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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE

of

Amanda A. Shah, MA

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Higher Education Administration

TAKING INVENTORY: VALIDATING A LEARNING
SKILLS INVENTORY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, August 4, 2022

10:00 a.m.

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

To join, [click here](#)

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or scan to join

Amanda A. Shah

M.A., Clinical Psychology
Cleveland State University

B.A., Psychology & English
Kent State University

Amanda has worked in higher education since 2008 as faculty, director of student services, director of academic support, and now as director of the Academic Success Center at Kent State University. Her roles have focused on cognition and learning, student retention and success, assessment of academic support programs, integration of academic support into the curriculum, and new program development.

Amanda is a Level III Learning Center Leader, certified by the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA). She has presented locally, regionally, and nationally on topics including prematriculation programming, academic coaching, faculty-led academic intervention, learning skills assessment, and inventory development and validation.

Amanda is passionate about education and service. Related to higher education, she is a member of the Philanthropic Education Organization (PEO) supporting women in pursuit of higher education and served on the Action Council and as a (R)Evolution Leadership Mentor for the Women's Center at Kent State University. She is also an editorial board member for The Learning Assistance Review, a scholarly journal of the NCLCA.

Taking inventory:

Validating a learning skills inventory in higher education

Higher education institutions face heightened accountability for student success. As such, higher education relies heavily on big data to predict student outcomes. This process is problematic because predictive models are developed on historical data, are deficit based, and are focused on student factors, neglecting institutional factors.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to validate a locally developed Learning Skills Inventory (LSI) and to identify learning skill predictors of academic success to develop a strengths-based approach for prediction models of academic performance.

The findings showed that the LSI instrument demonstrated inconsistent validity. Although most LSI learning skills were identified factors through factor analyses, only several met criteria for extraction. Regression analysis demonstrated a significant predictive relationship of learning skill factors with GPA but accounted for a small amount of the variance in GPA.

These results have student experience and practice and policy implications for higher education. As a skill-based component of GPA, learning skills assessment and development should be considered for integration into prematriculation and first semester outreach, services, and curricula. More research is needed to understand other factors that contribute to GPA.