Domestic Intercultural Immersion at Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation

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Purpose and Objectives

Could a cultural immersion, service learning experience help undergraduate student nurses operationalize course objectives, assimilate course content, and be of real service to the community partner?

Purpose of the cultural immersion experience at Lac du Flambeau:

- Allow community health nursing students to apply course concepts to develop health promotion and disease prevention strategies to meet community needs.

This focus led to four objectives:

- Develop awareness of barriers and constraints experienced by vulnerable populations in general and Native Americans in particular.
- Apply course content related to community assessment in a real-life situation.
- Engage in health promotion and disease prevention strategies.
- Develop students’ sense of civic responsibility and the community as partner.

Project Design

- **Service Learning:** The National Service Learning Clearinghouse defines service learning as...a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

- **Assignment:** October 2014 students were tasked with performing a comprehensive community assessment. October 2015 students were tasked with program evaluation, health promotion, and disease prevention strategies. Reflection for both groups was accomplished through blogging and journaling.

- **Implementation:** IPFW students partnered with members of Peter Christiansen Health Center (PCHC) creating documents for use by PCHC in their advanced credentialing application. A second group of students developed documents evaluating effectiveness of PCHC prenatal and home visiting programs.

- **Key Course Content:** The community as client, community assessment, teaching and learning principles and strategies, health promotion and disease prevention through education, evidence-based practice, immunization and infectious diseases, and Healthy People 2020.

Outcome and Conclusion

- **Client-Centered Care:** Students shifted from planning for individuals to planning for populations; they also learned the importance of including clients as an equal partner in the planning process.

  As a result of the data we collected, the community will identify “priority health factors that can be impacted.”

- **Student Engagement:** Engaging community nursing students in a cultural immersion experience provided benefits for both the students and the community of Lac du Flambeau.

  “My dream is to have each child able to grow up to be happy and healthy with wellness in their minds and bodies.” Betty Marshall, Yankton Sioux.


  Lac du Flambeau landmarks.

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