

Incorporating Relationship Education into a College Class on Marriage

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ABSTRACT. Many couples experience difficulty from relationship distress and/or divorce. Some research suggests that teaching relationship education (RE) to emerging adults before many enter long-term committed relationships can reduce relationship difficulty and promote healthy relationship behaviors. Yet, very little investigation has been conducted with RE and emerging adults. This study incorporated important concepts from the *Within My Reach* RE curriculum into an existing college class on marriage and comparisons were made with a class who did not receive RE on several variables. Results showed that those in the revised class showed significant gains in relationship confidence, insight, and healthy decision-making over the control class. Implications for practitioners and researchers are provided based on study findings.

Keywords: Relationship education, emerging adulthood, program evaluation

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The ups and downs of romantic relationships can create challenges for many couples and families. Approximately half of marriages end in divorce (Amato, 2010; Copen, Daniels, Vespa, & Mosher, 2012), and estimates also show that the U.S. spends \$112 billion dollars per year on costs related to distressed family relationships (Scafidi, 2008). In addition, adults who are divorced or experience prolonged relationship distress tend to experience reduced physical and mental health (Amato, 2001, 2010), and children who are experiencing high degrees of parental conflict in the home, or whose parents' divorce often experience adverse behavioral, emotional, social, and academic outcomes (Amato; Cummings & Davies, 1994; Whisman, 2008). As a preventative effort to combat some of the deleterious effects of divorce and relationship distress, some research suggests that teaching relationship skills to emerging adults, before many enter committed, long-term relationships can have a large impact on future relationship well-being (Stanley & Rhoades, 2009; Fincham, Stanley, & Rhoades, 2011).

In response to elevated couple and family instability, and high divorce rates increased interest and support has been given to the creation and implementation of relationship education (RE) programs to combat the negative influences of relationship distress on relationship partners and children (Doherty & Anderson, 2004; Halford, Markman, & Stanley, 2008; Markman & Rhoades, 2012). RE programs have primarily been designed and disseminated to more established, married, or engaged couples. However, very little information exists investigating the effectiveness of RE with emerging adults specifically within the college campus environment (Cottle, Thompson, Burr, & Hubler, 2014).

Emerging Adults and Romantic Relationships

For many, college and emerging adulthood go hand in hand. Emerging adulthood (18 to mid 20's), which is defined as a developmental period different from adolescence or adulthood (Arnett 2005, 2007), is a time of exploration and experimentation for many emerging adults. Some suggest that emerging adulthood represents a distinct and gradual transmission period from adolescence to adult developmental roles (i.e. career stability, marriage, and parental roles) (Arnett, 2007). Emerging adulthood has been characterized by a time of ongoing individual discovery in terms of educational pursuits, career fit, romantic relationship exploration, and gradually adopting more adult responsibilities (Arnett, 2004; Olmstead, Pasley, Meyer, Standford, Fincham, & Delevi, 2011).

Risk and Risk-taking in Emerging Adult Relationships

Emerging adulthood often represents a time period of increased engagement in risky behaviors, whether with relationship behaviors or otherwise (Arnett, 2007), and behaviors and practices during emerging adulthood may have long term implications for committed adult

romantic relationships (Fincham et al., 2011). For instance, sexual risk taking is common among emerging adults where “hooking up” or “friends with benefits” relationships are fairly common. These relationships are characterized by a high degree of physical intimacy outside of the context of commitment and any intentions of a long term relationships (Fincham et al.). Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, and Fincham (2010) found that many emerging adult college students, and women in particular, described their “hook up” sexual relationship as a poor experience that may have negative effects on personal well-being. Owen et al. note that individuals who reported a negative hooking up experience also may report feelings of unfair treatment from their partner or may not have felt that the experience was consensual.

