

# Effects of the Community Action Poverty Simulation on student implicit biases and student cultural competency

Nathan Chesney and Colleen Marzilli, PhD, DNP  
The University of Texas at Tyler

## Background

### Introduction

As the wealth gap between America's wealth and low-income communities continues to widen, nurses nationwide need to be equipped with compassion and cultural competency for those in poverty. Literature shows that implicit bias not only influences healthcare provider decision making, but small changes in implicit bias can lead to more equitable treatment of patients. The *Healthy People 2020* initiative as well as the American Academy of Nursing identify culturally competent care as a necessity in eliminating health disparities.

This study's purpose is to identify the effects of the Community Action Poverty Simulation on student implicit biases towards low-income communities and student cultural competency related to low-income communities. The researchers hypothesize that CAPS will cause a decrease in implicit biases among BSN students and an increase in cultural competency related to low-income communities.

Income inequality, USA, 1990-2014



### Key Terms

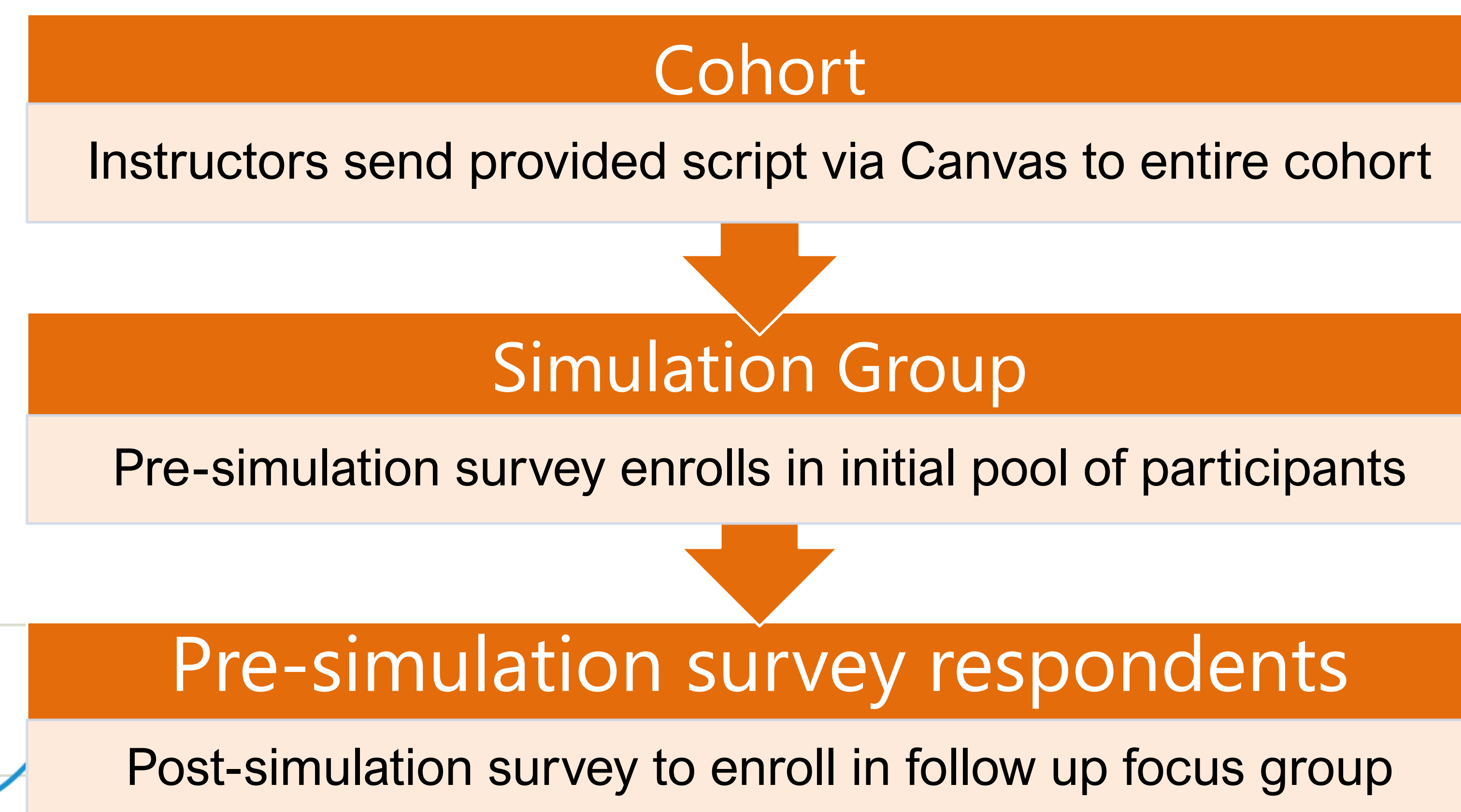
**Implicit Bias:** A subconscious, automatic association of a population or category with a negative stereotype or attribute

**Cultural Competence:** The awareness in Healthcare Providers (HCPs) of the experience, beliefs, and vulnerabilities that make each population unique. Additionally, the behaviors, practices, and policies needed to give quality care in cross-cultural situations

## Methods

### Participants

- 20-30 college students enrolled in the UT Tyler BSN program



### Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS)

- 2-4 hour simulation exercise
- Participants assume the identity of a family facing poverty
- A month's time is simulating during which the participant must make ends meet using only the community resources available.
- Debrief about the experience following completion

## Methods cont.

### Measures and Materials

This mixed methods study uses a sequential, explanatory design using a pre- and post-test followed by a focus group so that the qualitative data informs the quantitative data

### Black-White Implicit Association Test

- Measures automatic associations between poverty and evaluations (good, bad, etc.)
- Difficult to counterfeit
- Better predictor of implicit bias than self-report

### Attitudes towards Poverty scale (ATP)

- Poor people act differently
- Children raised on welfare will never amount to anything
- I believe that poor people have a different set of values than do other people

- 37-item self-report of attitudes towards poverty on a 5-point Likert scale

### Nurses Cultural Competence Scale (NCCS)

- 41 items was developed to measure the concept of cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural sensitivity and cultural skill

## References

- FitzGerald, C. & Hurst, S. (2017). Implicit bias in healthcare professionals: A systematic review. *BMC Medical Ethics*, 18(1), 1-18.
- Income inequality, USA, 1990-2014. (2017). Retrieved from <https://wid.world/country/usa/>
- Perrig, S.-J., & Watson, R. (2012). Construct validation of the Nurse Cultural Competence Scale: a hierarchy of abilities. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 21(11-12), 1678-1684. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2702.2011.03933.x
- Stanhope, M., & Lancaster, J. (2018). Foundations for population health in community/public health nursing. St. Louis, MO: Mosby. The Poverty Simulation. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.povertysimulation.net/about/>
- van Ryn, M., Hardeman, R., Phelan, S. M., Burgess, D. J., Dovidio, J. F., Herrin, J., ... Pzredworski, J. M. (2015). Medical school experiences associated with change in implicit racial bias among 3547 students: A medical students CHANGES study report. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 30(12), 1748-1756.
- Yun, S. H. & Weaver, R. D. (2010). Development and validation of a short form of the Attitude toward Poverty scale. *Advances in Social Work*, 11(2), 174-187.

The University of Texas at

**TYLER Honors**