

**ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**

A COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTANCE EDUCATION DELIVERY MODEL  
FOR A POST DIPLOMA/DEGREE HUMAN SERVICES MANAGEMENT  
CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

BY

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A project submitted to the  
Athabasca University Governing Council in partial fulfillment  
of the requirement for the degree of

MASTER OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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## **ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Athabasca University Governing Council for acceptance of a project entitled “A Community College Distance Education Delivery Model for a Post Diploma/Degree Human Services Management Certificate Program” submitted by Jean Gérard Sauvé in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Distance Education.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my partner and best friend Patricia Lychak and my children Corey and Chelsea. They are the driving force in my life.

## **ABSTRACT**

From 2005 to 2006, the Community Studies Department Chair at Algonquin College approached relevant program advisory committees with the intention of developing a post diploma/degree certificate program in the area of front line human services management. Given the work and personal demands placed on targeted potential students, a distance education approach was suggested. This research project was undertaken to explore content areas and delivery methods in a certificate program that would meet the needs of both potential adult learners and pertinent local human service agencies. A mixed research method was used including online survey and face to face interview methods. Survey invitations were sent out to 112 Ottawa Carleton agencies, administered over a 6 week period, ultimately producing a response rate of 54 returns or 48%. From a quantitative standpoint, survey data revealed that respondents stem from varied social service backgrounds, strongly value a number of human services management skills, express a strong need for leadership/management training and applaud a strong emphasis on online training delivery coupled with some face to face contact. Most participants are comfortable with computer usage and many have access to high speed internet. A good majority have 6 to 10 hours a week to devote to coursework and study. Qualitative results indicate that interviewees underline a range of human services management responsibilities that at times can blur into unforeseen additional worker roles. Team work dynamics and organizational leadership are reported as ongoing management challenges and identified as areas requiring additional training opportunities. This research project shows that there is a need and desire for a Human Services Management Certificate program at Algonquin College.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Algonquin College has served the Ottawa-Carleton Region by developing post secondary applied education for over 40 years. Important partnerships with numerous government agencies, private sector companies and individual stakeholders have played a role in this development. From its inception as a provincially funded institution in 1967, Algonquin evolved from a small campus with a few thousand students to an existing population of over 16000 full time and 36000 part time students. Throughout the 70's, 80's and 90's, ongoing demand for career-oriented education necessitated major expansions of campus facilities including an early learning centre, a horticulture centre and a media centre. Since the year 2000, the college has boomed with the construction of a police and public safety institute, a transportation technology centre, a simulation centre for health studies, recreational facilities, an advanced technology centre and a student residence. A 2007 college proposal to the Ontario provincial government will see a 120 million dollar expansion of the trades and technology division.

The vision within the current strategic plan states that “ Algonquin College will be the leading Canadian College delivering career-focused, quality education supported by student and client-centred service and technology” (Algonquin College, 2003, p.1). The plan prioritizes the pursuit of technological infrastructure excellence, face to face, hybrid and distance education delivery systems. In targeting these priorities, Algonquin has progressively provided state of the art technological tools, materials and supports to its students' population.

In a parallel document entitled “The Professor of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” the college identifies the necessary skills and competencies required by college professors and emphasizes the importance of technology by identifying skills that allow the faculty to select and use technology to “facilitate communication, enhance the presentation of information, produce learning materials and to assist learners to use technology as a tool to support their learning” (Algonquin Academic Strategy, 2003, p.9). Hence, the College is well positioned to offer technologically driven hybrid and distance education courses, diplomas and certificates.

Currently, hybrid courses have become a mandate for the college with a minimum of 20% of all face to face program courses reflecting such a delivery mode. Within 5 years, the College hopes to increase that percentage to 35 with an anticipated plateau of 40. Separate non-hybrid distance learning offerings are encompassed in a separate department and are attached to a number of diplomas such as Police Foundations, Business Administration and Marketing. There are at least 35 certificate programs offered online ranging from General Construction Estimating to Home Childcare to Project Management to Web Developer (Algonquin College, 2007). Although some courses are still delivered through paper based correspondence, the vast majority are delivered asynchronously on a semester or continuous basis.

For the past number of years, Algonquin has used the Blackboard learning management system to serve its student population. This popular, easy to use interface program has been praised by students as indicated by a 2003 study on the usages of Blackboard by Algonquin students (Aksim, 2004). Highlights of the report underline the importance students place on the ease of use, the variety of tools and the ability to

consolidate their learning within courses. Data also supports the motivation of both students and faculty to use this management system (Aksim, 2004). Most recently, the College has increased the broadband range of its networks to accommodate its ever growing student population base.

### Project Context

The School of Health and Community Studies is one of a number of Schools found within the college's structural organization. Specifically, within the Community Studies department a number of programs are offered that focus on human services and in particular front line client care. These programs include the Child and Youth Worker Program, Early Childhood Education Program, Social Services Worker Program, Developmental Services Worker Program and the Recreation and Leisure Program (Algonquin College, 2007). Programs range from 2 to 3 years in length and contain both academic and field placement experiences. Recent college placement statistics indicate that 95% of graduates find work in their chosen field within 6 months after graduation (Student Services, 2006).

For a number of years, community stakeholders have praised these graduates for their strong vocational training. They have however, suggested that additional training in the areas of budgeting, scheduling, shift management, conflict resolution and special projects e.g. summer camps would compliment the existing skill sets of graduates. From 2005 to 2006, the Community Studies chair approached relevant advisory committees with the intention of developing a post diploma certificate program in the area of front line human services management.

The response was overwhelmingly in favour of such a program. Since the majority of students targeted within this program are mature learners with previous experience in human

service agencies, it was decided that a distance education model including some hybrid elements would best respond to the busy lifestyles of a typical adult learner. This research project examines agency management needs and learner preferences as they apply to a distance education delivery model.

It is important to note that the focus of this post diploma/degree certificate program revolves around the potential, recently assigned or expanded management/administrative roles that graduates can assume in various direct care human service agencies. The certificate program would be designed to prepare the student to be proactive, heighten their productivity and performance and facilitate application of important workplace organizational tools and principles. Emphasis will also be placed on achieving leadership, communication skills and human resource management learning outcomes. The purpose of this proposed certificate is not to compete with more extensive programs of study such as undergraduate programs in Human Services Management but to underline the importance of additional applied management graduate skills in basic to intermediate administrative tasks found within human service agencies. Examples of such agencies include group homes, daycare facilities, outreach programs, community centres, shelters, halfway houses, institutions and schools.

To this end, this research project will evaluate community needs with a mixed methods research design of quantitative tools such as a questionnaire and qualitative strategies such as interviews. Data from this research will provide the program with the necessary information to best reflect the management needs of a variety of human service agencies. In addition, the interview method will reveal the phenomenological human nuances of human services management by targeting planned and impromptu management situations and opportunities within direct care client environments. Since most direct care environments

are at times by nature unpredictable e.g. disruptive client behaviour, spontaneous client outings, unexpected client expenses, the phenomenological interview approach will supplement quantitative data with the ad hoc managerial realities of typical human service environments.

### Purposes of the Research Project

The purposes of this project are to identify the needs of online adult learners and those of various human services agencies in order to propose a distance education delivery model for a post diploma/degree human services management certificate program and to suggest an appropriate instructional model.

The following research questions will be addressed in the study:

1. What are the management training needs of human service agencies?
2. What are the needs of potential online adult learners?
3. What is a distance education delivery model best suited for the Human Services Management Certificate program?

In summary, the study is asking what content areas and delivery methods in a community college online post diploma human services management certificate program will meet the needs of both online adult learners and related local service agencies.

### Program Delivery

From Hegel to Bertalanffy and Banathy, systems theory has attempted to unravel what LittleJohn (1997) calls the "links, influences and associations among parts of a system" p.59. Banathy (1995) emphasizes the application of systems analysis to the field of education and encourages its usage to encompass the myriad of issues facing educators today. Moore and Kearsley (1996) further apply systems thinking to distance education as a useful tool to

understand and improve interrelated processes such as learning, teaching, communication, design and management. In this respect, systems theory seems well suited to the analysis of typical community college functional contexts.

Banathy's (1992) systems-environment perspective or lens seems best suited to examine the underlying composition and dynamics of systems, and thus to depict the learning system for the Human Services Management Program. The proposed Algonquin College Human Services Management certificate program will essentially be an open system with its system, subsystems, suprasystem and wider environments including eventual provincial and national landscapes. Systems and Subsystems will include faculty, students, curriculum, communication, technological tools, communication, decision making, and performance monitoring. The suprasystem is indeed the college system itself with its many peripheral systems such as student association, counseling, physical resources, marketing etc. The wider environment consists of the community at large and the career oriented needs it presents to the college via the mechanism of a program advisory committee. The overall context of this system structure will be detailed in another chapter.

#### Operational Definitions for Use in this Project

The following terms may be specialized to the context of the Algonquin Human Services Management Program. They are therefore defined for clarity purposes:

Agency Needs: for the purposes of this project, agency needs will refer to the needs of frontline direct care agencies dealing with children, youth, adults and seniors who may be disadvantaged and/or challenged with special needs and/or troubled.

Child and Youth Workers: designated graduates who are employed in agencies and other facilities concerned with the challenges of troubled children/youth.



Developmental Services Workers: designated graduates who work in public and private settings supporting persons of all ages who may have various physical, mental and/or developmental disabilities.

Direct Care: social service environments where human service workers engage directly with clients.

Early Childhood Educators: designated graduates who teach young children in a variety of preschool and educational settings.

Hybrid Courses: courses which combine face to face student contact with online content and processes.

Learner Needs: will refer to online, mature adults interested in the Human Services Management Program.

Program Advisory Committee: a committee of community stakeholders, faculty, and college management who meet to discuss the directions of a particular program.

Recreation Workers: these designated employees work as recreation programmers and event planners.

Shift Management: workers coordinating shifts according to people movement, documentation and general activities.

Social Service Workers: designated graduates who work with disadvantaged individuals, groups and communities.

### Assumptions

This research project makes the following assumptions. Firstly, it is assumed that all potential online learners filling in a questionnaire will have an interest in the proposed program. Secondly, it is assumed that all agency representatives completing the research

questionnaires will also be interested in the Human Services Management program. Finally, it is assumed that the questionnaires and related interviews will be answered by the respondents in an honest, ethical and accurate fashion.

### Limitations

The targeted community will be limited to the Ottawa-Carleton area. Potential learners will consist of area agency workers while agencies themselves will be limited to those employing graduates of the various previously mentioned human service programs.

### Summary

Algonquin College is well positioned to offer a distance education post diploma/degree certificate in Human Services Management. Its elaborate technological infrastructure allows the institution to offer efficient courses in hybrid or online formats. Blackboard is a reputable learning management system that is well liked by the student population.

The various program advisory committees wish to go forward with a post diploma certificate in human services management to further equip graduates from existing human service programs and potentially university graduates with various basic and intermediate management skills. A distance education model is preferred because of the needs of potential online adult learners.

To this end, the following research study will explore the content areas and delivery methods that will best meet the needs of related local human service agencies. The data results will guide the development of a needs-based online curriculum in human services management.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of literature related to the development of a distance education human services management program. Themes ranging from distance education in Canada to the online adult learner to human services management, models of online educational delivery to existing programs are discussed. A summary of the literature concludes the chapter.

#### Distance Education in Canada

By virtue of its geographic size and relatively small population, Canada fits well into the distance education paradigm. With the advent of audio/video conferencing, the internet and increased transmission bandwidths, learning networks are becoming more and more prevalent in educational and commercial environments. Although Canada first became engaged in distance education through correspondence courses offered by Queen's University in 1889, it was not until the late 1960's that various institutions adopted distance education delivery models to service populations living outside large major centres. (Canadian Association for Distance Education, 1999). Since then, Canada has become a significant player on the world stage. For example, Athabasca University established in 1970 and located in the province of Alberta is considered a national leader in online education serving over 32000 students from Canada and around the world. Its mission statement emphasizes the removal of barriers to University access and excellence in teaching and research. Due to Canada's decentralization system of educational powers, provinces have traditionally focused on local and provincial needs. Athabasca finds itself in a unique

position to service a wide national student base and a much needed national approach to distance education (Davis, 2001).

Partnerships and consortiums have become a popular method to centralize distance education choices for Canadian students. The popular Canadian Virtual University website is essentially a consortium for a number of universities in Canada. Students from around the world can explore access to a wide variety of programs from business administration to education to the humanities which in turn lead to all types of credentials from certificates to diplomas, undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees. (Canada Virtual University, 2007). The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education website identifies a number of other consortiums that include universities and colleges offering programs beyond their local catchment areas (Ontario Institute for Education, 2007). Pidduck and Carey (2006) examined two distance education consortiums including 13 Canadian universities and 8 Canadian universities respectively. Consortium partner selection criteria were summarized as follows:

Table 1. Partner Selection Criteria

<b>Partner Selection Criteria</b>
Personal contact and previous knowledge of partner
Strategic commitment and support
Flexibility and willing to adjust to change
Communications including willingness to talk and make alliance work

Personal interest in the alliance
Financial assets available to put into the partnership
Technical capabilities, people or machines needed for the alliance
Intangible assets: other items of interest
Willingness to share expertise and teaching resources
Unique competencies
Local market knowledge, access

The study found that although the dynamics between players in the two main Canadian distance education consortia could become complicated in terms of government funding, research directional differences and varied ideological stances, familiarity with partners, perception of reputation, resource availability, and governing structure seemed to catalyze partner choices. Consortia continue to evolve in Canada and will solidify national distance education cohesion and infrastructures.

Another example of partnership in distance education is the emergence of local learning networks. A study commissioned by the Office of Learning Technologies part of Human Resources Development Canada presented model examples of effective learning networks (New Economy Development, 1998). Examples included a variety of networks from all provinces. The success of these networks was largely based on partnership players including governments, community based institutions, foundations, private sector firms and individuals. Research showed that all partners were highly motivated to unite given the evolving needs of a knowledge based economy.

An example of a far reaching learning network in Canada is the learning network for the Canadian Department of National Defence. Margueratt and Fahy (2003) explored the efficiency of such a network to reach service men and women who are deployed in various areas of the world. The authors emphasized the changing leadership mindset as to the appreciation of technologically enhanced distance education as a critical tool to create a community of motivated learners (Margueratt & Fahy, 2003).