Friends with benefits relationships (FWBR) are also quite common. FWBRs have been defined as a combination of sexual and friendship relationship with little or no commitment to remain monogamous to the other individual (Mongeau, Ramirez, & Vorell, 2003). Prevalence estimates with college student populations indicate that these kinds of sexual relationships range from 50-75% (Bisson & Levine, 2009; Fielder & Carey, 2010; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000; Vanderdrift, Lehmilller, & Kelly, 2010). Vanderdrift et al. found that students who engage in FWBR are less likely to utilize safe sex practices and choose not to use condoms during sexual intercourse due to the level of trust for the individual because of the friendship. This lack of safe sexual practices could lead to a rise in sexually transmitted infection diagnoses which could lead to difficulty in new relationships in the future. Other research has shown that sexual risk taking such as hooking up and friends with benefits relationships are associated with ongoing relationship ambiguity/confusion, elevated depressive symptoms, and greater risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (Bisson & Levine 2009; Grello, Welsh, & Harper, 2006; Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Fincham, 2010).

Sexting has emerged as another form of risk taking behavior that can lead to potential problems for the emerging adult population. Benotsch, Snipes, Martin, and Bull (2012) found that individuals who have participated in sexting behaviors also were twice as likely to engage in riskier sexual activities (e.g., multiple sexual encounters, forgo safe sexual practices). Furthermore, over half of the participants reported that sexting a partner lead to sexual intercourse with the sexting partner (Benotsch et al.).

The relational aggression and sexual victimization prevalence rates among young adult populations are also alarmingly high, and women are more likely to be victimized than men (Carey, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2015). These researchers found that during the first year of college 15% of women reported an incapacitated rape incident, and 9% reported a forcible rape incident. Additionally, Goldstein (2011) indicated most young adults, both males and females alike, have experienced some form of mild to moderate relational aggression or been involved, including relational aggression in romantic relationships. Furthermore, Goldstein found that individuals who choose to remain in long term relationships in which relationship aggression is present may put themselves at risk of experiencing this type of aggression for long periods of time.

Decision Making in Emerging Adult Relationships

Other research literature suggests that emerging adult romantic relationships often contain a high degree of ambiguity (Sassler, 2004; Vennum & Fincham, 2011). Some researchers have documented that emerging adults often enter serious relationships such as cohabitation as a “gradual slide,” or something that “just happened” rather than making clear, conscious decisions about important relationship transitions (Lindsay, 2000; Manning & Smock, 2005; Stanley, Rhoades, & Markman, 2006; Vennum & Fincham, 2011).

According to Manning (2013), cohabitation appears to be steadily increasing and does not show any indication of subsiding any time soon. Furthermore, individuals who choose to cohabit often begin this process without plans of ever advancing to marriage but choose to live together to help with finances among other things (Guzzo, 2014; Sassler, 2004; Smock, Manning, & Porter, 2005). Stanley and colleagues (2006) suggest that “sliding” into important relationship transitions such as cohabitation without making conscious decisions puts a relationship at greater risk for adverse outcomes, such as negative relationship constraints. Constraints, such as pregnancy, and joint financial ventures often increase the difficulty of ending or leaving a relationship that may not be healthy, safe, and/or justifying (Stanley et al). Owen, Rhoades, and Stanley (2013) found that those who avoided unhealthy relationship constraints, and reported more thoughtful decision making processes in their relationships reported more dedication to their partners, higher satisfaction in the relationship, and less cheating behaviors.

Considering the literature above on risk, risky behavior, and decision making in emerging adult romantic relationships, this time been identified as a particularly “teachable moment,” as emerging adults may be more open to learning about relationships during this time, and RE content may be particularly important in terms of boosting protective factors and reducing risk (Fincham et al., 2011; Ooms & Wilson, 2004). Two important areas in particular for emerging adults may be RE content on identifying potential “danger signs” in relationships, and making clear and conscious decisions about transitions in relationships.

