Interprofessional Teaching: Partnership to enhance student experiential learning.

Instructors: Deirdra Murphy (Physical Therapy), Ashleigh Hillier (Psychology), Students: Justin Kopec (Psychology), and Sarah Keeler (Physical Therapy).

**Community Based Participatory Research**

**Purpose:** Community-based physical exercise program for adolescents and young adults with ASD.

**Student Experiential Learning:** Students assisted in implementing the exercise program and collecting research data.

4 Psychology Undergraduate Students
2 Exercise Physiology Students
2 Doctoral Physical Therapy Students

**Qualitative Assessment of Student Learning Using Focus Groups and Individual Student Interviews.**

- University students appreciated the opportunity to engage in service in a community-based program for an underserved population.
- The experiential learning IPE model enabled them to apply their classroom learning to real situations.
- They reported a change in their attitude towards people with disabilities which supports previous research showing that the more contact a person has with a disability, the more likely that person will have a more positive attitude toward others with disabilities.
- Students increased their appreciation for other disciplines and learned how to apply knowledge to new problems or situations.

**Fit and Fun Program**

**Purpose:** Exercise and relaxation techniques would significantly reduce levels of cortisol and self-reported stress and anxiety in a group of adolescents and young adults with ASD.

- Conducted with young adults ASD over 5 years.
- 9 week program over the spring semester.
- 12 participants each spring.
- UMass Lowell students (Psych, EP, DPT) each spring.

**Expanded Purpose:**

- Embed Interprofessional Learning Outcomes into Faculty Research Agenda.
- Qualitative methodology was used to evaluate and assess interprofessional outcomes from students’ IPE experience.
- Individual interviews with students were conducted, audio-taped, transcribed and analyzed using NVivo software.

**Benefits of Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

- Researchers come in with different assumptions and ask different questions: “outsider’s perspective” (Nissani, 1997).
- Wider choice of funding sources and broader array of publication outlets (Saunders, 2004).
- Multiple perspectives from different fields impacted every aspect of the Fit and Fun program.
- Student exposure to a new field; influencing future goals and career plans.
- Increased productivity of involved faculty members.

**Challenges of Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

- Sufficient understanding of the other discipline(s).
- Cross-disciplinary communication challenges; significant implicit knowledge within a field.
- Requires more time and commitment.
- Establishing program priorities: physical outcomes or psychological outcomes?
- Integrating literature in write ups.
- Forming a coherent and cohesive description of the program.
- Equitable contributions.
- Combining schedules.
- Authorship.

**Expanded Purpose:**

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**Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice Competency Domains (Interprofessional Education Collaborative, 2011)**

**Competency Domain 1:**
Values/Ethics for Interprofessional Practice

**Competency Domain 2:**
Roles/Responsibilities

**Competency Domain 3:**
Interprofessional Communication

**Competency Domain 4:**
Teams and Teamwork

**Future Directions**

- Enhance community based experiential educational strategies to improve interprofessional student competencies in the 4 IPE domains.
- Explore additional methodologies to evaluate student experiential learning.
- Create research and teaching opportunities to embed interprofessional experiential opportunities.

**References**