As an emerging presence in the Distance Education framework, community colleges are reflecting their mandates to offer more accessible training programs to their targeted populations. Through examples such as the OntarioLearn consortium of 22 Ontario community colleges, college partnerships are building sound distance education college program offerings across provinces and the country as a whole. Spronk (1995) identified colleges such as Arctic College in the Northwest Territories that set up a successful computer and literacy development program enabling scattered communities to link with each other and with course instructors. Cambrian College located in northern Ontario in consultation with Aboriginal community representatives developed a native community care, counseling and development program geared to individuals already working in community positions. The college also partnered with Contact North, a learning network geared to serve northern Ontario Aboriginal and French people utilizing distance education methods and technologies (Spronk, 1995).

Given the overall pragmatic nature of community colleges, distance education is an invaluable paradigm for college growth and success. Reaching all types of communities with knowledge based courses and programs, ensures the success of provincial and national economies. Algonquin College with its advanced technological infrastructure, high numbers

of hybrid and distance education courses is extremely well positioned among colleges to be a significant leader in the distance education movement.

### Distance Education Delivery Models

The Institute of Distance Education located at the University of Maryland identifies 3 primary types of distance education delivery models. The distributed classroom model offers courses off campus at selected satellite areas to provide convenience and flexibility to remotely located students while the independent learning model provides a total online system freeing students from time and space restrictions. An example of such a model was developed by Cobban (2000) to facilitate post diploma access to baccalaureate programs in the field of dental hygiene. The last model combines an open learning mode with some classroom interaction otherwise known as a hybrid distance education approach (Institute of Distance Education, 1997). Factors to be considered in the planning of such models include technological infrastructure, student support, faculty/instructor support, multi media course design and organizational dynamics (Rosenberg, 2001).

Systems theory seems to be a valuable tool to ensure that educational organizations consider all important macro and micro dynamic factors when delivering distance education. Cookson (1997) used system theory to compare the distance education delivery efficiency of two university settings. Using Bathany's model of systems analysis (1992) namely the system environment, structure-function and process-behaviour lenses, the author compared various system elements such as suprasystems, systems and subsystems to identify efficiency differences in both educational institutions. One institution fared much better than the other in areas of defined inputs such as expectations, policies, people, money and materials and output areas such as activities and resources. When comparing functions and structures

within the two distance education institutions, again there were differences in terms of input processing, transformation processing and output processing (Cookson, 1997).

Fortune and Warson (1993) examined the possible failures of interdependent system paradigms and identified mitigating factors such as statements of purpose, performance measuring subsystems, conflict of objectives, subsystem intercommunication, influences of the wider environment and imbalances between resources used and quality output. A systems delivery model for the Human Services Management Certificate program is provided in a later chapter to illustrate the important considerations of a typical college institutional environment.

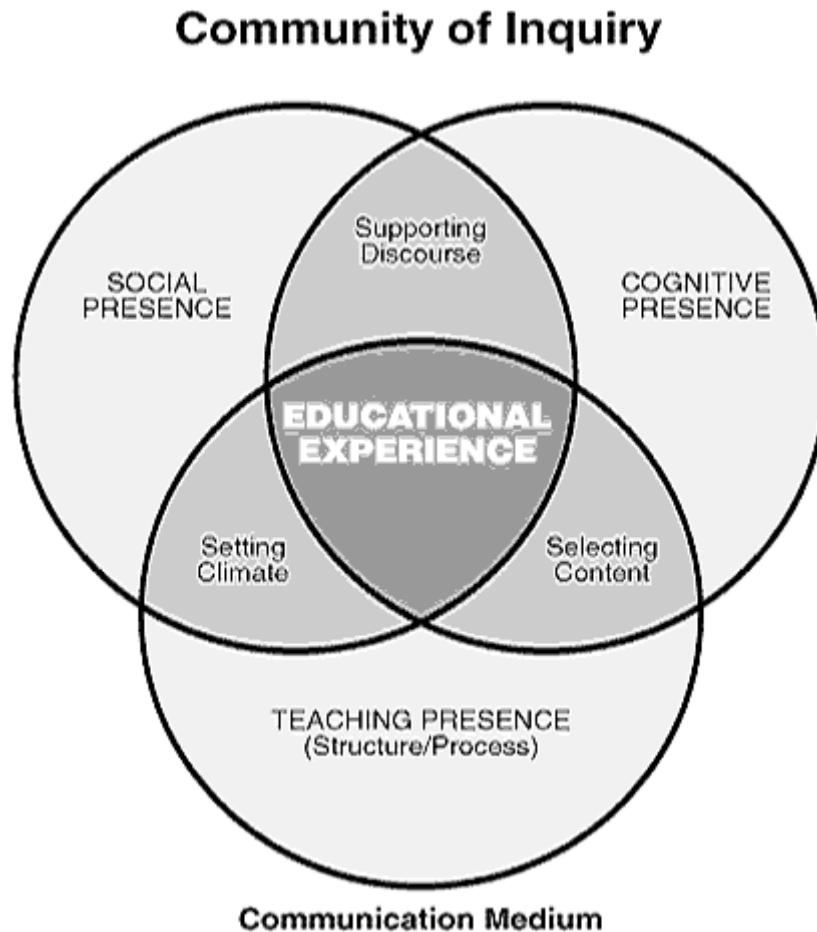
From an instructional design standpoint, accepted delivery models focusing on actual online learning environments are still evolving (Arbaugh, 2007). The Community of Inquiry model developed by Garrison, Anderson and Archer defines an effective e-learning environment through cognitive presence, social presence and teaching presence. Garrison and Anderson (2003) define the overall community of e-learning inquiry framework as follows:

“A critical community of learners, from an educational perspective, is composed of teachers and students transacting with the specific purposes of facilitating, constructing, and validating understanding, and of developing capabilities that will lead to further learning. Such a community encourages cognitive independence and social interdependence simultaneously” (p. 23).

The model presented by Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2001) in Figure 1 explores the relationship and function of these 3 components as they apply to computer mediated communication:



Figure 1. Community of Inquiry Framework (CoI)



Anderson et al. (2001) conducted a content analysis on two 13 week graduate level courses to identify CoI social presence components within asynchronous computer conferences. Once 12 indicators for affective, interactive and cohesive responses were established and delivered as criteria for coding student responses, the content analysis revealed the promising future research on how various components from the Community of Inquiry model could be correlated to learning outcomes.

Ling (2007) explored the Community of Inquiry framework as applicable to a synchronous online constructivist undergraduate information technology course. Two tutorial groups who interacted through collaborative learning within WebCT chat rooms were surveyed to gauge the presence of cognitive and teaching elements. Results indicated that the 3 elements were present in moderated discussions and were well matched with the original constructivist course design goals.

### The Online Adult Learner

As the academic literature on online adult learners evolves, foundations that have long been established to understand adult learners from research provide a point of reference. Adult oriented educators have often been advised to consider contract learning, experiential learning, portfolios and self pacing as critical strategies with adult learners. (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1984/2005; Magnan, 1990; Davis, 1993; Lyons, McIntosh, & Kysilka, 2003). Merriam and Caffarella (1999) emphasize the importance of meaningful learning experiences for adults and encourage educators to be less of an authority figure and transmitter of knowledge and more of a role model and resource person. An important exercise to understanding adult learning needs is to compare adult learners with youth learners. The following comparison presented by the Rochester Institute of Technology (1997) highlights important differences that relate specifically to distance education design for online adult learners:

Table 2. Comparison of Adult and Youth Learners

Adult Learners	Youth Learners
Problem-centered; seek educational solutions to where they are compared to where they want to be in life	Subject-oriented; seek to successfully complete each course, regardless of how course relates to their own goals
Results-oriented; have specific results in mind for education - will drop out if education does not lead to those results because their participation is usually voluntary	Future-oriented; youth education is often a mandatory or an expected activity in a youth's life and designed for the youth's future
Self-directed; typically not dependent on others for direction	Often depend on adults for direction
Often skeptical about new information; prefer to try it out before accepting it	Likely to accept new information without trying it out or seriously questioning it
Seek education that relates or applies directly to their perceived needs, that is timely and appropriate for their current lives	Seek education that prepares them for an often unclear future; accept postponed application of what is being learned
Accept responsibility for their own learning if learning is perceived as timely and appropriate	Depend on others to design their learning; reluctant to accept responsibility for their own learning

Hence, in general, adult learners are more self-guided, bring more life and career experience to their learning and require more pragmatic instruction. When applied to online environments, adult learners also perform as well as in the face to face educational milieu. (Jahn, Krug, & Zhang, 2004). Chyung (2007) assessed the usage of a contract learning strategy with adult online learners to find out that this strategy was not necessary to motivate students. Instead, adult learners in this study were motivated by having choices of activities that most related to their own life and career experiences. Adult online learners perceive the learning itself and types of learning activities as motivating, satisfying catalysts. (Chyung & Vachon, 2005).

Adult learners can at times become anxious in the distance education process. Many face a role contradiction between the role of a student and that of an adult while trying to maintain a sense of empowerment. Garland (2004) examined this contradiction and concluded that such roadblocks as lack of peer support, bureaucratic procedures and frustrations, unsatisfactory relationships with tutors, technology and the need for achievement and fear of failure led to further personal control problems. Such control problems revolved around the need to be an independent learner, time management and overall stress from multiple life and career commitments (Garland, 2004). The online adult learner expects to have a number of choices, options, supports and overall control over their learning experiences.

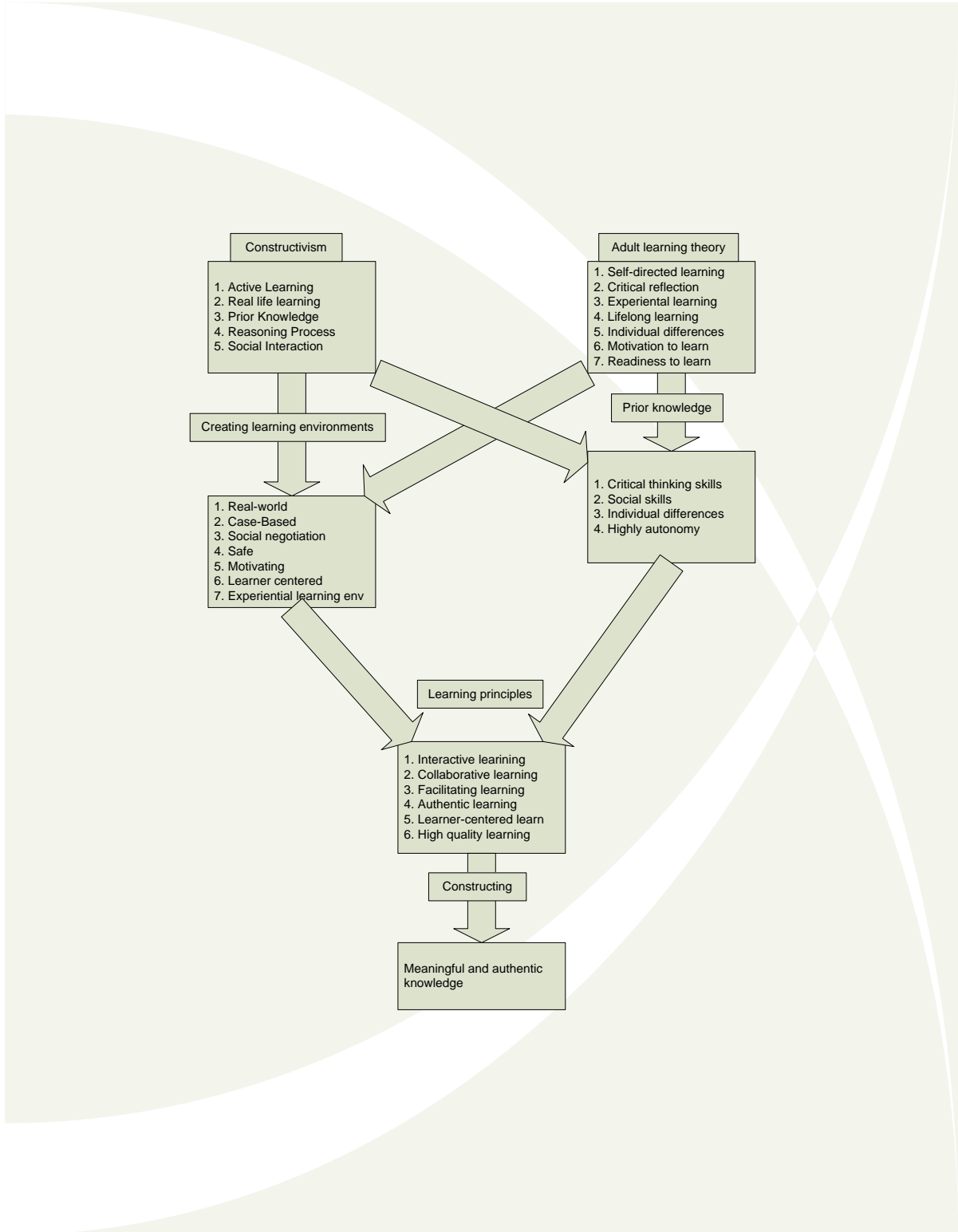
Bender (2003) suggests that online adult learners are at their best when exposed to nonlinear thinking. Linear direction breeds too much of a familiarity and comfort level while non linear presents creative challenges that adults can relate to (Bender, 2003). On the other hand, others such as Braden (1996) believe that linear online direction and design are of

paramount importance but also does not dismiss the importance of lateral thinking.

Therefore, a balance between linear and non linear is suggested to best fit the range of adult needs defined by individual life and career goals.