Gaps in Literature on RE with Emerging Adults

After reviewing the examples above, emerging adulthood represents an opportune time to provide RE both to combat the deleterious effects of risks and risk factors, and promote individual and relational well-being. Although still in its infancy, there is a small body of literature showing the effectiveness of RE with emerging adult samples. In one example, Kerpelman et al. (2010) found that when a sample of young people were introduced to relationship education, false ideas about relationships were decreased, and conflict resolution skills were elevated. Additionally, Olmstead and colleagues (2011), found that college students who participated in a college course with a relationship education component showed gains in relationship knowledge and skills (e.g. the “speaker listener” technique), and the participants felt

they gained a stronger idea about themselves as well as any current or future relationships. Furthermore, Braithwaite, Lambert, Fincham, and Pasley (2010) found that individuals who participated in the relationship education class showed a decreased amount of cheating on their current partner, and Cottle et al. (2014) found that college students who received RE reported positive increases in relationship knowledge and communication skills from pre to posttest.

Thus, RE when implemented with emerging adults holds the potential of increasing awareness and teaching skills associated with healthy relationships, and for many emerging adults, prior to the formation of serious relationships such as cohabitating, engaged, or marital relationships. However, there is still much to be learned about RE delivery formats with emerging adult populations. To our knowledge there does not exist any research focused on incorporating RE components into the “traditional flow” of an existing college course on committed relationships. The research cited on RE on college campuses above teaches RE separate from class lectures (Olmstead et al., 2011) or as a two-day seminar (Cottle et al., 2014).

In the current study an existing course on marriage was redesigned to incorporate the core components of the research-based *Within My Reach* (WMR; Pearson, Stanley, & Rhoades, 2008) RE curriculum with primarily emerging adult, college students. The WMR curriculum emphasizes skills such as seeking a good match/partner, identifying relationship warning signs, and learning and communication skills. It is designed to be applicable to students regardless of current relationship status (Pearson et al., 2008; Stanley & Rhoades, 2009). Similar to other RE research with emerging adults (e.g., Olmstead et al., 2011) the content focuses on *self-awareness* (e.g., understanding one’s own family background, personality, and examining relationship goals), *relationship awareness* (e.g., partner selection, making healthy relationship choices), and *relationship skills* (e.g., communication and listening skills, such as using the speaker-listener technique and time-outs). Students who received the revised class content were compared with students who did not (control class) on a number of relationship measures.

It was hypothesized that students who received the revised marriage course would show significant gains over those who did not on the positive relationship measures (e.g., relationship confidence, relationship vision, relationship insight, relationship decision making) and score significantly lower from pretest to posttest on the cohabitation and relationship violence measures. Also, it was hypothesized that those in a relationship who had taken the revised marriage courses would show additional gains over those in the control class, including significant gains in relationship satisfaction.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 237 total participants enrolled in a semester long marriage class taught at state university in the central U.S during spring and fall semesters from 2013 to 2015; revised marriage class (n = 140), control class (n = 97). The sample was primarily female (88.6%), and Caucasian (68.4%), with African American (12%), Asian (5.1%), and Hispanic or Latino (5.1%) as the next largest groups. Participants ranged in age from 18-47 ($M = 21.8$, $SD =$

4.6). Within the sample, 55.3% reported being in a current romantic relationship, with most describing the relationship as “dating exclusively” (35.7%), “married” (10%), and “dating nonexclusively” (4.8%).

Procedures

The marriage class is a university-wide course that fulfills a life skills requirement. Each semester, two classes received the revised class content, and two did not. Students did not know in which class they had enrolled. In the revised marriage classes the important concepts from the WMR curriculum were included, and those who attended the control class received content concentrated on the course text only.

The revised marriage classes were taught by two professors (one male and one female, PhD level) who had received training in WMR. These professors held weekly meetings to assure that similar content from the WMR curriculum was addressed in each class each week. Those who taught the control classes were other professors in the department who were not the same as those who taught the classes with the revised content.

