

Teaching Peer Review for Dr. Gillian Marshall Fall 2019

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To: Marcie Lazzari <mlazzari@uw.edu>

Cc: Gillian L Marshall <geegee@uw.edu>

Good morning Marcie and Gillian. First, thank you Gillian for inviting me to sit in on your TSOCWF 101 Introduction to Social Work class. It was an honor to observe your teaching and exciting to see how engaged your students are in the course activities.

The class session I attended on November 5, 2019 was focused on the evolution of the mental health system and the role of social workers in the healthcare system. Dr. Marshall's class was very well organized and she used a variety of methods to engage the students in the course material from a very structured lecture focusing on the evolution of the mental health system, major mental health movements, key figures in the field of Social Work (i.e. Dix, Richmond, and Canon), categories of disorders, and the Mental Health Parity Act. Dr. Marshall provided the students with concrete examples and clear definitions of terms. She went a step further by asking the students questions related to the assigned readings and the lecture, so they could apply the definitions and make connections between the examples shared with the class and the reading and lecture for the day.

There were about 32 students present in the class, and they all were engaged during the lecture. The one recommendation I made to Dr. Marshall is to let them have their break sooner, since a number of the students were first and second year students and research shows their attention span is not as long as that of the older students.

It is clear that Dr. Marshall has established a good rapport with her students. During the class break there were 7 students who lined up to talk with her. The students waiting to talk with her each had either a question or wanted to share their thoughts about the material covered during the lecture. They were very comfortable talking with Dr. Marshall and she gave each student her undivided attention, was clearly listening to what they had to say, and encouraged them by providing sincere praise for the ideas they shared and by directing them to resources that can help enhance their learning. She treated the students who wanted more clarification with respect and took the time to provide more examples to help them understand the terminology.

It is clear that Dr. Marshall has created an inclusive classroom environment where all members of the class are respectful of the learning community in TSOCWF 101. The students were very diverse, and during the break I talked with students from different racial backgrounds, gender, and class standing. I talked with 6 students, who shared with me that they felt they were getting a great introduction to Social Work in the class and that the class has piqued their interest to the point that they plan to take more courses in this discipline. Three of the six said they want to go to graduate school in social work.

Following the break, Dr. Marshall provided the students with some case studies, and they worked in groups to review the case study and the best course of action to meet the needs of the person described in the case study. Each group worked diligently as they discussed the case study and applied what they have learned to date in order to figure out how to meet the needs of the person given the situation described in the case study. I observed each group and all students participated in the activity. The last step for the students was to create a poster with their recommendations and to report out to the class for further discussion.

I also noticed that there were refreshments on a table in the classroom for the students, and a number of them ate the food provided. I told Dr. Marshall after class that although we are not required to bring food for our students, I think it is great that she does provide something for the 8:00 class as we know that both on our campus and nationally that food insecurity is real and many college students deal with it everyday. Her students were very comfortable getting refreshments as needed, and there was no disruption during the lecture, group work, or report outs simply because someone was getting some of the food Dr. Marshall brought to the class. Three of the students told me they were glad she brings refreshments otherwise they would have nothing to eat before class.

Finally, I enjoyed the class and applaud Dr. Marshall for the empathy and patience she demonstrates through her interaction with the students one on one, in small groups, and during the larger class discussion. The course content was interesting. The class was organized, and Dr. Marshall has established a strong community of scholars in TSOCWF 101.

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