Constructivism is now a popular approach of satisfying online adult learner needs because of its flexibility and range of learning directions (Alesandrini, 2002). In this vein, instructional principles that guide distance education delivery designs include interactive learning, collaborative learning to learning facilitation and learner-centered learning. The following model depicts a comprehensive application model for online adult learners that encompasses constructivism with adult learning theory, learning environments and learning principles (Huang, 2002):

Figure 2. Constructivist Application Model



Constructivism appears to provide effective scaffolds for acquiring diversified facets of understanding. The notion of accessing multiple learning resources, analysis of information and problem solving fit well with constructivism and its application to real world skills and situations (Sing, 1999). Gabriel (2004) studied expected collaboration in an online course and concluded that participants were motivated to communicate, interact and participate in the online environment. Most students found the work intense but realized the strong benefits of organization, technology, critical thinking. Le Baron and Santos (2005) examined university student reactions to two interactive constructivist online exercises, the Resource Treasure Hunt and Coffee Letters. Both assignments focused on socialization and collaboration. Over 2000 messages were exchanged peer to peer among thirty student participants. Asynchronous and synchronous discussions as well as traffic in the virtual café were the main communication tools used by both students and instructors. There was a strong relationship between the satisfaction of student online interaction and the ease and reliability of the technological infrastructure (LeBaron & Santos, 2005). Given certain mitigating elements such as technology, constructivism can motivate, engage, challenge and satisfy online adult learners. With such significant advantages, constructivism will be heavily factored in the design and delivery of the proposed Human Services Certificate learning outcomes.

In respect to technological usage, online adult learners seem to prefer an easy to use, intuitive learning management system. West, Waddoups, Kennedy and Grahon (2007) examined the Blackboard learning management system; conducting a survey of 124 instructors and 163 students, an analysis of the calls reported by the Blackboard support centre and interviews with a sub-sample of instructors and students. Results indicate that 75% of students found Blackboard easy to use and between 60 to 70% appreciated such

features as announcements, course documents, gradebook and email features. Only 10 to 20% appreciated the synchronous course related discussion board and digital dropbox tools. Almost 90% of students were dissatisfied with the lack of Blackboard system stability such as access to network and gradebook inconsistencies. Overall, the majority of students felt that using Blackboard was an efficient usage of their time. The authors concluded that satisfaction results were likely skewed by the lack of infrastructure/software stability (West et al, 2007). The use of a consistent and predictable technological platform seems to provide an important building block in the design of distance education programs such as the proposed human services management certificate.

### Human Services Management

Journal discussion on human services management is virtually non-existent. Most references closest to the field centre around generic management, or more specifically, financial management. Realistically, most Canadian human social service organizations are simply not built around the goal of profit making. Traditionally, managers of human service systems have originated from a social service practice background. For example, it is not unusual to observe a social worker or other social service practitioner as executive director of a social service agency. For direct care workers, there is virtually no training available in the management dimension of human services. Most aspiring managers pursue generic management courses and apply their principles to human services.

There are also a range of management functions found within direct care social service positions that workers may perform, such as facilitating meetings, managing money or resources, evaluating programs and personnel, supervising volunteers or employees, communicating effectively within and outside the agency and developing/revising agency



policies. This section will examine various components of human services and how they can be linked to unique management challenges.

Ethical Management. Mark Pastin, (1986), a leader in business ethics identified the following four principles for highly ethical organizations:

1. They are at ease interacting with diverse internal and external stakeholder groups. The ground rules of these firms make the good of these stakeholder groups part of the organizations' own good.
2. They are obsessed with fairness. Their ground rules emphasize that the other persons' interests count as much as their own.
3. Responsibility is individual rather than collective, with individuals assuming personal responsibility for actions of the organization. These organizations' ground rules mandate that individuals are responsible to themselves.
4. They see their activities in terms of purpose. This purpose is a way of operating that members of the organization highly value. And purpose ties the organization to its environment (p. 194).

In a further perspective of effective management, Mark Mallinger (1998) describes the conclusion of a survey gauging the nature of management skills from business school faculty:

“The effective 21st century manager is likely to be a transformational leader. That is, a masterful change agent who, through the use of outstanding interpersonal skills and analytical application, is able to motivate others by sharing a strategic vision, while at the same time adhering to a rigorous ethical code”. (p. 1).

By their very nature, human service agencies reflect the mandate of social responsibility and can otherwise adhere to the stated ethical principles. Such agencies are expected to efficiently serve client bases and to provide vision for ongoing service development. Ethical management challenges can be abundant as there are often value conflicts in human service ideologies, where different solutions can be equally justifiable and decision consequences vary across clients. Human service agencies managers may seek out direction for ethical management through the development of codes of ethics and/or conduct and related policies and procedures. For example, the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (2007) presents a detailed code of ethics and related standards of practice emphasizing elements from professional obligation, integrity, objectivity, competence, confidentiality and conflict of interest to detailed policy and procedure directives. As one of many social service fields with such codes and standards of practice, the Ontario social work field defines explicit expectations for workers and managers to follow. Since such directional paradigms in social services can at times lead to varying perspectives and interpretations, conflict resolution/mediation becomes a critical skill for the human services manager. Kindler (1998/2006) identifies conflict resolution values such as preserving dignity and respect, listening with empathy, finding common ground without forcing change and honouring diversity, all which fit extremely well into human service management situations.

Supervision. Human Services managers are responsible for hiring, assessing performance and promotion of staff. Poindexter and Valentine (2007) identify 3 categories for human services supervision:

1. Managing, monitoring and evaluating programs and people (administrative supervision).
2. Supporting volunteers, students, and workers in relation to individual practice, independence, and growth (clinical supervision).
3. Educating, mentoring, and training volunteers, students and workers (staff development). (p. 187)

Supervisors are responsible to agency clients, superiors and agency workers. The work requires an array of intervention skills from administrative, clinical and expressive-supportive. Supervision issues include self-management, dependence and independence, client-counsellor relationships, supervisor/supervisee differences and similarities, culture and communication problems, technology and supervision, violence, substance abuse in the workplace, interdisciplinary teams, workers with personal problems and issues of ethics (Dolgoff, 2005).

Leadership. The literature on leadership has long debated whether management is a subset of leadership or whether leadership is indeed a subset of management (Gardner, 1990). Shriberg, Lloyd, Shriberg and Kumari (2005) emphasize that management and leadership overlap but represent different skill sets. Managers use values, policies, procedures, schedules, incentive and discipline while leaders also challenge their people to achieve goals by creating visions for the future. Shriberg et al. (2005) identify general areas such as ethics, vision and multiculturalism as catalysts to great leadership.

Most of these management/leadership characteristics are prevalent in the various fields of social services as most management functions are people oriented and involve motivation and much teamwork. Also, since ethics management is instrumental in social services, leadership behaviours are paramount to successful non profit organizations. Dubrin (2007) identifies the following leadership behaviours that, although intended for the business community, fit directly into human services management:

- Being honest and having integrity in dealing with others
- Paying attention to all stakeholders
- Building community
- Respecting the individual
- Accomplishing silent victories (p. 172)

Dubrin (2007) also emphasizes the leader's obligation to the good of society and the assurance that a product or service be in the best interest of the community.

Good leaders build teams and, in the social services, teamwork is directly related to the welfare of targeted clients. Tjosvold and Tjosvold (1993) developed a cooperation theory in team building that empowers workers by having them participate in the development of policies, systems and procedures, having them express their values, aspirations and feelings and having them be accountable to each other and to teams. Leadership in social service systems is different from business organizations in that the latter focus largely on profitability while the former work to ensure evolving social benefits to targeted clients. The leadership thrust is therefore anchored in the therapeutic needs of the clients and embraces the cohesiveness and harmony of its team players.

Technology. In human services, technology has helped bridge the practice needs of the worker with the information needs of the manager. With the advent of computer software tools such as the Computer Assisted Social Services system (CASS), professionals can keep client records and notes, administer social histories, clinical questionnaires and screening devices, conduct clinical interviews and administer/score various evaluative mechanisms (Nurius & Hudson, 1993). Although actual online counseling has been used with mixed success, the advantages have included improving client access in remote areas, providing flexibility in scheduling sessions and facilitating data collection and research. Disadvantages have focused on varying professional levels of technological expertise, lack of confidentiality, lack of body language cues and location specific variables (Neukrug, 2004).

Excel has long been an industry software standard for financial accounting and overall data processing. However, minimal literature exists as to how Excel can best be applied to human service scenarios. Human services managers use Excel in a variety of ways to plan and operate budgets, tabulate agency data and organize research information. Other situations more particular to human services can include recording agency activities such as fundraising, volunteer commitments, and event registrations (Weinbeck & Weinbeck, 2006). Excel offers a wide range of usages that can be particularly useful to a human services manager.

Managing databases has become easier with the availability of commercial database management products. Such tools are usually targeted for larger organizations than the usual human service agency. These smaller organizations can use similar programs such as Portfolio, Microsoft Access, IBM's Lotus or Borland's Paradox (Clolery, 2004).

Rosenzweig (2004) summarizes the benefits of technology in human services by indicating

that: “with each advance in technology, applications will become more transparent to you and easier to you. There will be many more changes, and they will occur at a much faster pace, bringing human service professionals good news” (p. 367).

When undertaking, monitoring or assessing agency research, managers can also use the SPSS package to present data analysis results through a variety of statistical methods. Without extensive training, SPSS users can present computer assisted data processes in customized charts and graphs. (Norusis, 2006).

Overall, ongoing technology can meet important social service agency needs and is a necessary learning curve for human service managers. Easy access to a broad spectrum of information and data will allow a manager to keep extensive record keeping down to a manageable task.

### Existing Programs

Human services management programs are very few in numbers across North America. An extensive internet search has revealed one undergraduate degree, one applied degree, two certificates from university settings and one certificate from an Ontario community college. This section will briefly examine each program with its delivery systems, curricula and comparisons with the needs of targeted students of the proposed Human Services Management Certificate program at Algonquin College.

The University of Phoenix offers both campus and online programs ranging from associate to graduate and doctoral level degrees. The Bachelor of Science in Human Services Management consists of 60 credits with 20 courses with a completion tuition cost of approximately 30000 dollars. The delivery mode is online while the average part time

completion time is averaged at 7 to 9 years. The curriculum covers a range of topics found in Appendix A.

Insofar as this program is an undergraduate degree, qualified candidates for the proposed Algonquin certificate program have received training through their 2 to 3 year diploma programs in many of the University of Phoenix course areas. For example, Child and Youth Workers, Early Childhood Education Workers, Social Service workers, Developmental Service Workers have studied models of effective helping, child development, cultural diversity and special populations, advocacy and ethical issues (reference to monographs). Hence, these college graduates have a reasonable base leading to a potential certificate in Human Services Management.

Loyalist College is a community college located in Belleville, Ontario that offers a Bachelor of Applied Arts in the area of Human Services Management. This four year applied degree is open to secondary school graduates as well as graduates from such programs as the Social Services Worker, Early Childhood Education, Developmental Services Worker, Child and Youth Worker Recreation and Leisure programs. The program is offered face to face on a full or part time basis. The curriculum is listed in Appendix B.

This applied degree also includes a 14 week co-op placement within a selected human services agency. Typical graduates from the above noted college programs can negotiate transfer of credits in such areas as Sociology, Psychology, Introduction to Community Services, Social Psychology, and Computer Applications.

McGill University offers a certificate in Health and Social Services Management that is available to students with a CEGEP diploma, students 21 years of age or over who do not have the normal academic background for admission but can be admitted as mature students.

Special qualifying programs are offered to students between 18 and 21 who have a high school certificate. Classes are offered face to face during regular semesters from 6 to 9 p.m.

The curriculum consists of one co-requisite, 9 required courses and one elective course and is identified in Appendix C.

The program covers major areas of human services management and will admit noted college program graduates with equivalency consideration of an Ontario community college diploma for the required CEGEP credential. The on campus course offerings offer less flexibility than a distance education delivery model.

The Latin American Health Institute within Suffolk University in Boston Massachusetts offers a graduate level certificate program in Health and Human Services Management. Applicants are screened on the basis of existing management responsibilities, sponsorship from an existing employer, commitment to completing the one year program on track and to staying with their current employer for at least one year after graduation. The program consists of 5 face to face course training blocks as listed in Appendix D.

This on campus program is designed for selected existing local managers with undergraduate degrees who are pursuing a graduate level certificate program. The training for every block takes place on five consecutive Fridays and accordingly participants are released from their work duties by their respective sponsors.

Fanshawe Community College located in London, Ontario offers a post diploma certificate in Human Services Management through its Continuing Education department. Admission into the program is available to graduates of any community college human service diploma program. Insofar as the curriculum is offered in various formats including face to face, online and hybrid, course availabilities do not always assure an exclusive online



program trajectory. Required courses found in Appendix E are offered from various areas in the college including business and health sciences.

While the course titles and course descriptions in this program are generic in nature and are applicable to any management setting, there does not seem to be a great deal of course specific references to human services paradigms. Graduates from the noted Algonquin programs would easily qualify for this management certificate but would potentially be limited by the inconsistent catalogue availabilities of online, hybrid and face to face courses.

In summary, there are only a handful of programs across North America offering Human Services Management education/training. From an undergraduate degree and applied degree programs both offering core and peripheral courses to more specific post degree and post diploma certificate programs presenting a more focused core of courses, the human services management delivery models range from strictly online, to hybrid and face to face to a mixture of all modes (Table 3). Admission criteria to these programs vary from a high school diploma and mature student status to a community college diploma or university degree.

The intended delivery model for the proposed Algonquin College Human Services post diploma program is indeed to ensure flexibility, consistency, a comprehensive pedagogy, a systems based organizational structure and graduate skill sets that are representative of both learner and community agency needs. The research data in this study will gauge both the curricular and career based requirements of various human services community agencies.

Table 3. Comparison of Existing Human Services Management Programs

Human Services Management Program	University of Phoenix	Loyalist College	McGill University	Suffolk University	Fanshawe College
Program Type	Online	Face to face	Face to face	Face to face	Online/hybrid
Credential	Degree	Applied Degree	Certificate	Graduate Certificate	Certificate
Program Length	4 years	4 years	1 year	1 year	1 year
Admission Requirements	High School	High School	CEGEP	Undergraduate Degree	College Diploma
Curriculum	20 courses	36 courses	9 courses	10 courses	6 courses
Co-op Requirement	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

### Summary

The literature suggests that distance education in Canada through consortiums and partnerships can allow programs such as the proposed certificate program to become accessible to provincial and national student populations. Distribution models can efficiently serve online adult learners who are for the most part self directed and reasonably motivated. The field of Human Services Management which is mostly anchored in non profit operations finds itself in relative literature infancy but borrows a number of important management principles from the business world. Relatively few institutions offer a specific Human Services Management program and the format varies from undergraduate to applied degree to certificate credentials.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### Research Methodology

As outlined in the introduction, this project will answer the following research questions:

1. What are the management training needs of Ottawa Carleton region human service agencies?
2. What are the needs of potential online adult learners working in human service agencies?
3. What is a distance education delivery model that is best suited for the proposed Human Services Management Certificate program?