Data for this project was collected over four semesters (four marriage classes per semester). Following informed consent, students from the different classes who chose to participate completed an inclass pretest survey the second week of the semester, and an in class posttest survey the final week of classes. Those who chose not to participate. The surveys were administered by project research assistants. Student participants who were single or otherwise not in a relationship were instructed to think about a future relationship for any questions that referred to a relationship (e.g., “I now know how to identify communication danger signs”).

Measures

Survey items used Likert scale formatting for both the pre- and posttests, with anchors “Totally Disagree” assigned a value of 1 and “Totally Agree” a value of 7. The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the developers of PREP Inc. materials for specific evaluation of the WMR curriculum using items from their previously established scales. The measures assessed in the current study are described below:

Relationship Confidence: A summation of five items from the Future Relationship Confidence Scale (e.g., I am very confident when I think of having a stable, long term relationship; α pre-post: .82-.81; Stanley, Rhodes, & Williams, 2007; Williams, 2007).

Relationship Vision: A summation of six items from the Future Relationship Confidence Scale (e.g., I have a clear vision of what I want my marriage (or other long-term romantic relationship) to be like; α pre-post: .81-.80; Stanley et al., 2007; Williams, 2007).

Relationship Insight: A summation of four items from the Future Relationship Confidence Scale (e.g., I have an excellent knowledge of specific things to look for to determine whether a romantic relationship is healthy); α pre-post: .83-.78; Stanley et al., 2007; Williams, 2007).

Speaking: A summation of two items from the Communication Skills Test (Saiz & Jenkins, 1996; α pre-post: .82-.83).

Listening: A summation of five items from the Communication Skills Test (Saiz & Jenkins, 1996; α pre-post: .82-.83).

Relationship Satisfaction: A summation of 12 items adapted from the Boredom in Romantic Relationships Measure (Strong, 2008) and the Investment Model Scale (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998; α pre-post: .84-.87).

Decision Making in Cohabitation: Single item: *Living with my boyfriend/girlfriend before there is a clear commitment to a long term relationship will increase my chances of having a successful marriage.* The item was reverse coded in the analysis.

Relationship Violence: Single item: *Even in a healthy relationship, occasionally slapping, pushing or shoving during an argument is inevitable.* The item was reverse coded in the analysis.

Open-ended Questions: Over that last year (two semesters) of data collection those who received the revised course content were also asked to comment on three open-ended questions reflecting on the class: *What part of this class did you find most helpful in terms of learning about relationships?; What course concept do you think you will remember the most moving forward?; and Is there anything from this class that you have applied to a current relationship?*

Results

Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to assess differences in the study outcomes by class (with the pretest entered as the covariate). First, class differences were assessed, followed by the addition of the class x relationships status (current relationship vs. not) interaction term. As an added step, to give more complete picture of the study findings, repeated measures ANOVA was used to assess the effect of time (pre-test to posttest) separately for the revised and control classes. Quantitative analyses were run in SPSS 21.0 (IBM Corp., 2012). For an overview of ANCOVA findings see Table 1.

The open-ended data was analyzed using autonomous counting methods, where “counting is to produce numbers that are intended to stand on their own as significant research findings” (Hannah & Lautsch, 2011, p. 16). Similar terms/concepts were grouped together and counted. For an overview of autonomous counting results please see Table 2.

Relationship Confidence

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would experience significantly greater gains in relationship confidence when compared to the control class. As predicted, students in the revised class did report a significant gain in relationship confidence over the control class, $F(1, 231) = 7.84, p < .01, \eta^2_{\text{partial}} = .04$. The class x relationship status interaction was approaching significance, $F(1, 231) = 2.80, p = .09, \eta^2_{\text{partial}} = .01$.

Relationship Vision

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would experience significantly greater gains in relationship vision when compared to the control class. Contrary to the hypothesis, students in the revised class did not report a significant gain in relationship vision over the control class, $F(1, 232) = 1.76, p > .05$. The class x relationship status interaction was also not significant, $F(1, 230) = 0.20, p > .05$.

