This presentation will highlight the planning and the curriculum developed for an international study abroad –program to Ireland exploring nursing and healthcare and the incorporation of a service learning component for students. The program is the result of on-going collaborations of nursing faculty at Schools of Nursing in the United States and in Ireland. The primary purpose of this program is to provide students with the opportunity to explore a variety of Irish health care services and to partake in a service learning opportunity while in Ireland. During this study abroad program students learn about the history of Ireland’s health care system, Ireland’s health care services, Ireland’s community/public health system, Ireland’s Mental Health Commission, Ireland’s mental health law, patient rights of Ireland’s mentally ill, and the preparation and education of Ireland’s nurses. In addition, students will be exposed to the cultural opportunities that the beautiful country of Ireland has to offer. The program will take place in Ireland, specifically the cities of Dublin and Galway. Ireland is the westernmost and second largest of the British Isles and is separated from Great Britain by Saint George’s Channel on the southeast, the Irish Sea on the east, and the North Channel on the northeast. Politically, the island is divided into Northern Ireland, a constituent part of the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the Republic of Ireland. The island is divided into four historical provinces—Connaught, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster—and administrative units called counties. There are several exciting highlights being offered to students during this study abroad program which may include, Guest lectures by expert nursing/healthcare faculty from Trinity College, and the National University of Ireland, Galway; Tour of the National University of Ireland, Galway’s state of the art simulation lab; Visit to a variety of hospitals and outpatient clinics; and a day site visit to St. Patrick’s Hospital, the oldest psychiatric hospital in Ireland. Presentations related to Ireland’s Health Care Services such as the Health Service Executive, the Irish Times and A Vision for Change which is the Irish government policy for mental health that provides a template for the modernisation of Irish mental health services.; Field trips to places such as Cliffs of Moher, and the Aran Islands; Daily post conferences with highlights of health care topics and student led discussions; A cultural program of events including traditional music, theatre and film. The trip culminates in presentations of the highlights of students’ service learning opportunities. Finally, the program and curriculum for the course Exploring Ireland’s Health Care Services will be presented.

Preparing a study abroad course is a rigorous and time-consuming process and there are several implications for faculty to consider in the process of preparing an international study abroad trip. This presentation will offer important planning considerations, lessons learned, and will highlight the learning and service learning opportunities related to nursing and healthcare in Ireland. This presentation will appeal to nurse educators who are interested in planning a study abroad experience for their students.
Title:
Exploring Nursing and Healthcare in Ireland: A Collaborative International Study Abroad Program Incorporating Service Learning

Keywords:
Healthcare, Ireland and Study Abroad

References:

Abstract Summary:
This presentation will highlight the planning and curriculum developed for a study abroad trip to Ireland to explore nursing and healthcare and the incorporation of a service learning opportunity for students. The program is the result of on-going collaborations of nursing faculty at United States and Irish Schools of Nursing.

Content Outline:
1. Introduction of Exploring Ireland’s Healthcare Services
2. Syllabus
3. Learning Opportunities
   1. Site visits
   2. Guest lectures
   3. Incorporation of service learning
   4. Cultural excursions
3. Implications for Faculty Leading a Study Abroad Course
   1. Planning considerations
   2. Lessons learned
   3. Learning Opportunities

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