Data will define the content areas and delivery methods in a community college online human services management certificate program that best meet the needs of online adult learners and related local service agencies. The type of research design utilized is the design and demonstration examples design as outlined by Mauch and Park (2003) through examples such as personnel training curricula, professional education programs and instructional materials. Since the management tasks of potential program graduates of the Human Services Certificate program are determined by standard responsibilities and at times spontaneous management scenarios, a mixed research method is warranted. For quantitative data collection, a questionnaire was administered to gauge learner needs and agency needs. Qualitative data was collected to assist in the interpretation of quantitative data. Five interviews were conducted with key agency managers to better understand, identify and

interpret the day to day subjective nuances involved in direct care management. A sequential strategy as underlined by Creswell (2003) is best suited with the interpretation of quantitative data presented first, followed by the support of qualitative results.

### Specific Procedures

The research procedures undertaken are as follows:

1. Identified email addresses of all major social service agencies in the Ottawa Carleton area.
2. Designed questionnaire to gauge agency/learner needs as related to human services management.
3. Pretested questionnaire for readability, clarity and usability.
4. Identified 5 agency managers to interview.
5. Applied for research ethics approval from Athabasca University.
6. Questionnaire administration prepared through Zoomerang.
7. Questionnaire administration through Zoomerang March 2008.
8. Conduct interviews with identified agency representatives (March, 2008).
9. Data collection March-April, 2008.
10. Data analysis and presentation May-June, 2008.

The above sequence has taken place from January 2008 to June 2008.

### Research Population and Sampling

The overall research population consists of all related Ottawa-Carleton social service agency learners and managers. The learner/agency convenience sample canvassed included local agency managers as well as potential students who work within such agencies. The project survey invitations including cover letter (Appendix F) were sent out mid February

2008 to 112 Ottawa Carleton social service agencies. The survey was administered over a 6 week period, ultimately producing a response rate of 54 returns or 48%. All respondents agreed to the project consent protocol as prescribed and approved by the Athabasca University Ethics Committee. See Appendix H.

Five various local agency managers were selected on the basis of a variety of client settings/services to discuss the subjective elements found in day to day human service management. Qualitative data supported the quantitative data to provide additional perceptions about the learning needs of direct care staff who often assume basic administrative duties.

### Instrumentation

The agency/learner needs questionnaire consisted of a Likert type response scale for questions designed on basis of findings in the research literature and existing program curricula. The instrument was pilot tested with a small number of respondents to gauge its validity and reliability. Over 2 questionnaire trials, feedback from participants indicated that the questionnaire was clear, consistent and objective. Results comparing the first and second trials for each respondent were very similar with no apparent change in underlying conditions. External validity was estimated through many existing commonalities between Canadian Human Service agency settings including client settings, staff composition, legislative standards and service ideologies. Any necessary adjustments were made to the questionnaire which was then posted and accessed by participants through the Zoomerang survey data collection system. A copy of the final survey is found in Appendix G.

The interview format consisted of a phenomenological qualitative research approach with questions asked to capture individual interpretive aspects of day to day direct care

human services management. Interview questions focus on work life of managers and direct care staff, how they assume administrative tasks and mediate conflicts. Meaning units such as general management responsibilities, organizational challenges, spontaneous management tasks, documentation/data collecting and leadership mindsets emerged and were documented as managers discuss and describe their productivity/performance roles and those of direct care staff.

### Data Collection

Data was collected through the Zoomerang online survey service. A timeline of 2 months from March to April 2008 was used to give participants an opportunity to complete the survey.

Interviews were scheduled in March and completed within the agency milieu or on the college campus. Feedback was processed and categorized according to a phenomenological interview approach through the development and analysis of relevant meaning units.

### Treatment of the Data

The sequential explanatory mixed research design strategy as outlined by Creswell (2003) describes the approach used in this study. The priority focus is on the quantitative data while the qualitative data supports primary findings with individual interpretations of the day to day realities of human services management work.

Once the data was collected through Zoomerang, tables were constructed to depict descriptive data. Analysis includes respondent demographics, needs, likes, dislikes and preferences as applicable to a distance education delivery mode as well as specific agency needs as related to the proposed certificate program areas of study. Interview data was

processed according to meaning units that clearly categorize the organized and spontaneous dimensions of human service management.

### Summary

Collected data provides important information to answer the research questions. A proposed curriculum will reflect both potential student and agency needs, while fitting into distance education and instructional delivery models.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This chapter describes results from quantitative and qualitative data collected for the project. The quantitative section will include survey results attesting to demographic characteristics, agency needs, student learning needs and preferences, course/subject areas, motivating factors, constraints and barriers, and other comments. The qualitative interview data will highlight meaning units such as management responsibilities, organizational challenges, spontaneous management tasks, documentation and data collecting and leadership. In this respect, qualitative data sets will support primary quantitative measurements with specific individual reality perceptions of selected human services management challenges.

#### Quantitative

Demographic Characteristics. All responses were received from the general Ottawa-Carleton region with 98% of respondents living less than 100 km from Algonquin College. The most prevalent age group was found in the 41-50 range at 37%; the 31-40 group measured at 24%. Table 5 reports fewer percentages at the 20 to 25, 26 to 30 and over 50 groups.

Table 4. Respondent Age Groups

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	8	15%
26-30	6	12%



31-40	13	25%
41-50	19	37%
Over 50	7	13%
Total	54	100%

In reference to type of education, 31% have completed a degree in social sciences while 31% are Early Childhood Diploma graduates. Child and Youth Worker graduates, Social Service Diploma graduates and Developmental Services Worker graduates were measured at 23%, 6% and 6% respectively. Forty four percent of respondents included additional or unique credentials to the survey question. These ranged from Masters in Social Work, Human Resources Certificates, Bachelors in Commerce, Foster Care Certificates to Bachelor of Arts in English and Political Science. A complete list of answers to the Other category answers are found in Appendix I.

Table 5. Respondent Education

Type of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Degree in Social Sciences	16	31%
Early Childhood Education	16	31%
Child and Youth Worker	12	23%
Developmental Services	3	6%
Recreation/Leisure	0	0
Other, please specify	23	44%

All survey participants were asked questions about his/her comfort level with computers, availability of computers, fax machines, high speed internet, email access and related user comfort. Ninety percent reported that they were comfortable with a functional level of computer usage, 98% reported having a computer at home, 88% indicated having a computer at work, while 96% indicated that they had high speed internet access. One hundred percent were satisfied with both their email access and usage.

Respondents were asked about the nature of their organizations. Table 6 indicates the breakdown of various selected types of organizations. Early Childhood Education Services comprised 18% of the sample while Residential Services reflected 12%. Twenty five percent of participants provided additional or unique types of agency organizations. These ranged from hospital services, rehabilitation, family life education, foster care and developmental services. It is important to note that most of the answers compiled in the Other section of this question were related in some way to one or more of the question choices, e.g. school based mental health centre, foster care. A complete list of additional and unique other answers have been included in Appendix J. Most respondents identified the names and addresses of their respective agencies. A complete list of agency names is found in Appendix K.

Table 6. Nature of Social Service Organizations

Nature of Organization	Frequency	Percentage
Early Childhood Education	18	35%
Residential	12	24%

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Social Assistance	4	8%
Drop in Centre	7	14%
City Program	3	6%
Emergency Shelter	3	6%
School Based	9	18%
Outreach	5	10%
Other, please specify	25	49%

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Forty nine respondents identified their position titles within their agencies. Out of those persons, 79% were existing managers such as executive directors, program managers and team leaders. This represents a wide range of authority and responsibility. Twenty one percent were identified as practitioners such as Early Childhood Educators, Child and Youth Workers and teachers. A full list of position titles is found in Appendix L.

Agency Needs. Agency participants were asked to rate the importance of identified human service management skills as applicable in their own agencies. Table 7 presents the degree of importance attached to a number of identified human service management skill areas. The most highly rated management skill set was reported as listening skills at 92%. Interpersonal skills and oral communication were ranked at 90% and 87% respectively. Agency representatives were clear on the importance of people skills in a human services management position. Problem solving was underlined by 79% as very important followed by initiative (73%) and organizational skills (67%). Respondents also rated decision making (67%), organizational skills (67%), and negotiation skills (58%) as significant. Written

communication was measured as very important at 57% and important at 41% while organizational skills resulted in 67% very important and 31% important ratings.

The common thread running through the top rated human services management skills points to leadership, including good interpersonal skills, listening skills, oral communication, problem solving and good negotiation skills. Organizational, decision making and written communication skills together averaged quite high with 63% seeing these as very important.

Table 7. Required Human Services Management Skills

	Very important	Important	Not important	Does not apply	No opinion
Interpersonal skills	47	5	0	0	0
	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Listening skills	48	4	0	0	0
	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%
Oral communication	45	7	0	0	0
	87%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Written communication	29	21	1	0	0
	57%	41%	2%	0%	0%
Organizational skills	35	16	1	0	0
	67%	31%	2%	0%	0%
Negotiation skills	30	15	3	3	1
	58%	29%	6%	6%	2%
Problem solving	41	10	1	0	0
	79%	19%	2%	0%	0%

Decision making	35	16	1	0	0
	67%	31%	2%	0%	0%
Initiative	38	14	0	0	0
	73%	27%	0%	0%	0%

Course/Subject Areas. Survey participants were asked to select potential courses/subjects deemed important to their agency. Table 8 depicts the ranking of such courses. The top three choices rated as very important were communication skills for the human services professional (77%), professional, ethical and legal issues in human services (69%) and leadership in social service organizations (63%). Most of the remainder of the course/subject areas as seen in the table are deemed very important to important. This data tends to confirm what the literature and existing program curricula specify as critical components of the human services management field. The following subject areas were identified as key content areas by agency representatives: leadership, communication, management theory, social policy, professional issues, programming planning, labour and employment law, intercultural relations, financial accounting and technology .

Table 8. Potential Courses/Subject Areas as Rated by Survey Participants

	Very important	Important	Not important	Does not apply	No opinion
Communication skills	40	12	0	0	0
	77%	23%	0%	0%	0%
Organizational behaviour	25	26	1	0	0
	48%	50%	2%	0%	0%
Models of effective help	28	18	5	0	1
	54%	35%	10%	0%	2%
Management theory	24	22	5	0	1
	46%	42%	10%	0%	2%
Professional ethical and legal issues	36	15	1	0	0
	69%	29%	2%	0%	0%
Financial accounting	11	28	11	2	0
	21%	54%	21%	4%	0%
Technology in human services	9	37	6	0	0
	17%	71%	12%	0%	0%
Intercultural relations	27	22	3	0	0
	52%	42%	6%	0%	0%
Programming planning	29	21	0	1	1
	56%	40%	0%	2%	2%
Social policy	23	25	4	0	0
	44%	48%	8%	0%	0%

Issues and trends	15	28	9	0	0
	29%	54%	17%	0%	0%
Leadership	33	14	3	1	1
	63%	27%	6%	2%	2%
Labour law	21	25	2	0	2
	42%	50%	4%	0%	4%

Motivating Factors. Survey results indicate that a desire for increased knowledge (67%) is the most highly rated motivating factor to pursuing a human services management certificate. The interesting second highest rated factor is personal satisfaction (58%) followed by a desire for career advancement (52%). Desire for career mobility is rated at 48%. The bulk of answers as depicted in Table 9 fall within the range of very important to important. Results seem to indicate that a balance exists between personal satisfaction/desire for increased knowledge and desire for career mobility and advancement.

Table 9. Motivating Factors to Pursue Certificate Program

	Very important	Important	Not important	Does not apply	No opinion
Personal Satisfaction	30	20	1	1	0
	58%	38%	2%	2%	0%
Desire for increased knowledge	35	15	1	1	0
	67%	29%	2%	2%	0%
Desire for increased career	25	18	8	1	0

mobility	48%	35%	15%	2%	0%
Desire for career advancement	27	16	8	1	0
	52%	31%	15%	2%	0%

The survey also explored a number of factors ranging from financial considerations to communication with instructors that could influence a potential student's choice of and success within a certificate program. As outlined in Table 10, length of certificate program (67%), flexibility in scheduling (57%), work responsibilities (53%) and financial considerations (46%) are the most highly rated choice/success factors. Closely behind and generally rated as very important to important are family obligations (44%), time management (44%), communication with instructors (44%) and a belief in one's ability to succeed (43%) Interestingly enough, 44% indicate no child concerns. This suggests many have a family life where children who are more independent from their parents. Overall family responsibilities however still rated highly at 77% between being very important and important. Communication with other students was rated more highly in the important category (57%) whereas communication with instructors was rated 44% in the very important category. This data indicates that potential students value communication with other students but tend to value the interaction with instructors more. In the final analysis, both types of communication are quite similar when totaling the very important and important categories. Generally, potential students seem to be motivated to learn, cognizant of work and family obligations and mindful of the length and cost of a certificate program.



Table 10. Choice/Success Factors for Potential Students

	Very important	Important	Not Important	Does not apply	No opinion
Financial consideration	24	21	6	1	0
	46%	40%	12%	2%	0%
Distance from campus	10	24	14	3	1
	19%	46%	27%	6%	2%
Transportation concerns	3	15	24	8	1
	6%	29%	47%	16%	2%
Work responsibilities	27	19	3	2	0
	53%	37%	6%	4%	0%
Family obligations	23	17	8	4	0
	44%	33%	15%	8%	0%
Child Care concerns	4	8	17	23	0
	8%	15%	33%	44%	0%
Flexibility in scheduling	29	17	4	1	0
	57%	33%	8%	2%	0%
Belief in ability to succeed	22	23	4	1	1
	43%	45%	8%	2%	2%
Time management	23	23	4	1	1
	44%	44%	8%	2%	2%
Communication with other students	8	28	11	1	1
	16%	57%	22%	2%	2%

Communication with instructors	23	20	7	1	1
	44%	38%	13%	2%	2%
Length of certificate program	34	14	2	1	0
	67%	27%	4%	2%	0%

Microsoft Excel was clearly the most valued computer application. As presented in Table 11, 92% of participants rated Excel as very important or important. Acces, SPSS and Scheduler were mostly rated as unimportant although it is interesting to note that many responses were identified as having no opinion. Hence, some respondents may not have been familiar with some of the computer application choices. A few persons identified MS Word under other applications. Word was not included as a survey choice as it was considered more of a staple application than a specific tool related to human services management.