Relationship Insight

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would experience significantly greater gains in relationship insight when compared with the control class. As predicted, students in the revised class did report a significant gain in relationship insight over the control class, $F(1, 228) = 4.10, p < .05, \eta^2_{partial} = .02$. The addition of the class x relationship status interaction was not significant, $F(1, 226) = 1.86, p > .05$.

Speaking

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would experience significantly greater gains in speaking skills when compared to the control class. Contrary to the hypothesis, students in the revised class did not report a significant gain in speaking skills over the control class, $F(1, 224) = 1.18, p > .05$, but the addition of the class x relationship status interaction was significant, $F(1, 222) = 5.23, p > .05, \eta^2_{partial} = .02$, with those who had received the revised class who reported a current relationship and those in the control class not in a relationship showing more gain in speaking skills.

Listening

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would experience significantly greater gains in listening skills when compared to the control class. Contrary to the hypothesis, students in the revised class did not report a significant gain in listening skills over the control class, $F(1, 224) = 0.71, p > .05$. The class x relationship status interaction was also not significant, $F(1, 222) = 2.39, p > .05$.

Decision Making in Cohabitation

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would report significantly greater gains in thoughtful decision making with cohabitation when compared to the control class. As predicted, students in the revised class did report a significant gain in thoughtful decision making with cohabitation over the control class, $F(1, 233) = 4.73, p < .05, \eta^2_{partial} = .02$, but the class x relationship status interaction was not significant, $F(1, 231) = 0.71, p > .05$.

Relationship Violence

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage class would experience significantly more negative attitudes on relationship violence when compared to the control class. Contrary to the hypothesis, students in the revised class did not report a significant more negative attitude on relationship violence over the control class, $F(1, 226) = 0.02, p > .05$. The class x relationship status interaction was also not significant, $F(1, 224) = 0.32, p > .05$.

Relationship Satisfaction

It was hypothesized that students in the revised marriage in a relationship would experience significantly greater gains in relationship satisfaction when compared to those in a relationship in the control class. Contrary to the hypothesis, students in a relationship in the revised class did not report a significant gain in relationship satisfaction over those in a relationship in the control class, $F(1, 118) = 0.58, p > .05$.

Separate Repeated Measures ANOVA Results for the Effect of Time

Results showed that, overall, the effect of time (from pretest to posttest) was significant for all study variables for the revised and control classes with the exception of relationship violence (which resulted in a low, sustained mean for both groups) and relationship satisfaction. Also, the effect of time was significant for the decision making in cohabitation variable for the revised class ($F(1, 138) = 9.97, p < .05, \eta^2_{partial} = .07$), but not the control class. The effect size for the revised class was somewhat stronger for relationship confidence ($\eta^2_{partial} = .29$ vs. $\eta^2_{partial} = .10$), relationship insight ($\eta^2_{partial} = .43$ vs. $\eta^2_{partial} = .35$), and relationship vision ($\eta^2_{partial} = .27$ vs. $\eta^2_{partial} = .20$).

Open-ended Questions

Results of the autonomous counting analysis showed that the top four most mentioned course concepts for “What part of this class did you find most helpful in terms of relationships?” were: 1. Communication (20 count), Conflict Resolution (13 count), Sliding vs. Deciding (6 count), and Changing Perceptions on Relationships (e.g., “it is not all about me”; 5 count). The top four most mentioned course concepts for “What course concept do you think you will remember the most moving forward?” were: 1. Sliding vs. Deciding (20 count), Communication (17 count), Conflict Resolution (5 count), and Ideas on Keeping a Marriage Healthy (5 count). The top three most mentioned course concepts for “Is there anything from this class that you have applied to a current relationship?” were: 1. Communication skills (41 count), Sliding vs. Deciding (20 count), and Standing up for Myself (5 count).

