**Purple- KN notes**

**Themes**

**Research Question:** *What are the opinions and attitudes of online counseling students towards synchronous and asynchronous learning?*

Four themes emerged: 1) Better understanding; 2) advantages and barriers; 3) produced anxiety; and 4) priorities and time considerations with the subtheme of connection emerging in themes 1 and 2.

*Theme 1:* Both asynchronous learning and synchronous learning facilitated increased learning but of different things and in different ways.

*Synchronous*

* Learned more about the material through interacting with other students **and instructor,** being able to see different perspectives, and adapt their thoughts about a subject in real-time.

Discussion point - co-creating meaning learning theory, cognitive flexibility, case consultation

* Had an increased understanding of the major assignments for the class because they were able to ask questions in real-time from the instructor and follow-up with clarifying questions if something was unclear until they gained clarity.
* Had a better understanding of their peers’ communication **and instructor’s communication** intentions through being able to read their tone and other nonverbals when they shared something, which led to better connection with peers.

*Asynchronous*

* Learned more about APA formatting, improved their writing skills, their research ability, and produced more developed answers. Also received feedback each on these elements from their instructor so they could constantly improve.

*Theme 2:* Both asynchronous learning and synchronous had advantages and barriers to learning. The term *barriers* was chosen over disadvantages because very few students reported disadvantages to synchronous learning but they did report barriers that kept them from participating.

*Advantages - Synchronous*

Learning methods discussed above and

* Improved communication
* Deeper connection and bonding with classmates (lasting connections beyond class)
* Collaboration in small groups
* Additional support
* Less time consuming
* **More enjoyable/interesting with interacting with other students in real-time**

*Advantages - Asynchronous*

* Allowed for independent learning that was self-paced and provided flexibility for when students could complete their work **for more developed work**
* Easier to complete on their own time for students who had competing obligations and busy schedules

Discussion Point: Students viewed synchronous learning more positively, reported more advantages, and preferred it over asynchronous learning; however, asynchronous learning produced outcomes that synchronous learning could not, implying that using both forms of learning could produce more comprehensive learning outcomes for counseling students.

*Barriers - Synchronous*

* access to internet
* distractions
* socially or physically drained (health); social burnout
* finding a time everyone could meet
* time to prepare for Zoom class; **(reading/reviewing material)**

*Barriers - Asynchronous*

* Lack collaboration and interaction with other students (Q&A post, More interaction with students and material dependent on number of responses to discussion board but this is outside of the poster’s control
* confusing instructions and couldn’t ask questions
* one-dimensional learning
* unsure of tone (communication)
* more time consuming
* boring
* redundant

*Theme 3:* Both asynchronous learning and synchronous learning produced anxiety for students, but it manifested differently

* Asynchronous, anxiety about whether their answers were correct in their discussion board because they couldn’t see other’s posts before they posted
* Synchronous, anxiety about speaking up in class

Discussion Point: Getting comfortable with being wrong in session; Is it only social anxiety or will it impact their ability to speak up in session with a client or in a case consultation group? **Could be from the awkwardness from not knowing when to speak in a Zoom class (social cues).**

*Theme 4:* Priorities and time considerations seemed to mediate a student’s choice for completing their learning asynchronously or synchronously.

* Whether students prioritized their persona life or class seemed to influence their choice or ability to attend synchronous sessions. Are they able to fit life around class or fit class around life?
* If students were unavailable or unable to attend synchronous class because of work, life, family obligations, or childcare, then they were appreciative of being able to choose to complete the asynchronous discussion board.
* Students often chose synchronous learning though because it was less time consuming compared to completing discussion boards.
* If students did not have the time to prepare before synchronous learning, by reviewing class materials or finding additional literature, then they would choose to complete the discussion boards.

Discussion Point: Different types of students you have in an online program so offering a choice could be beneficial to all students

**Other thoughts:**

**Timing/scheduling seems to dictate many student’s decision to attend class and the effect from that could be how they learn as well? This could lead to doing research on how it impacts the brain (neuropath for research) or lead to looking into how their lifestyles impact their learning? And to see if that impacts grades if they are learning from mandatory ways due to life obligations versus learning their first choice.**