & O’Kane, M. (In-progress). Structured reflective decision-making through video simulation: An emerging innovation in social work education.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Lwin, K., Beltrano, N. (In-progress). Child welfare practice skills and competence when working with a simulated family.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Lwin, K., Beltrano, N. (In-progress). Examining child welfare decision making through simulation-based education.

Lee, B., Ji, D. & O’Kane, M. (2021). Examining cross-cultural child welfare practice through simulation-based education. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 42(2), 271-285. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-020-00783-8>

Invited Presentation:

Lee, B. & O’Kane, M. (2022, Mar). Examining cross-cultural child welfare practice through simulation-based education. Webinar for Practice and Research Together (PART). Online – Canada.

Peer Reviewed Presentations:

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., & Dow-Fleisner, S. (Submitted). Developing competence: Investigating the skills and complexities of social work practice with adolescents. Research presentation at the Society for Social Work Research. Washington, DC.



Lee, B., O’Kane, M., & Lwin, K. (Accepted). Child welfare practice skills and competence when working with a simulated family. Paper presentation at the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN). Edinburgh, GB-SCT.

Lee, B., & O’Kane, M. (Accepted). Examining cross-cultural child welfare practice through simulation-based education. Paper presentation at the Council on Social Work Education. Atlanta, GA.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., & Göncü, K. (2023, May). Working with interpreters to address linguistic barriers in social work practices: A pilot simulation-study. Research presentation at the Canadian Association of Social Work Education Conference (CASWE). Toronto, ON.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., & Göncü, K. (2023, May). Social work practice with immigrant adolescents: An exploratory mixed methods study. Research presentation at the Canadian Association of Social Work Education Conference (CASWE). Toronto, ON.

Lee, B., & O’Kane, M. (2022, Mar). Using simulation to examine responses to ethno-racial difference in child welfare. Paper presentation at the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN). Online – Quebec City, QC.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Ji, D. (2021, Nov). Structured reflective decision-making through video simulation: An innovation in social work education. Paper presentation at the Council on Social Work Education. Orlando, Florida. (Withdrawn due to COVID-19 concerns)

Lee, B., Ji, D., & O’Kane, M. (2021, June). Cross-cultural child welfare simulations: An innovation to connect the classroom and field. Paper presentation at the Canadian Association of Social Work Education Conference (CASWE). Virtual Conference.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Ji, D. (2021, May). Advances in simulation-based social work education specializing in children and families. Poster presentation at University of British Columbia (UBC) – Celebrate Learning Week. Virtual Conference.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Ji, D. (2021, May). Developing critical reflective practice through virtual simulation. Workshop at the Teaching in Practice-based Professions Conference, Mount Royal University, Virtual Conference.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Ji, D. (2019, June). Virtual simulation: Using technology to teach cross-cultural child welfare practice. Paper presentation at the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE), University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC.

Lee, B., O’Kane, M., Ji, D. (2019, May). Using Simulation in Social Work Education Specializing in Children and Families. Poster presentation at University of British Columbia (UBC) – Celebrate Learning Week, Vancouver, BC.