Discussion

Study results show that RE with emerging adults can increase healthy relationship knowledge and awareness over a 16-week + course. Although the results are in some ways consistent with previous research using WMR (e.g., Cottle et al., 2014; Fincham et al., 2011), these results show that some positive effects can be produced incorporating RE into an existing class on relationships over the semester above and beyond those found in students who received the class on relationships only. The open-ended question data showed that many students reported remembering, and even applying, the major course concepts to their relationships at the end of the semester.

Interestingly, the significant gains in those who received the revised course over the control class were more connected with confidence in their relationship knowledge/skills and

relationship awareness/insight of healthy and potentially dangerous relationship practices/behaviors (i.e., gains in relationship confidence and insight). Pertaining to these outcomes, students who had received the revised content reported more assuredness in their ability to identify healthy relationship characteristics and more confidence in their ability to effectively manage challenges to help a relationship last.

Surprisingly, study results also showed no differences by class in relationship vision. This may be that the relationship vision variable more taps into a long-term relationship perspective, or “visioning” toward one’s relationship future. Recent reports show an increasing number of individuals who do not marry or enter long-term committed relationships until the late 20s (Arnett, 2007; U.S. Census, 2016). Although nearly half of the sample reported being in a current relationship, it may be that they were not thinking seriously about marriage (or long-term commitment), were not certain about what they wanted in a mate, etc. Thus, the questions asking about long-term relationship “visioning” may have been more difficult to conceptualize for some students.

In terms of relationship communication skills (speaking and listening) the results were mixed. No significant differences were found in listening skills. For speaking, those who had received the revised content and reported being in a relationship and those not in a relationship in the control class reported more gains. This finding is somewhat puzzling in that “communication” was in the top two for all three open-ended questions assessed in the count data. So, it does seem the concept was “getting through”, but these findings point to the need to further examine, and perhaps adjust the methods for teaching and measuring communication skills.

The results showed that class type did little to influence relationship satisfaction in those who reported a current relationship. However, half (49.6%) of the sample reported that they had been in their current relationship for 12 months or less (and 20% reported 6 months or less). Relationship satisfaction tends to be high early in the relationship, decline somewhat over time, and potentially “recover” later on (e.g., VanLaningham, Johnson, & Amato, 2001). Thus, assessing changes relationship satisfaction in this primarily emerging adult sample where many had not been in a relationship less than one year may have been challenging.

As another point to consider, the separate analysis investigating the effect of time demonstrated that the class showed a positive effect for both groups in the majority of the study variables. The old adage of “you don’t know what you don’t know until you know it” may have been in play here in terms of relationship knowledge, insight, etc. Thus, the intervention (the marriage class) had an effect on both students in the revised class and the control class, with the revised class showing an enhanced effect in some areas.

Similar to the findings of Cottle et al. (2014), this study found that students in the revised class reduced their perceptions that cohabitation will increase the chances of relationship success over the control class (this difference was supported in both the ANCOVA and repeated measures ANOVA analysis). This is one area where the revised class had an enhanced effect, showing significant differences with the control classes. This is potentially important since

cohabitation, and especially cohabitation while early in emerging adulthood can lead to relationship instability (Guzzo, 2014; Kuperberg, 2014). This change in perceptions may lead students to different decision-making processes when considering cohabitation that may have lasting impacts in terms of relationship health and stability.

Implications for Practitioners and Researchers

There is still much to learn about effective delivery of RE with various audiences. Historically (and still to some degree, currently), RE is primarily delivered through religious organizations, and audiences have been primarily white, middle-class, engaged or married couples (Hawkins, Blanchard, Baldwin, & Fawcett, 2008). Investigations such as the current study help to conceptualize ways to increase the reach of RE to emerging adults. The results show that RE, as implemented into an existing class on relationships, can produce positive changes in emerging adult relationship attitudes, knowledge, and awareness. Hans (2014) noted that there are over 215 academic units in the area of child and family studies/family science. Hence, if even a modest proportion of these programs incorporated RE into their current course offerings there is the potential to reach many emerging adults (as well as others enrolled in these classes).

