

**Hawaii International Conference on Education**

**January 7-10, 2003**

**Honolulu, Hawaii**

**Title Page**

**Title:** Infusing Cooperative Learning into School of Education Courses

**Topic Area:** Other Areas of Education

**Type of Session:** Workshop Proposal on Education

**Key Words:** Instructional Strategies, Cooperative Learning, Higher Education

**Workshop Presenters:** Bobbette M. Morgan, Ed. D.

The University of Texas at Brownsville  
80 Fort Brown  
Brownsville, TX 78520

Wk. Phone: (956) 983-7965

FAX: (956) 544-8929

e-mail: [bmorgan@utb.edu](mailto:bmorgan@utb.edu)

Paula Parson, Ph. D.

The University of Texas at Brownsville  
80 Fort Brown  
Brownsville, TX 78520

Wk. Phone: (956) 554-5091

FAX: (956) 554-5107

e-mail: [pparson@utb.edu](mailto:pparson@utb.edu)

**Summary for Conference Program:** Learn to infuse cooperative learning strategies and procedures, appropriate for higher education classrooms, by experiencing them in this session. Leave this session with materials, ideas, and “know how”.

**Hawaii International Conference on Education**  
**January 7-10, 2003, Honolulu, Hawaii**

**Description of Presentation**

**Title:** Infusing Cooperative Learning into School of Education Courses

**A. Purpose**

Participants will learn to infuse cooperative learning strategies and procedures appropriate for higher education classrooms by experiencing them in this session. They will leave this session with materials, ideas, and “know how”. Research on effectiveness of cooperative learning in educational settings will be covered also.

**B. Abstract of Presentation**

Cooperative learning in college classes has its roots in the theories of social interdependence, cognitive-development, and behaviorial learning. Some research provides exceptionally strong evidence that cooperative learning results in greater effort to achieve, more positive interpersonal relationships, and greater psychological health than competitive or individualistic learning efforts (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1994). Among the strategies used in the School of Education courses for infusing cooperative learning will be reading circles, importance of and guidelines for establishing base groups, and how to implement cooperative examinations. Based on the research of one of the presenters eight thematic clusters were formed related to the comments of 140 university undergraduates in education classes who have experienced taking group exams for group grades in a cooperative learning environment. The eight clusters were 1) feelings of support and/or reinforcement; 2) feeling relaxed and/or confident; 3) partners knew the material; 4) deeper understanding of material; 5) not wanting to let their team down; 6) feelings of stress; 7) concern if his/her partners would prepare as carefully as they have; and 8) expressing that they were an effective group.

Learning to teach is a lifelong process and never a finished product; teachers who will be successful must adapt “best practices” to meet the needs of current learners (Shuler, 1996). Modeling cooperative learning strategies in the higher education classroom better prepares new teachers and gives them a level of confidence to implement such strategies in their own classrooms. Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller (2000) state that “The case for high-quality preservice education has been effectively made, given the urgency of filling over two million teacher vacancies within the next 10 years...As expectations for students continue to increase, so will expectations for teachers.”

The research on cooperative learning is impressive and solid. The widespread use of cooperative learning is due to multiple factors. Three of the most important are that cooperative learning is clearly based on theory, validated by research, and operationalized into clear procedures educators can use (Johnson & Johnson, 2000, pg. 1). *Cooperation and Competition: Theory and Research* provides a comprehensive review of the existing research studies related to social

interdependence from 1898 through 1989. They numbered 1,321 separate studies in which... “most have included a control group, randomly assigned individuals to conditions, conducted in North America, were published in journals or books, and involved individuals of a wide variety of ages, socioeconomic levels, ethnic backgrounds, and vocations. Fifty-four percent of these were conducted between 1979 and 1989” (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, pg. 16).

The implications for structuring student to student interaction within the university classroom are clear. The increased depth of understanding, the feelings of support, respect for other’s contributions, and the clarification of information produces more students with a greater awareness of the material and more developed social skills to be contributing members of teams.

Information to be shared is summarized in terms of pros and cons and connected to cooperative learning research studies.

### **C. Description of Participant Involvement**

A variety of cooperative learning strategies will be incorporated into the presentation. Presenters are experienced in using base groups, cooperative examinations for group grades, jigsaw activities, and role assignments to promote positive interdependence. Participants will experience all of these strategies and receive materials summarizing the strategies as well as having the opportunity for discussion about implementation of cooperative learning in the higher education setting. Hands-on and minds-on learning will be the focus of this Professional Workshop.