Table 11. Importance of Computer Applications to Human Services Management

	Very important	Important	Not important	Does not apply	No opinion
MS Excel	22	26	2	0	2
	42%	50%	4%	0%	4%
Elect Scheduler	0	7	17	6	18
	0%	15%	35%	12%	38%
SPSS	3	8	16	8	15
	6%	16%	32%	16%	30%
MS Access	4	9	22	4	10
	8%	18%	45%	8%	20%

Other application	15	4	3	3	16
	37%	10%	7%	7%	39%

When agency representatives were asked their preference as to the potential course delivery formats, 76% preferred a total computer based communication, 76% also chose a combination of classes and online, 61% emphasized correspondence study, and 45% indicated that concentrated weekend classes and internet contact would be suitable. Two percent chose full time study as a preference. Given multiple possible choices to this question, the overall preference as depicted in Table 12, seems to revolve around some type of online delivery with some options such as face to face and concentrated weekend study.

Table 12. Program Delivery Preferences

Correspondence study	31	61%
Computer based/internet	39	76%
Combination of classes and internet	39	76%
Concentrated weekend classes/internet	23	45%
Full time study	1	2%
Other	4	8%

Overall Other Survey Comments. Fourteen respondents provided additional comments to the questionnaire. A variety of comments were presented ranging from endorsing the human services management certificate proposal, emphasizing the importance of coupling

face to face and online delivery formats to the importance of including prior learning advanced standing for managers anticipating the opportunity for further training. A complete list of other overall comments is included in Appendix N.

### Qualitative

For the qualitative portion of the research project, 5 managers from various human service agencies were invited to an interview to discuss the day to day realities and challenges of human services management work. Each participant was asked the following 5 questions:

1. What are the general management responsibilities for a social service agency manager and direct care worker?
2. What are some of the organizational challenges for social service managers and direct care workers?
3. What are some of the spontaneous management tasks that could arise in a social service environment?
4. How important are documentation and data collecting in your agency?
5. When looking at agency teamwork, how would you describe the necessary organizational and leadership mindsets among team members?

Susan. Susan is a seasoned executive director of Lifetime Networks which is an agency focusing on the community integration of developmentally disabled children and adults. She has had over 25 years experience in various managerial roles as applied to the field of developmental disabilities. Her interview was conducted in the agency March 7, 2008 and lasted 34 minutes.

For question 1, Susan identified leadership, programming board consultations, recruitment, strategic planning, financial planning, special event sponsorships as important management responsibilities. For direct care workers, management tasks include leadership, program management, special events coordination and committee work. When asked about organizational challenges for both managers and direct care workers (question 2), Susan emphasized the lack of leadership and management training. She was emphatic as to how such deficiencies can greatly affect agencies. Susan also identified written communication, group work dynamics and conflict mediation as additional organizational challenges. For direct care workers, written communication and team work were noted as common organizational challenges. Question 3 identified certain spontaneous management tasks arising in a social service environment. In this respect, Susan underlined mediation of conflict with staff and client families as well as critical incident reporting. When asked in question 4 about documentation and data collecting, Susan felt that there was often too much emphasis on documentation in some cases to the detriment of client needs. She felt that more stringent government documentation is challenging managers to balance client needs with bureaucratic needs. For the last question, Susan indicated that when referring to necessary organizational and leadership mindsets, more training opportunity promotion is required in manager-staff facilitation, team work guidance, agency cohesiveness and people skills. An ongoing willingness to groom junior staff into more management orientated positions or responsibilities was also noted.

Dave. Dave is a practice leader for Child and Youth Workers at the Eastern Ontario Children's Hospital. Dave is also a graduate of the Algonquin Child and Youth Worker

program and has been in this professional leadership position for over 10 years. The interview with Dave was conducted at the hospital March 10, 2008 and lasted 43 minutes.

In response to question 1, Dave identified manager roles as planning and managing, financial budgets, staffing, leadership, strategic planning, performance appraisals and networking. For direct care staff, management responsibilities include the management of petty cash, student internships, committee work and some team leadership. When addressing organizational challenges in question 2, Dave identified contingency financial plans, mediation of conflict and coping with overall community stigmas regarding mental health. For direct care workers, empowerment of interdisciplinary roles i.e. Child and Youth Worker in a large medical model facility was a noted organizational challenge. For question 3, spontaneous management tasks included crisis management, patient safety, family issues and covering for staff away on sick leave. For question 4, Dave emphasized the ongoing documentation and data collecting needs of a typical teaching hospital environment. All documentation is deemed very important and client progress measurement is carefully scrutinized. For the final question, Dave expressed organizational and leadership mindsets as managers being approachable, ensuring strategic planning through ongoing consultation with team members, being people oriented and always tying performance to performance appraisals.

Rob. Rob is the manager of Global Child Care Services. He is responsible for a specific day care facility within the broader agency. Rob has been involved in the field of early childhood education for over 8 years. The interview took place March 18, 2008 in the researcher's office and lasted 31 minutes.

In reference to question 1 and general management responsibilities, Rob indicated that on the managerial level, supervision, performance appraisal, budgeting, leadership, mediation, and visionary thinking were examples of responsibilities. For question 2 and the possible organizational challenges for managers and direct care workers, Rob pointed out that managers find it at times difficult to network with colleagues from sister agencies and other detached agencies. Also, for many managers, they often find themselves playing the dual role of both manager and direct care worker. For direct care workers, Rob identified differing worker ideologies as variables causing possible organizational concerns. Spontaneous management tasks as queried in question 3 included managing and documenting incidents of all types, compensating for unexpected staff absence or resignations, general staff conflict, parent issues and weather related closures or suspensions of planned activities. For question 4, Rob indicated that his agency collects daily logs for problem children, documents staff profiles and compiles data for agency and government purposes. When asked in question 5 to identify good organizational and leadership mindsets among managers and team members, Rob underlined cooperation, facilitation, guidance, fairness and a sense of humour.

Brian. Brian is the executive director of Options Youth, an agency responsible for the management and placement of children in foster home environments. Brian has worked in the field of children and youth for over 35 years. The interview took place in his agency office on March 28, 2008 and lasted 54 minutes.

When discussing general management responsibilities as defined in question 1, Brian indicated that managers are responsible for hiring and supervision, conflict mediation, program development, budget design and delivery, scheduling, student supervision, chairing

meetings, leadership, public relations and professional development. Direct care staff and foster families manage basic client budgets, document, understand and apply legislative standards. For question 2, Brian emphasized some of the organizational challenges. For managers, they included stress management, staying within budget limitations, interagency communication, understanding the details of both child legislation and child related legal issues. For direct care staff, both written and verbal communication were challenges as they applied to documentation and expressing child related legislation. When discussing spontaneous management tasks (question 3), Brian underlined all types of incidents, staff to staff conflicts, foster parent issues ex. alcohol and/or drug dependencies. In reference to documentation and data collecting (question 4), Brian's agency collects information through both agency forms/logs and client interventions for government accountability and for an overall reflection of competent agency delivery systems. Therefore, in his view, managers should always be well versed in proper documentation. For the last question, Brian outlined open mindedness, team work, conflict mediation, facilitation, a sense of humour and flexibility as necessary organizational and leadership mindsets among agency team members.

Wendy. Wendy is a manager of a residential group home targeted at serving emotionally disturbed children and youth. She has been manager of the home for over 6 years and has also supervised a number of Algonquin students. The interview took place March 11, 2008 in the researcher's office and lasted 38 minutes.

For question 1, budgeting, billing, supervision, leadership, team building, special events coordination, household organization, purchase and repair were named as important general management responsibilities. For direct care staff, program management household expenses and student supervision were identified by Wendy as key management roles. When



discussing organizational challenges for managers in question 2, Wendy indicated that balancing administrative tasks with client intervention was a difficult priority. Direct care workers were also taxed with balancing paperwork and client programming. Spontaneous management tasks (question 4) included conflicts with outside professionals, injury and other critical incident management and reporting, and on call supervision. Wendy underlined the importance of documentation. From her perspective, documentation is critical for accountability, agency rate revisions and the successful outcomes of behavioural management and activity programming. Finally, for question 5, Wendy identified organizational and leadership mindsets such as open communication, team cohesiveness and facilitation, mutual respect of team members and facilitation of communication.

Meaning Units. The following meaning units taken numerically from the 5 interview questions, allow us to compare interpretations of the interviewees and to find common denominators in respect to human services management.

1. General management responsibilities

Susan: “There is such a range of management responsibilities in human services.”

Dave: “Without leadership, a manager cannot assume all the different sides of management.”

Rob: “I have to wear a manager’s hat and a worker’s hat.”

Brian: “There are lots of management responsibilities and they all mostly focus on communication.”

Wendy: “In my place, managing means doing everything.”

Participants all agree that there is a wide range of management responsibilities and that there are many facets to being a manager in the human services field. In

many cases, such facets can create additional challenges as attested by Rob and Wendy's comments.

## 2. Organizational challenges

Susan: "There is often a lack of leadership and management training in our agencies."

Dave: "Trying to ensure mutual respect in an interdisciplinary fashion is very difficult."

Rob: "I can't believe how many workers have different ideologies that can clash on a team."

Brian: "Agency workers are stressed because communication is sometimes compromised for the sake of getting the job done."

Wendy: "Again, wearing both management and worker hats can be really difficult and many times impossible."

Team work dynamics seems to be a significant organizational challenge. A lack of management training as indicated by Susan coupled with too many responsibilities as emphasized by Wendy seem to contribute to overall agency frustration.

## 3. Spontaneous management tasks

Susan: "Our environments are often unpredictable for incidents and conflict."

Dave: "Crisis intervention and dealing with families are the big ones."

Rob: "I have more staff that simply quit without notice. That is very stressful for a manager."

Brian: “Things can erupt quickly and without notice with any of my 100 foster families.”

Wendy: “Being on call for supervision always seems spontaneous even though I am assigned this task.”

The common thread in all of the above interpretations seems to point to human dynamics. A thorough understanding of team work and human dynamics appears to be of paramount importance in human services management.

#### 4. Documentation and data collection

Susan: “Far too much emphasis on paperwork. I have seen agency workers spending hours upon hours documenting instead of spending time with the clients.”

Dave: “In my hospital milieu, we seem to be shackled with forms and endless writing.”

Rob: “Documentation is important where I am. I wish I had someone to help me with it though.”

Brian: “Documentation is critical for funding.”

Wendy: “I find we do far too much documenting.”

Interpretations indicate that documentation is important but in some cases too time consuming. Streamlining documentation through possible further training and sensitivity would surely alleviate a number of frustrations as expressed above.

#### 5. Necessary organizational and leadership mindsets among team members

Susan: “We are required to give more team work guidance than other private sector management positions.”

Dave: “Managers have to be approachable, respect their team and be prepared to negotiate.”

Rob: “I think that if I did not have a sense of humour, I could not do my job.”

Brian: There truly has to be a sense of shared responsibility on an agency team. I also have to laugh every day actually make that every hour.”

Wendy: A manager has to be a complete part of the team and be an open communicator.”

Open communication, a sense of humour, team work facilitation, mutual respect and negotiation are important mindsets for our agency representatives. Leadership seems to be a major derivative of the above factors.

### Summary

From a quantitative standpoint, survey data reveals that respondents are from varied social service backgrounds, strongly value a number of human services management skills, express a strong need for leadership/management training and applaud a strong emphasis on online training delivery coupled with some face to face contact. Most participants are comfortable with computer usage and many have access to high speed internet. A good majority have 6 to 10 hours a week to devote to coursework and study.

Qualitative results indicate that interviewees underline a range of human services management responsibilities that at times can blur into unforeseen additional worker roles. Team work dynamics and organizational leadership are reported as ongoing management challenges and identified as areas requiring additional training opportunities.

## CHAPTER V

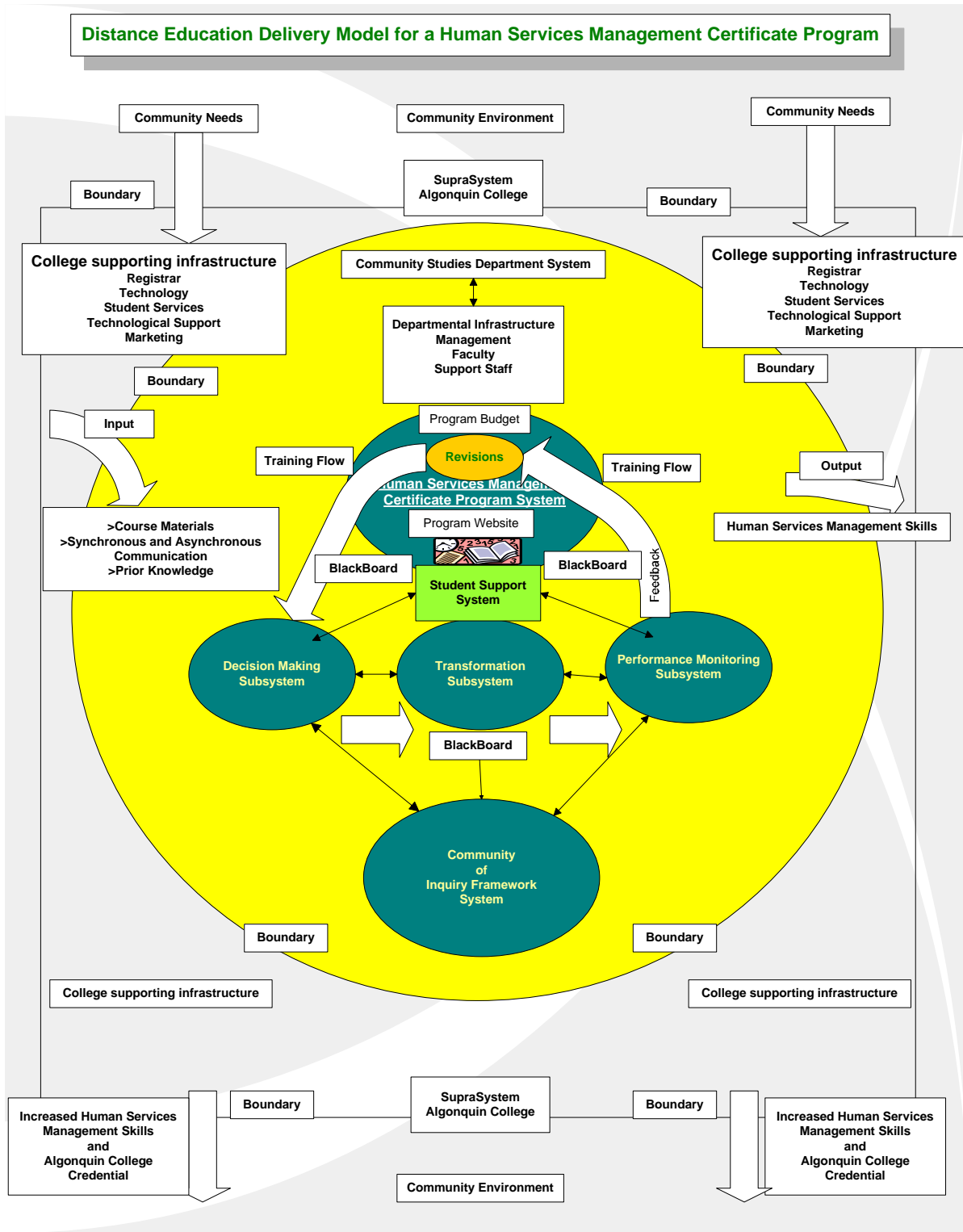
### INTERPRETATION/DISCUSSION

For the past several decades, systems thinking has become an important paradigm to explore and analyze hard and soft organizational systems. As previously emphasized in the literature review, systems theory lends itself well to the development and analysis of system models as applicable to community college operations. This chapter interprets the data and how it can be shaped by a systems model to deliver the Human Services Management Certificate program to the student. Figure 3 captures the essence of an open system with its subsystems, systems, suprasystem and wider environment. Research project elements such as the literature review, other program offerings, survey and interview data are incorporated into the model and lay the foundation for the appropriate distance education delivery system.