In addition, if family life education programs are to enjoy long-term effectiveness partnerships and collaborations are important to consider. For example, the field of RE could greatly benefit from those teaching courses on healthy relationships at colleges and universities effectively partnering and sharing ideas with those who work with RE programs in social service organizations, government programs, religious organizations, middle and high schools.

The timing of measurement may also be an issue when evaluating outcomes in RE. A 16-week span can be a long evaluative period. It may be in this study that concepts/skills taught early in the semester may have been hard to remember completely by the end of the semester. Future research should explore adding measurement points over the semester.

Additionally, in general, the long-term effectiveness of RE has been under investigated, and this is even more the case with emerging adult populations. Future research should strive to understand the long-term impact of RE on emerging adults in various ways (e.g., attitudes, knowledge, skills, decisions, etc.). For instance, for this study it would be important to know how the RE content affects ongoing decisions made about relationships, and future relationship functioning (e.g., how the concepts taught affect future partner selection, communication skills used in relationships, etc.). Learning more about the long-term impact of RE will be crucial as the field continues to effectively strive to boost healthy relationship development in not only emerging adults, but various populations.

Limitations and Conclusion

This study contains a number of limitations of which the reader should be aware. First, the sample is of limited diversity, especially in terms of gender and ethnic diversity. Second, though the study included a control group, the long-term effectiveness of RE was not assessed. Future research should seek to evaluate RE with emerging adults with more diverse samples, and use longitudinal methods to assess long-term impacts.

Despite the mentioned limitations, the study makes an important contribution to the field of RE with emerging adult populations by demonstrating the effectiveness of incorporating core components of the WMR curriculum into an existing college course on relationships. Others who teach these topics may find not only the results of the study helpful, but also the method and process for conducting RE in college courses. Of course, wider-spread coordination and adoption of sound practices through which to offer RE will only increase the potential for positive outcomes. Increasing the reach of RE to emerging adult populations may help them to more fully consider healthy decision-making and other important relationship concepts to influence more healthy and positive relationship outcomes.

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Table 1.

Overview of ANCOVA Results

Variable	Class	Pre-test Mean (Covariate)	Observed Posttest Mean (DV Mean)	Adjusted Posttest Mean (Estimated DV Mean)
Relationship Confidence	Revised	22.91	25.58	25.62**
	Control	23.29	24.63	24.58
Relationship Vision	Revised	35.58	38.66	38.64
	Control	35.12	35.12	38.00
Relationship Insight	Revised	20.79	20.79	24.88*
	Control	20.53	20.53	24.05
Speaking	Revised	14.11	15.42	15.31
	Control	13.54	15.56	15.78
Listening	Revised	24.32	26.55	26.68
	Control	25.08	27.37	27.20
Decision Making in Cohabitation	Revised	2.81	3.37	3.36*
	Control	2.80	2.81	2.81
Relationship Violence	Revised	1.71	1.87	1.91
	Control	1.76	2.02	1.93
Relationship Satisfaction	Revised	75.69	75.72	75.90
	Control	77.12	77.07	76.78

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2.

Frequency of Open Ended Responses (revised classes only)

Question	Example	Frequency/Count
<i>What part of this class did you find most helpful in terms of relationships?</i>	Communication	20
	Conflict Resolution	13
	Sliding vs. Deciding	6
	Changing Perceptions	5
<i>What course concept do you think you will remember the most moving forward?</i>	Sliding vs. Deciding	20
	Communication	17
	Conflict Resolution	5
	Ideas on Keeping a Healthy Marriage	5
<i>Is there anything from this class that you have applied to a current relationship?</i>	Communication skills	41
	Sliding vs. Deciding	20
	Standing up for Myself	5