Historically, colleges of health have educated their students in discipline specific silos, and then these same students are expected to function efficiently and effectively in a team-oriented manner in practice. Interprofessional Education (IPE) involves educating students from 2 or more professions with the group learning and engaging in clinical practice with the object of cultivating collaborative practice (Bridges, Davidson, Odegard, Maki & Tomkowiak, 2011). The goal of inter-professional education is to prepare health professional students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for collaborative interprofessional practice (Thistle, 2015).

Several studies have been done on the inclusion of IPE in different universities but found the efforts questionable and that many of the experience did not fit the accepted definition of IPE (Australian Government, 2008; Garling, 2008; Gilligan, Outram, & Levett-Jones, 2014). In addition, the majority of the experiences involved passive learning rather than clinical or experiential learning experiences. Wise, Frost, Resnik, Davis and Iglarsch (2015) explored integrating IPE into physical therapy curriculum. The authors found that physical therapy programs developing IPE usually starts with classroom experiences before integrating clinical experiences. Thus the need for IPE integration into healthcare curricula has been clearly demonstrated, however more studies are needed on to how to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of this content.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this project is to implement an IPE program in the undergraduate and graduate programs in a College of Health and later evaluate the effectiveness of the
program compared to an IPE course. With 70% of adverse events in healthcare attributed to poor communication among members of the healthcare team (Gilligan, Outram, & Levett-Jones, 2015), it is essential that IPE be implemented and evaluated for effectiveness in regards to teamwork among the many healthcare disciplines.

**METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive comparative cross-sectional research design will be used for this study. The process started with the implementation of the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) model where 10 nursing faculty and 2 dental hygiene faculty chose 15 undergraduate and graduate students as AHEC Scholars. This group will be immersed in a 2-year nursing/dental hygiene inter-professional program that began this Fall. Clinical experiences will begin in the second year for the AHEC Scholars. The next phase will include creating an IPE elective course that all health care majors in the College of Health can take. After the 2-year period, evaluations of the AHEC model and the IPE course will be conducted and compared for differences using an investigator developed instrument. Concepts measured will be knowledge, skills, attitudes, engagement and communication. Data will be analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 25. Descriptive statistics and frequencies will be used to describe the sample. Independent t-tests will be conducted to compare differences among students that are a part of the AHEC program and those taking the IPE elective course.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

As interprofessional learning outcomes and competencies are increasingly being required by health professional accreditation standards, colleges of health need to consider how to implement IPE within their curricula (Thistlewaite, 2015). Further studies are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of IPE content once integrated. Results of this study could impact how students, especially undergraduates, value the significance of other health professions. Further studies are needed on the effectiveness of IPE programs on graduate students and work environments.

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**Title:**

Implementing and Evaluating the Effectiveness of Interprofessional Education in College of Health Curriculum

**Keywords:**

Curriculum, Education and Interprofessional

**References:**


**Abstract Summary:**

This research project will discuss implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of interprofessional education (IPE) in a college of health. The concepts explored will be knowledge, skills, attitudes, engagement and communication. A formal IPE program will be compared with a faculty developed IPE course.

**Content Outline:**

**Objective:** To implement and evaluate the effectiveness of interprofessional education (IPE) in undergraduate and graduate college of health curriculum and compare an IPE program to a faculty developed IPE course.

**Introduction:** Students learn in silos and are then expected to work effectively in teams. Many errors occur in healthcare related to miscommunication among the healthcare team. Studies are needed to produce effective models for implementing IPE in universities across the country.

**Methods:** A descriptive comparative cross-sectional design will be used for the study. Nursing and dental hygiene students have been chosen as AHEC Scholars and will be immersed in a 2 year IPE course. An IPE elective course will be created that all students in the College of Health may take. The program and course will be compared...
by examining the concepts of knowledge, skills, attitudes, engagement and communication.

**Implications:** This study will add to the body of knowledge on IPE and may provide suggestions for future models of IPE implementation. Information obtained can impact the classroom and clinical setting as well as the work environment.

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**Primary Presenting Author**

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