#### Wider Environment

The wider system for the Human Services Certificate program ties in many potential variables such as geography, demographics, economics, social, technology, cultural, ideology and political developments. Data identified age, computer access, computer usage, responsibilities and constraints such as finances, family and work, educational background, among other factors will be integrated into other certificate delivery systems and subsystems and ultimately ensure that community needs are being considered.

Figure 3. Program Systems Delivery Model



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## Suprasystem

The Algonquin College suprasystem provides the all important boundary definition whereby interrelationships between the wider or community environment and those of all other systems can occur through input. System mechanics transform input into output through various systems and subsystems then back through the suprasystem and in turn through the wider environment. In the case of the certificate program, input or initial student readiness can be identified as prior knowledge, course materials, asynchronous and synchronous communication understanding. Potential student motivation comes in the form of wanting career advancement, a desire for increased knowledge and personal satisfaction. The output produced by the Community Studies Department system transfers to the Algonquin College suprasystem and finally to the wider environment of the Ottawa-Carleton Region in the form of certificate related human services management skills. These skills are then directed as output to the wider environment through the development of an enhanced community workforce.

Algonquin College in the suprasystem role provides an overall infrastructure for the certificate program by providing physical resources, admission and registrar services, technological services, student services and marketing to name a few.

## Systems

As depicted in Figure 3, 4 interacting systems exist for the certificate program. Firstly, the Community Studies Department system contains the certificate program support components such as management, support staff and the overall departmental budget. Secondly, the Human Services Management Certificate Program system consists of a

program budget, program faculty, a program website and the Blackboard learning management program. The certificate training flow from this system leads to 3 separate student learning subsystems identified as the decision making, transformation and performance monitoring subsystems. These subsystems are also integrated with and supported by third and fourth systems known as the community of inquiry system and student support system respectively.

Community Studies Department System. This major system fulfills an administrative encompassing role. Managers, faculty and support staff through many organizational subsystems, ensure that program offerings including the certificate program have all necessary financial, physical and human resources to meet important pedagogical and managerial needs. Such an infrastructure allows for an ongoing reciprocal interaction between all systems.

Human Services Management Certificate Program System. This integral system incorporates the structure, content and overall direction of the certificate program. Curriculum development and instructional design coupled with program website development and management of the Blackboard learning management programs are the main mechanisms of this system.

Based on the literature review, comparisons of existing certificate programs, quantitative and qualitative results, the following constructivist curriculum courses are prioritized and suggested for the Human Services Management Certificate program and will flow through the three learning subsystems:



- **Leadership/Management in Human Services**

Leadership was repeatedly reported in all facets of the project including literature review, comparisons of other programs and survey data as a critical dimension of Human Services Management. It is particularly important as applied to team work, communication and overall human dynamics as described in both quantitative and qualitative reports.

- **Financial Accounting in Human Services**

Accountability was a strong theme in the literature review, within existing programs and among survey and interview respondents.

- **Excel Applications**

Given the importance of agency accountability as defined by both quantitative and qualitative reports, survey data clearly indicated that a vast majority of respondents valued and desired more training with this software package.

- **Professional, Ethical and Legal Issues in Human Services**

All project reporting tools have emphasized the importance of these human service dimensions.

- **Labour and Employment Law**

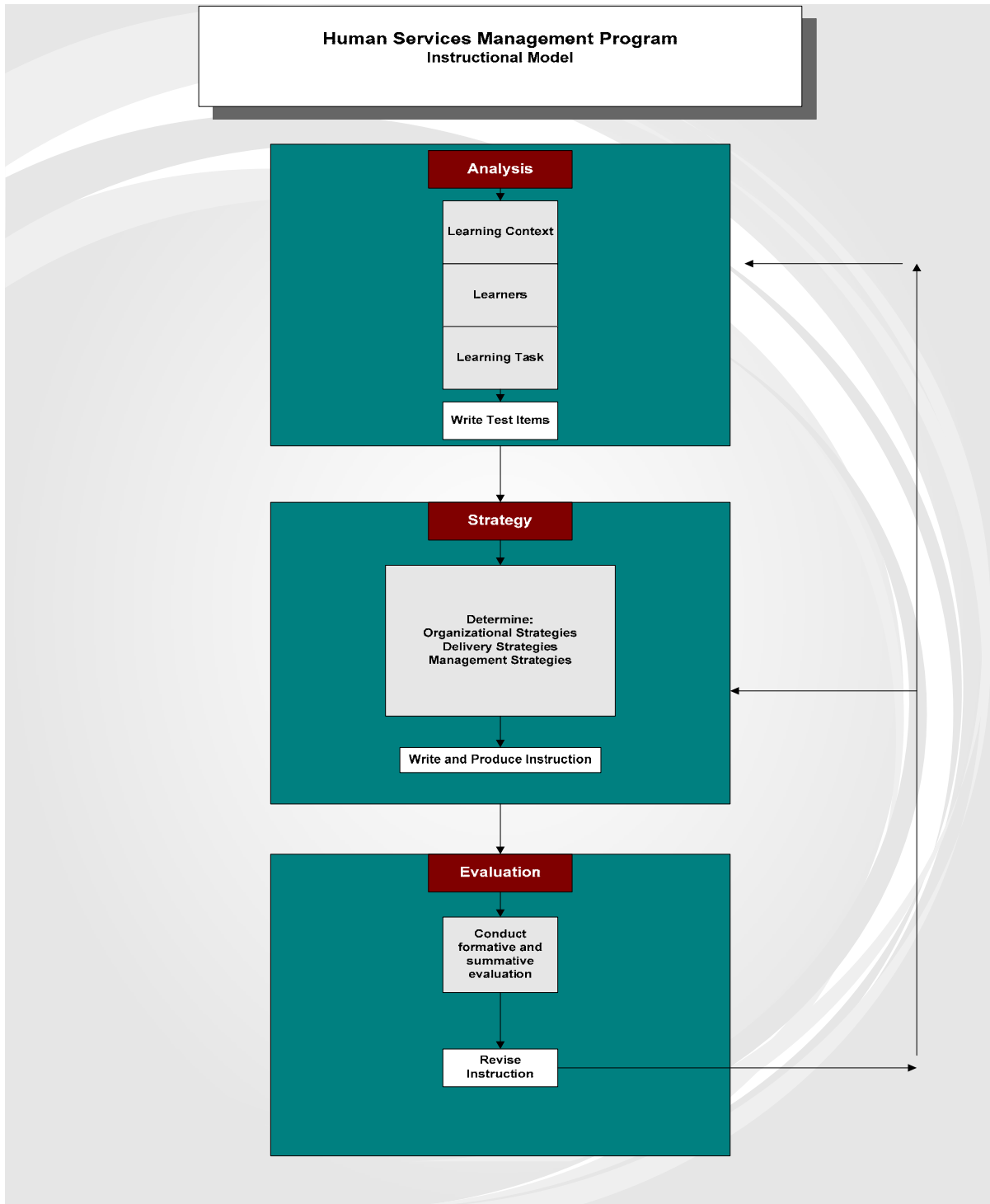
A large portion of survey respondents felt that this area of knowledge was critical for a human services manager.

- **Programming Planning and Design**

A vast majority of survey respondents underlined the importance of this area in respect to additional training.

Figure 4 depicts the certificate instructional model inspired by Smith and Ragan (1999) who proposed an instructional design process that is based on the Dick and Carey model but provides more room for what they call the “ball of worms” phenomenon whereby the “interrelatedness and concurrency of all activities of design are acknowledged” (p. 8). Thus, the model seems to combine the structural benefits of behaviorism with the latitude of cognitivism.

Figure 4. Instructional Design Model



Distance education is well suited for this type of model. The foundational framework which according to Smith and Ragan (1999) includes communication, systems, learning and instructional theories is compatible with the theories of distance education which include independence and autonomy, industrialization of teaching and interaction and communication (Keegan, 1986). This model which includes analysis of learning context, learner characteristics/needs and learning tasks, organizational, delivery and management strategies and evaluation aligns well with the following three important certificate program training subsystems namely the decision making, transformation and performance monitoring subsystems as depicted in Figure 5. A constructivist modality thread is found in all subsystems whereby students and instructors engage in collaborative, real world, case based learning environments. Adjoining and related systems of community of inquiry instructional framework and student support will be discussed later reflecting their interrelationship with these subsystems.

a) Decision making subsystem

At the first stage of the training for the 6 prescribed certificate courses, the student reads and processes all foundational materials related to the course theme. Different learning routes are offered to respond to various learning styles. Conceptual information is acquired and critically analyzed while exercises and other learning materials ensure that the student lays the groundwork for skill transformation. The overall learning framework is clearly defined and communicated to students through the Blackboard course management system and the program website.

#### b) Transformation subsystem

The transformation subsystem essentially moves the foundational material processed by the student to a level where applied analysis of the material coupled with situational scenarios are employed. Transformation is facilitated through assigned applied tasks in the learning processes. These include reflection/application questions, synchronous and asynchronous computer conferences on Blackboard with instructor and fellow students, learning journals and other critical analysis assignments.

The overall experience of transformation is propelled by the intrinsic value of the learning process and its rewards which in turn leads to a sense of personal and professional accomplishment. A significant number of survey respondents attested to feeling intrinsically motivated to pursue the certificate program through a sense of personal satisfaction. Transformation is indeed the principal catalyst for learning that will be found in many of the certificate courses.

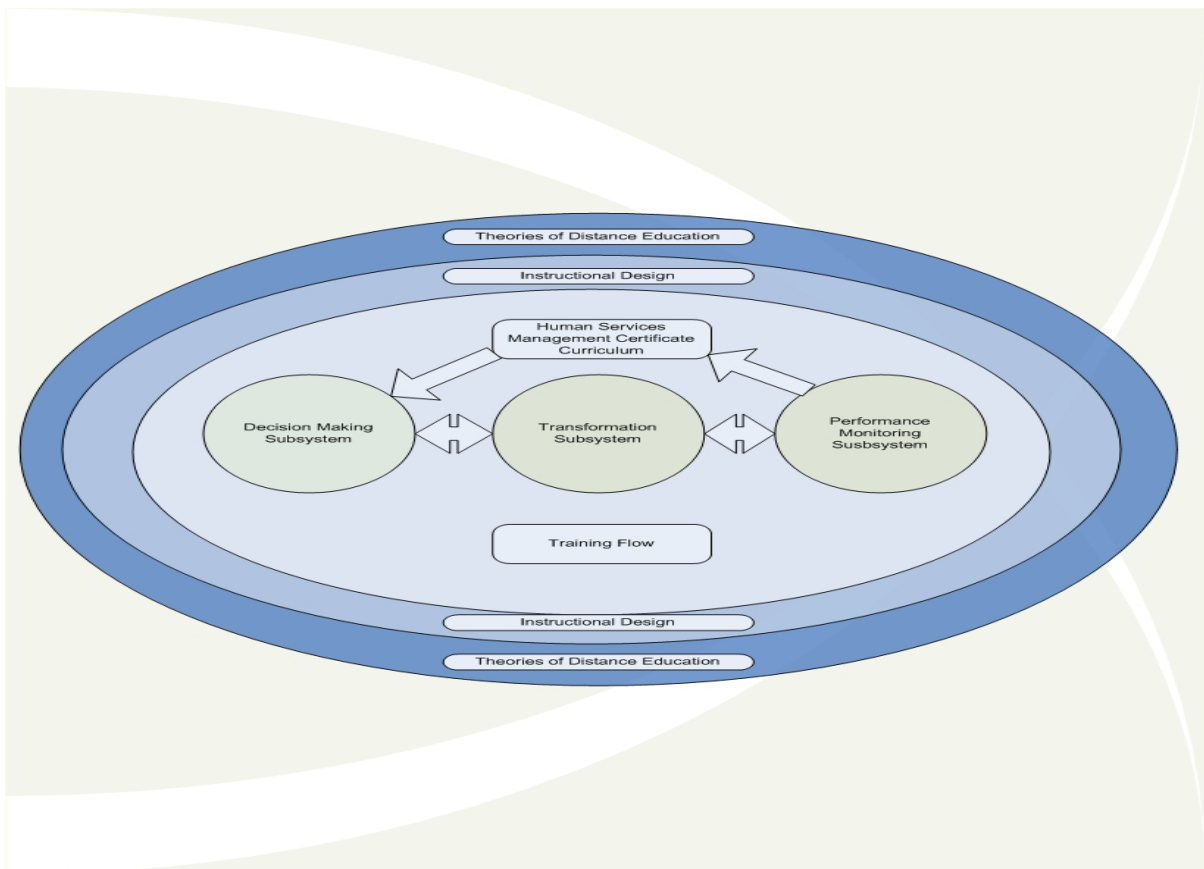
#### c) Performance monitoring subsystem

According to Naughton (1984), the system component that greatly contributes to system failure is that of performance. Since performance is a function of objectives, purposes, inputs, decision making and transformation, this component is paramount in sustaining homeostasis or the overall stability of the training flow system. The successful completion of the 6 certificate courses will be gauged by the instructor's evaluation of content understanding and skill demonstration. Instructors will provide feedback that will help students develop acceptable levels of material proficiency and help them improve future performance. Feedback protocols and evaluation rubrics must be established and

communicated objectively; clear expectations of decision making and transformation subsystems must also exist and be documented. Regulation of performance is critical to ensure consistent and anticipated output to the suprasystem.

