

# Creation and Evolution of a Simulation Instructor Course A Qualitative Action Research Study

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## Introduction

Teaching and learning with simulation is an important strategy of adult education in healthcare. This project describes an action research study focusing on the development of a simulation instructor course where experiential learning was not only the topic, but the tool by which the learners received most of the instruction. This work brings together experiential learning as defined in the adult education literature and concepts in simulation education (Fenwick, 2003). Due to the lack of other qualitative action research studies related to simulation instructor courses, the authors put forth this work as an example of the unfolding new knowledge learned in our course. The basis of our research question was: What topics should be given greatest weight and how should they be ordered in a simulation instructor course for experienced healthcare educators?



Learners in Group Flat-Screen Simulation

## Methods

Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 day simulation instructor course</li> </ul>
Intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve course using feedback</li> </ul>
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>daily 1-minute papers</li> <li>written evaluations</li> <li>watchman notes: flow/engagement</li> <li>faculty debriefs</li> </ul>
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>data were used to make changes before, during, &amp; after 7 courses</li> </ul>
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-minute papers using constant comparison method post-hoc</li> <li>trustworthiness &amp; consistency</li> <li>maintained by triangulation</li> </ul>
Course Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>after each course, faculty adjusted the curriculum based on feedback and emerging themes</li> </ul>

## Results

### Three primary themes emerged:

- Theory is important**  
Few trainees have background in education and simulation theory
- Practical application requires practice**  
All learners wanted more practice debriefing and designing & running scenarios
- Unexpected insights and details matter**  
Learner satisfaction and comfort is crucial  
Model IPE & working with challenging learners for better understanding

Topics were added, deleted, modified, and rearranged with every course iteration i.e. increased debriefing practice & kept theory

## Conclusions

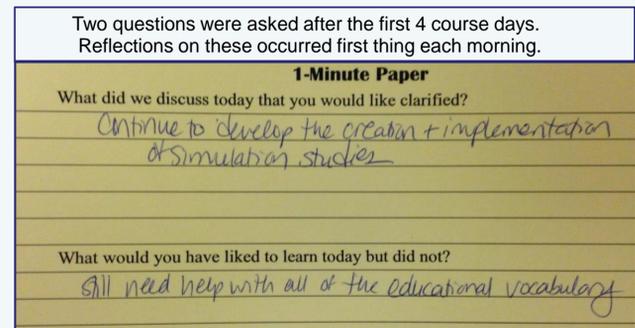
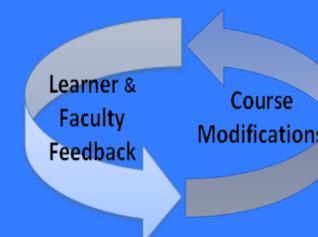
We noted the need to attend more to:

- student preparation
- course goals
- debriefing practice
- clearer explanations for course work
- more faculty support for group work
- affirm students' life-long learning
- support for course graduates

Design for this course drew on adult education literature as well as the healthcare education literature. Simulation education has much to learn from adult education and adult education has something to learn from simulation.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- A safe, trusting, respectful, friendly environment is needed & must be monitored
- Know what you want to teach & what you don't want to teach
- You can't teach everything in one course
- Create the course knowing you will change it often
- Use a crawl, walk, run approach to build learner confidence
- Remind learners that debriefing is difficult & takes practice
- Use watchmen to assess flow and learner engagement
- Use small learner groups for collaborative hands-on work
- Model IPE collaboration as you teach the course
- Alert faculty & techs to learner responses and course changes
- Details matter: room temperature, adequate space, & food



Learners in a Group Disaster Simulation