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Teaching Cultural Humility and Competence: A Multi-disciplinary Course for Public Health and Health Services Students

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Cultural Competence
Possessing knowledge-based understanding and skills with which to provide culturally acceptable and relevant care including general, as well as specific information about diverse cultures.

Cultural Humility1
A life-long learning process of self reflection and self-critique which involves

- Being aware of one’s personal beliefs & not letting them interfere with providing culturally relevant care
- Recognizing the inherent power imbalances in patient-provider communication—using patient focused care
- Demonstrating mutual respect and partnership with patients, families and co-workers

1 Adapted from Tervalon,M, et. al (1998)

WHY A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY CULTURAL HUMILITY COMPETENCE COURSE?

- To ensure that students develop prerequisite areas of cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills for application in practice
- To provide students with an in-depth opportunity to identify and reflect on their own cultures, values and preferences, and how this impacts health care services and administration.
- To provide students opportunities to interact across disciplines and facilitate their understanding of the “culture of health care and population health”
- To prepare the future workforce to lead, teach and develop culturally competent health organizations in a multicultural environment
- To respond to legislative, regulatory, and accreditation mandates (e.g. LEP, CLAS, NBPHE, CHES, Joint Commission)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Hybrid On-line Format
Requires a structure which is responsive to the time and logistical constraints of multi-disciplinary students

- 4 in-person classes held on Saturdays
- 3 live synchronous online classes (small group)
- 7 asynchronous online classes using discussion boards to facilitate communication between students and faculty

Overall Course Aim
An in-depth and advanced understanding of cultural diversity, health inequities and cultural competence in inter-professional health and human service delivery and administration.
Facilitate development of cultural competence and humility in one’s self, colleagues and the work environment and its application to practice.

Cultural Humility
A Crucial Process for Cultural Competence

My Cultural Identity Pie Chart

Guided Reflective Questions
1. What did this exercise reveal about yourself?
2. How may your insights impact your interactions and responses, both personally and professionally?
3. Why is it important to have personal understanding of your culture?

Course Themes

1. Diversity, Health Disparities and Cultural Competence: influence of
   - Race, ethnicity, acculturation and socio-economic status on health access and status
   - Historical events, current and future demographics
   - Cultural diverse cultural values, beliefs and attitudes on illness perspectives, health behavior and health care practices
   - Limited English Proficiency and health literacy on health behaviors and outcomes

2. Self-Reflection: Values, Beliefs and Behaviors: Awareness of
   - One’s own cultural background, values and beliefs & attitudes, & relationship to others
   - The ongoing process of being a culturally competent and humble health and human service provider

3. Application to Practice: Facilitating skills in
   - Observation and interaction in diverse communities
   - Development of professional goals as a cultural competence practitioner and change agent
   - Building partnerships with diverse communities

Student Feedback

“I have better able to examine the cultures which I am a part of, something I wish to always be cognizant of even when I become immersed in it in the future” – MD/MPH student

“What I really got out of the reading was to listen with your heart, get to know and understand people . . . and take time to reflect and learn why things happen and why people believe what they believe” – MPH student

“I had little awareness of the pervasiveness of cultural influences and prejudices that are so much a part of American history and un-consciousness. . . . This perspective has broadened my focus . . . looking at programming for cultural groups and possibilities for systemic change” – OTD student

Enrollment Profile over 3 Years
(44 Students)
- MPH (including 2 practicing physicians)
- MD/MPH
- Occupational Therapy
- PharmD
- Physical Therapy