Program evaluation feedback from students, instructors and managers is critical. Such feedback is assessed by the program system and all necessary implementations are injected in the training flow subsystems. Any recommendations outside the training flow subsystems are negotiated with other system(s) and/or suprasystem.

Figure 5. Training Flow Subsystems



Community of Inquiry Instructional Framework System. As introduced in the literature review, the Community of Inquiry instructional model frames an online learning environment through the meshing of cognitive, social and teaching presences. According to this model (Figure 1), all three elements must be present in order to ensure what Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2001) call an “online community that encourages cognitive independence and social interdependence simultaneously” (p. 23). Social presence in this model emphasizes learners feeling connected with their learning community, comfortable in their interactions with others, and essentially always reflecting their true personalities. Survey data reported that a significant number of respondents valued communication and interaction with both instructors and fellow students. Respondents also believe in their own desires for success and personal satisfaction through a self-assessed comfort level in an online learning environment. The certificate program will ensure such presence by supporting students through the student support and departmental systems as well as through

Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2001) describe cognitive presence as being developed through a 4 phase process including a triggering event where some problem or inquiry is identified, exploration whereby the learner uses critical thinking and discussion to delve into a problem or issue, integration whereby learners construct meaning from their thoughts and ideas and resolution whereby learners can apply their newly gained knowledge to workplace settings. The certificate program instructional delivery will be based on a constructivist approach. Assignments and discussions will revolve around attributing meaning to course concepts and theories as they apply to each student’s respective personal and/or work environments.

As emphasized by Garrison and Cleveland-Innes (2005), the role of the instructor in energizing cognitive presence is critical through course design, content and interactivity. Through the college suprasystem, departmental and program systems, instructors are well positioned with suprasystem resources such as professional development opportunities and major technological infrastructure that provides accessible, interactive online environments for student success.

The Community of Inquiry system as identified in Figure 3 is indeed an important backdrop framework to ensure that certificate program subsystems create a training flow that treat students respectfully with opportunities for support, engagement, interaction and development. It is expected that the ongoing interaction of the social, cognitive and teacher presence will be central to the delivery of the Human Services Management Certificate program.

Student Support System. This system provides the instructor/student support backbone for the decision making, transformation and performance monitoring subsystems. Academic support for the constructivist certificate program includes course management and communication of student expectations, facilitation of student participation, promotion of reflection/collaborative learning, promotion of critical thinking skills, maximization of technological platforms and student evaluation/feedback. Instructors are working with the self-reference, personal goals, course control and autonomy of students to facilitate human services management skills. This instructor premise according to Yang and Cornelious (2005) is a constructivist approach recognized for its maximal online learning impact.

The mandate of this system is to provide instructors and students alike with services ranging from advice on college directives, advice and referral to peripheral services, course

counseling and instructional technology support. The certificate program will utilize 3 important media modes to offer a comprehensive online support system. The main college website geared to both campus and off campus students provides a myriad of information on college services and events. Students can easily find calendar events and can access grades for their respective courses. Next, the certificate program website will provide the students with an online learning community in order to access local, national and international resources. Finally, the Blackboard learning management platform provides a user friendly environment to allow students to peruse course materials, engage in collaborative discussions/consultations with classmates and to submit assignments/write exams.

### Summary

The human services management certificate systems model presents micro and macro dynamic factors necessary for a comprehensive and functional distance education environment. From organizational and pedagogical standpoints, systems are interdependently ensuring a flow of checks and balances leading to a constructivist training momentum enveloped by technological infrastructure, student support/feedback and instructor/student interaction. Ultimately, the model strives to meet the needs of students, faculty, Algonquin College and Ottawa-Carleton social service agencies.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Stemming originally from an interest by Algonquin College advisory committee members, this study has synthesized a literature review, comparisons of other human services management programs, quantitative/qualitative data and a comprehensive program delivery model to understand and respond to management training requirements of Ottawa-Carleton social service agencies. Managers and direct care staff have expressed a desire for more training opportunities/formats available to meet their professional and personal needs. With this in mind, the original project research questions are answered with findings.

1. What are the management training needs of human service agencies?
2. What are the needs of potential online adult learners?
3. What is a distance education delivery model that is best suited for the Human Services Management Certificate program?

1. What are the management training needs of human service agencies?

As discussed in the literature review, research on human services management in the social sciences is limited. Very few academic journals exist solely for the purpose of human services management research. Although some principles from business paradigms can be applied effectively, more research on management and human services ethics, leadership and teamwork is necessary.

Survey results demonstrate that a number of management skill areas are important in human service agencies. One hundred percent of respondents felt that interpersonal skills, listening skills, oral communication and initiative were very important and/or important and are therefore vital. Ninety eight percent felt that written communication, organizational

skills, problem solving and decision making were worthy of an important rating. When asked to choose possible course/subject areas, 100% chose communication skills, while 98% chose organizational behaviour and professional/ethical/legal issues. Ninety six percent wanted more training in programming planning and design, 92% in labour and employment law, 90% wanted more opportunities in leadership training and 88% wanted more management theory. Ninety two percent of respondents deemed Excel as a critical computer application in human services.

Interviewees identified team dynamic issues, role conflicts, excessive documentation and leadership skill deficiencies as ongoing management-related issues. Participants were frustrated with the wide range of managerial responsibilities and the inevitable spontaneous tasks that surface without notice.

Given that a certificate program is a condensed training package, data was carefully considered to include a curriculum of 6 core courses that encompass the major training needs identified by the literature review, other program curricula, survey respondents and interviewees. Based on specific survey results and interview meaning units, the following courses address the identified needs:

- **Leadership/Management in Human Services**
- **Financial Accounting in Human Services**
- **Excel Applications**
- **Professional, Ethical and Legal Issues in Human Services**
- **Labour and Employment Law**
- **Programming Planning and Design**

## 2. What are the needs of potential online adult learners?

According to survey results, 61% of respondents are between the ages of 31 and 50, and hold a variety of post secondary credentials from Early Childhood Diplomas to Masters in Business Administration. Ninety six percent of participants indicated that personal satisfaction was important in respect to pursuing a human services management certificate. Other dimensions such as desire for increased knowledge, desire for increased career mobility and desire for career advancement were rated at 96%, 83%, and 83% respectively. Such high levels of motivation coupled, with previous academic experience, bode well for the self discipline required in distance education courses. It is interesting to note that when choosing a delivery format for courses, a significant majority chose computer based learning (76%). Given that respondents could choose more than one answer for the delivery format question, 76% also chose a combination of the internet and classes. An additional 45% saw the value of concentrated weekends. Only 2% preferred full time study. Given these trends, it seems clear that most persons in the survey prefer a computer mediated certificate program with some face to face opportunities suggesting possible hybrid or concentrated weekends.

In respect to preferences, 90% wanted flexibility in scheduling, 82% wanted good communication with the instructor, 94% wanted a reasonable certificate program length, 88% wanted some confidence that they would succeed in the program and 73% wanted communication with other students. Hence, respondents want a program that is flexible, allows for autonomy, consistent communication with both the instructor and fellow students and for a realistic completion.

Almost all participants (90%) reported that they were comfortable with computers and had access to the necessary technology for distance education. As indicated in the

introduction, Algonquin is well equipped to respond to the online needs of these potential students.

3. What is a distance education delivery model that is best suited for the Human Services Management Certificate program?

An original model was conceptualized to frame and reflect the delivery of a human services management certificate program to agency personnel. Systems theory was used as an important operational paradigm to ensure that different systems such as the college suprasystem and program system interact with student support and community of inquiry systems. Training flow subsystems reciprocate with these latter systems to maximize the learning success of program students. The College suprasystem is the resource backbone to the certificate program with superior technological infrastructure such as Blackboard and extensive network capabilities, technologically proficient instructors with online/hybrid experience and an elaborate student support mechanisms.

### Conclusions

This research project has shown that there is a need and desire for a Human Services Management Certificate program. Potential students are seasoned learners who have both specific professional development needs and specific learning preferences. Distance Education is a good fit for these learners as demonstrated by their high levels of motivation, autonomy, desire for knowledge and career mobility, need for flexibility and maximization of time. Algonquin College is well positioned to offer all the necessary systems to empower the student with online learning interaction and options for some face to face contact.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the college invest in the development of pedagogically sound coursework learning packages for each identified certificate course. Course development will include carefully constructed learning modules that encompass the introduction to and absorption of, concepts, theories and practices and ultimately ensure graduate pursuit of effective human services management strategies/interventions. Constructivist approaches to critical thinking discussions will be fostered through synchronous and asynchronous Blackboard/face to face modes and performance monitoring and appraisal. The main delivery structure of the course offerings will be online with designated course components as face to face sessions. An ongoing project management role within the Community Studies department is necessary to ensure administrative foundations, program website development, relevant course design, consultation and collaboration with college and community resources. The program will operate with a suggested starting class of 25 or less students and grow with demand to outlying areas of the Ottawa-Carleton region. As the program evolves, more research on the national level is suggested to best reflect any regional trends that could warrant program adjustments.

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## **APPENDIX A**

University of Phoenix/Program of Study

Introduction to Human Services

Communication Skills for the Human Services Professional

Organizational Behaviour

Models of Effective Helping

Management Theory, Practice and Application

Human Lifespan Development

Critical Thinking: Strategies in Decision Making

Case Management

Professional, Ethical and Legal Issues in Human Services

Quality Management and Productivity

Financial Analysis for Manager 1

Advocacy and Mediation

Organization Psychology

Technology in Human Services

Cultural Diversity and Special Populations

Research and Statistics

Building Community in Organizations

Marketing

Program Design and Proposal writing

Interdisciplinary Capstone Course

## **APPENDIX B**

### Loyalist College/Program of Study

#### First Year

Organizational Communication

Program Planning and Design

Psychology

Sociology

Introduction to Community Services

Human Services Legislation

Research Practicum

Principles of Adult Education

#### Second Year

Family and Modern Society

Organizational Development

Social Statistics

Canadian Cultural Studies

Research Practicum

Multi Media Communication

Financial Accounting

Lifespan Development

Intercultural Relations

#### Third Year

Fundamentals of Canadian Business 1

Fundamentals of Canadian Business II

Management of the Strategic process

Program Planning and Design

Social Policy, Community Relations and Government

Issues in Program Evaluation and Assessment

Strategies for Implementing Change

Action Research Methods

Project Management

Social Psychology

Fourth Year

Leadership, Power and Influence

Marketing

Ethics and Advocacy in Human Services

Organizational Behaviour

Applied Research Project

Communities and Canadian Politics

Community Development and Partnerships

Governance and Labour Law

Issues and Trends in Human Services

## **APPENDIX C**

McGill University/Program of Study

Co-requisite:

Communication in Management I

Required Courses:

Health Care Systems

Information Systems

Introduction to Financial Accounting

Introduction to Organizational Behaviour

Social Service Systems

Evaluation of Health and Social Services Organization

Legal Aspects: Health and Social Services

Health and Social Services Management

Human Resources Management

One course is chosen among the following electives:

Introduction to Labor Management Relations

Managing Organizational Teams



## **APPENDIX D**

### Suffolk University/Program of Study

Block 1: Human Services Management I and II

Block 2: Financial Management I, Program Development I and II

Block 3: Financial Management II, Legal and Ethical Issues

Block 4: Technical Writing, Human Resources I

Block 5: Public Relations, Human Resources II

## **APPENDIX E**

Fanshawe College Program of Study

Dimensions of Behaviour

Leadership in Organizations

Organizational Structure and Behaviour

Organizational Business Communication

Developmental Supervision and Leadership

Labor and Employment Law

## **APPENDIX F**

### Survey Cover Letter

Dear Community Partner,

As a result of many requests from our Community Studies Community Advisory Committees, the Community Studies department is developing a post diploma/degree Human Services Management Certificate program. The program will be directed to graduates from various community college and university programs who are working in various human service fields including social work early childhood education, developmental services, child and youth work, criminology, recreation and primary/secondary education.

This proposed certificate would be designed to prepare learners for potential, recently assigned, or expanded management/administrative roles in the human services field. The program of study would train students to be proactive, heighten productivity and performance and to apply important workplace organizational tools and principles. Emphasis would also be placed on leadership, communication skills and human resource management.

At this time, we are requesting your valued input to assess agency and learner needs as they would apply to the developing content and delivery model of this program. We are striving to meet the needs of busy working adults through both distance education and hybrid (part online-part classroom) delivery formats.

The attached survey is divided into two parts addressing **Agency Needs** and **Learner Needs**. We are hoping that you will complete this survey and pass it on to as many workers in your agency as possible. The survey is easily completed online through the Zoomerang survey service. By accessing the following web link \_\_\_\_\_, you will be able to complete the survey in a minimal amount of time. Any information you provide us will be kept confidential; only aggregate summaries will be published to support program development.

Your input will largely determine the direction of this program. Since the timeline for development is upon us, we are requesting that you complete this survey at your earliest convenience by \_\_\_\_\_

We look forward to our continued partnership with all of you as we develop this educational opportunity for busy working adults involved in the human services sector.

If you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [sauvej@algonquincollege.com](mailto:sauvej@algonquincollege.com) or at 613-727-4723 extension 5370.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this important survey,

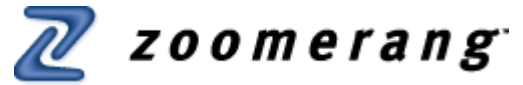
Jean Sauve,

Coordinator, Community Studies Department

## APPENDIX G

Zoomerang Online Survey

Sauve MDE data collection



### Human Services Management Certificate Program Agency/Learner Needs Survey

#### Human Services Management Certificate Survey

**1**

Please put your survey ID number here

**2**

Position Title

**3**

Agency Name:

4 Agency Address:

5

What is the nature of your organization?

