

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNET WEBSITE AS A LEARNING RESOURCE FOR A WEB-BASED COURSE IN CLINICAL GERONTOLOGY: DEMONSTRATION OF A FORMAL METHOD OF EDUCATION. NS Gorman

**PROBLEM.** An Internet WebSite did not exist to support the clinical gerontology course offered at Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to develop an Internet WebSite to serve as a learning resource for students taking the course. The research question for this study was 'What is an appropriate and valid design for an Internet WebSite to be used as a learning resource for a Web-based course in clinical gerontology?'

**METHODS.** A method of educational inquiry known as development methodology was used to complete the study. A thorough review of the literature was performed. A formative committee was established to guide and advise the researcher during the course of the study. Criteria for WebSite development were written and approved by a formative committee and subsequently validated by a summative committee. Finally, a plan was developed and implemented for the publication and evaluation of the WebSite.

**RESULTS.** This study resulted in the design and publication of a WebSite that was based on validated criteria. The WebSite provided access to a variety of course activities and learning resources. The summative committee evaluated the WebSite and determined that it did meet the validated criteria for appropriate WebSite design. Evaluation: Although the WebSite functioned well and the students believed that it was a valuable learning resource, it was recommended that the course be transferred to WEB-CT (Web Course Tools). This would improve technical support available through the University's Office of Information Technology. It would also improve the instructor's ability to manage the course through special course management tools contained in Web-CT. Evidence of a new contribution: The study demonstrated that the development of appropriate and valid learning resources should be based upon a formal method of educational inquiry.