Early Childhood Education/Care

Residential

Social Assistance

Drop in Centre

City Program

Emergency Shelter

School Based

Outreach

Other, please specify

---

## 6

Based on your experience, please rate the importance of each of the following human service management skills required by your agency

1	2	3	4	5
very important	important	not important	does not apply	no opinion

Interpersonal skills

1

2

3

4

5

Listening skills

1

2

3

4

5

Oral communication

1

2

3

4

5

Written communication

1

2

3

4

5

Organizational skills

1

2

3

4

5

Negotiation skills

1

2

3

4

5

Problem solving

1

2

3

4

5



Decision making

1

2

3

4

5

Initiative

1

2

3

4

5

---

7

A series of potential courses/subject areas are listed below. Please rate these courses on how essential they are to your organization

1

2

3

4

5

very important

important

not important

does not apply

no opinion

Communication skills for the human services professional

1

2

3

4

5

Organizational behaviour

1 2 3 4 5

Models of effective helping

1 2 3 4 5

Management theory: practice and applications

1 2 3 4 5

Professional, ethical and legal issues in human services

1 2 3 4 5

Financial accounting

1 2 3 4 5

Technology in human services

1 2 3 4 5

Intercultural relations

1 2 3 4 5

Programming planning and design

1 2 3 4 5

Social policy: community relations and government

1 2 3 4 5

Issues and trends in human services

1 2 3 4 5

Leadership in social service organizations

1 2 3 4 5

Labour and employment law

1 2 3 4 5

8

Please rate the importance of the following computer applications to human services management.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
very important      important      not important      does not apply      no opinion

MS Excel

1                       2                       3                       4                       5

MS Access

1                       2                       3                       4                       5

Elect Scheduler

1                       2                       3                       4                       5

SPSS Statistical Package

1                       2                       3                       4                       5

Other application

1

2

3

4

5

9

What is your age group?

20 - 25

26 - 30

31 - 40

41 - 50

over 50

**10**

How far do you live from Algonquin College?

Less than 100 km

101-500 km

over 500 km



**11**

What is the type of education you have completed?

Degree in Social Sciences

Early Childhood Education Diploma

Child and Youth Worker Diploma

Social Services Diploma

Developmental Services Worker Diploma

Recreation/Leisure Diploma

Other, please specify

---

12

How important would the following motivators be for you in a human services management certificate?

1	2	3	4	5
very important	important	not important	does not apply	no opinion

Personal satisfaction

1  2  3  4  5

Desire for increased knowledge

1  2  3  4  5

Desire for career mobility

1

2

3

4

5

Desire for career advancement

1

2

3

4

5



### 13

How important would each of the following factors be to your success in a human services management certificate program?

1

2

3

4

5

very important

important

not important

does not apply

no opinion

Financial considerations

1

2

3

4

5

Distance from campus



1 2 3 4 5

Transportation concerns

1 2 3 4 5

Work responsibilities

1 2 3 4 5

Family obligations

1 2 3 4 5

Child care concerns

1 2 3 4 5

Flexibility in scheduling

1 2 3 4 5

Belief in ability to succeed

1 2 3 4 5

Time management

1 2 3 4 5

Communication with other students

1 2 3 4 5

Communication with instructors

1 2 3 4 5

Length of certificate program

1 2 3 4 5



14

How many hours per week would you be willing to devote to coursework

and study?

- 0-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- 11 to 20 hours
- Greater than 20 hours
- Other, please specify



**15**

Which of the following ways would you be willing to take courses toward a human services management certificate? (click all that apply)

- Correspondence study

Computer based communication/internet

Combination of classes and internet

Concentrated weekend classes and internet

Full time study

Other, please specify

---

## 16

Please indicate which of the following you have access to? (click all that apply)

Computer at home

Fax machine

Computer at work

Other, please specify

---

**17**

Are you comfortable with your level of computer skills?

**YES**

**NO**

---

**18**

Do you have high speed internet access?

**YES**

**NO**

---

**19**

Do you have E-mail?

**YES**

**NO**

---

20

Are you comfortable using E-mail?

---

21

Thank you very much for your important assistance and advice. As we continue to develop the curriculum, we would be grateful for further

advice. Please provide any further comments you wish to provide.

Thank you very much for your important assistance and advice. As we continue to develop the curriculum, we would be grateful for any further advice. Please provide any further comments you wish to provide in the space below:

## APPENDIX H

### Ethics Committee Approval Letter



**DATE:** March 3, 2008

**TO:** Jean Sauvé

**COPY:** Dr. Marti Cleveland-Innes (Supervisor)  
Janice Green, Secretary, Athabasca University Research Ethics Board

**FROM:** Dr. Tom Jones, Chair, Athabasca University Research Ethics Board

**SUBJECT: Ethics Proposal #CDE-08-01: “A Community College Distance Education Delivery Model for a Post Diploma Human Services Management Certificate Program”**

---

Thank you for providing further revised documentation requested by the Centre for Distance Education (CDE) Research Ethics Review Committee in order to meet conditions of approval.

I am pleased to advise that the above-noted project has now been awarded interim **APPROVAL TO PROCEED**. You may begin your research immediately.

Your application will be received by the Athabasca University Research Board at their next monthly meeting, and final ethical approval will be issued from that office. Please be advised that the Athabasca University Research Ethics Board retains the right to request

further information, or to revoke this interim approval, at any time prior to issuance of the  
final approval.

As implementation of the proposal progresses, if you need to make any significant changes  
or modifications, please forward this information immediately to the CDE Research Ethics  
Review Committee via Janice Green, for further review.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [janiceg@athabascau.ca](mailto:janiceg@athabascau.ca)



## APPENDIX I

### Other Survey Answers for Type of Education

#### Sauve MDE data collection Results Overview



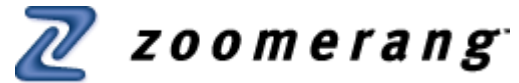
11. What is the type of education you have completed?	
#	Response
1	Nsg Diploma + Occ Health Nsg Diploma
2	Human Resources Management
3	Masters in Social Work
4	Non profit management certificate
5	MBA
6	Human Resources Certificate and Leadership courses
7	Management in Human Services Certificate - Queens
8	Special Care Counselling Diploma (Quebec)
9	Accounting
10	Bsc Degree- biotech
11	B.A. psychology, Certificate of Business Management
12	resource teacher certificate
13	BA - Sociology and Criminal Justice
14	Medical Assistant College Diploma
15	B.A political Science and 1 year of ECE
16	BA
17	Foster Care Certificate Jun 04
18	Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Law
19	BA English lit and Psychology; TESL certificate

20	ONGOING BA CYC
21	Human Resources Management Certificate
22	Business Administration
23	Human Services Management
24	Graduate in Conflict Resolution

## APPENDIX J

### Survey Additional or Unique Types of Agency Organizations

#### Sauve MDE data collection Results Overview



5. What is the nature of your organization?	
#	Response
1	Kgn/School age program located in a school
2	Families for/with Developmental Disabilities
3	Hospital
4	Children's Mental Health
5	Rehab for Children and Youth with special needs
6	therapy for children with autism
7	future planning
8	community services
9	DS Residential and Day Program facilities
10	Community and Health Centre
11	Developmental Services-Day Program, Group Homes
12	Family Life Education- workshops/Info and referral
13	children with special needs
14	Home & School Based Children's Mental Health Centro
15	Community Resource Centre
16	Retiring 22 Jun 08, return to school (IBI/ABA trg)
17	children and adults, incl treatment and day option
18	foster care
19	Employment supports

20	developmental services
21	Health, Fitness and Recreation Facility
22	resource center, parent education, prenatal educator
23	Family Resource Program
24	Community Support Services (Individualized Day/Sil
25	non-profit

## APPENDIX K

### Names of Agency Organizations

#### Sauve MDE data collection Results Overview



3. Agency Name:	
#	Response
1	Global Child Care Services
2	Families Matter Coop
3	Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario
4	Robert/sSmart Centre
5	Centre 507, Drop-In
6	YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region
7	Ottawa Children's Treatment centre
8	The Portia Learning Centre
9	l'Arche Ottawa
10	Lifetime Networks Ottawa
11	OCAPDD
12	Distress centre of Ottawa and Region
13	Family Tree Youth Services
14	Kanata Research Park Family Centre
15	Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa Carleton
16	Orléans-Cumberland community Resource Centre
17	Ottawa-Carleton Lifeskills Inc
18	Orleans YMCA-YWCA Child Care
19	Andrew Fleck Stittsville Kindergarten and School A

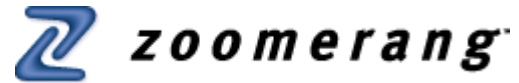
20	Annavale Nursery School
21	Dr. E. Couture Childcare
22	Ottawa Carleton Lifeskills
23	Connect With Kids -Family Life Education Services
24	Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa Carleton
25	Aladin Childcare Services
26	Vista kindergarten School Age Program
27	Children's Integration Support Services
28	Glebe Parents Day Care
29	Crossroads Children's Centre
30	Nepean, Rideau & Osgoode Community Resource Centre
31	Sonshine Families
32	Andrew Fleck Child Care Services
33	Home
34	Interval House of Ottawa
35	Christian Horizons, East District
36	Family Tree Youth Services
37	Options Youth (Ontario) Inc.
38	WOCRC: CHRYSALIS HOUSE
39	Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
40	Christian Horizons
41	Christian Horizons
42	Downtown YMCA-YWCA
43	Family Tree Youth Services
44	Chapman Mills School Age Program
45	Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board
46	Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board
47	Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa

48	Katimavik Preschool Resource Centre
49	Community Living Association (Lanark County)
50	Confederation Court Community House
51	River View Homes Ottawa Ltd.
52	Balla Consulting Group

## APPENDIX L

### Position Titles Within Agencies

#### Sauve MDE data collection Results Overview



What is your position title?	
1	Director, Forest Valley School Age Program
2	Community Liaison Director
3	Professional Practice Leader for CYW's
4	Manager of Human Resources
5	Centre Manager
6	Youth Outreach Worker
7	Director of Clinical Programs & information
8	Director of Operations
9	Executive Director
10	Executive Director
11	Executive Director
12	Manager of Educational Services
13	Supervisor
14	Executive Director
15	Home Child care Advisor
16	Program Manger
17	Director, Human Resources
18	Program Coordinator
19	Early Childhood Educator
20	Team Leader



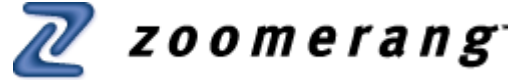
21	Supervisor
22	Program Director
23	Family Life educator
24	Home Childcare Advisor
25	Executive Director
26	Executive Director
27	Integration Advisor
28	Administrative Coordinator
29	Child & Youth Worker
30	Housing Loss Prevention Worker
31	Adult Services Manager
32	Acting Head Teacher, Thursday's Child Nursery Scho
33	Retiring from Military Jun 08
34	Public Education Coordinator
35	Area Manager and Recruitment Manager
36	Program Manager
37	Executive Director
38	CHILD & YOUTH COUNSELLOR
39	Human Resources Officer
40	ED
41	Staff Development Coordinator
42	Regional Director
43	Full Time Child and Youth Counsellor
44	Supervisor
45	Educational Assistant
46	Teacher
47	Daycare and Part-time/Respite Manager
48	Coordinator

49	Community Services Manager
50	Youth Worker
51	Program Supervisor
52	Consultant

## APPENDIX M

### Other Overall Survey Comments

#### Sauve MDE data collection Results Overview



21. Thank you very much for your important assistance and advice. As we continue to develop the curriculum, we would be grateful for further advice. Please provide any further comments you wish to provide.	
#	Response
1	There needs to be a real focus on time management, employee coaching and mentoring, supervision and performance evaluation as well as communication skills with internal and external stakeholders
2	I have found the strictly online courses to be difficult to engage in. A mixture of online and class work would offset the isolation I feel when completing online courses.
3	As an executive director, I am looking at these courses as opportunities to support the men and women in my organization who have just come into management positions or who might do so in the next 1-3 years. I would like to have the ability to offer people opportunities that are in line with our values and will give current employees leaning options outside of what we offer in l'Arche at the local, regional, national and international level.
4	IT was hard for me to prioritize- I think all of these areas are so important. I took a course through Carleton's School of Public Administration and the Centre for Volunteer Sector Research last summer- it was an intensive master's level certificate course. Let me know if you'd like the contact info for my professors there- there seem to be lots of areas of cross-over where they might be helpful to partner with for the program development piece.
5	It would be important that this is an applied degree versus certificate program - there are a number of certificate program options, while not maybe directly related, they are certainly available - an applied degree would be a unique opportunity
6	Question 8 lists several options that I am not currently familiar with! I do not see listed MSWord or a word perfect program. (unless it is listed under another name, than I say it is very important. Study time available is dependant on what else is happening in my life at a given time, which is why I prefer the correspondence model above all. I like the flexibility it allows. This is exciting!
7	I thinks it would be great to see a post diploma program in this area. I feel that the internet would be the best method of delivery. I look forward to new opportunities.
8	For those of us who have been doing the work for 20 - 30 years , an assessment would be a good idea for the work we already have covered ; therefore given credit for these parts of the certificate .
9	Even though this is not for me - I would be encouraging my senior staff to take these courses.
10	I find that the skills that I am lacking but could really use would be policy writing, hiring and other human resource procedures. I work in a non-profit coop. We wear very many hats and need such a wide variety of skills.

11	If a course is created out of this research, I would like to be informed. :) Thanks!
12	I am interested in continued education in areas of Child Education and Development, specifically Special Need, in order to obtain skills that will assist me in teaching my young Autistic son and Developmentally Delayed daughter. I also believe that any skills learned in my chosen field of study can be used in the Foster Care system should I so choose to volunteer my services.
13	I very much look forward to the results of the survey. This is an area in child care especially that you have to learn by doing the job.
14	In this field I believe computer technology and financial based programs are very important. As well as such programs as Policy Writing and Development, Labour Laws as it relates to various programs; Group Homes vs Mon-Friday 9-5 jobs. Even small business, how to develop programs.