

## **Nursing Education Research Conference 2020**

### **Climate Change as a Scaffold for Interprofessional Learning in Nursing Education**

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**Purpose:** On the morning of May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Mauna Lau Observatory reported the highest levels of global atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas (GHG) implicated in climate change, in recorded history. Available science concludes with 90% certainty that the Earth's climate has warmed over the past few decades as a result of GHG emissions from human activities. No credible body of scientists have found an alternate explanation for the rising global temperatures. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and the American Public Health Association (APHA) warn that climate change is a major public health threat. It may also be argued that it is the most daunting justice issue of our time as it will disproportionately impact vulnerable populations now and for years to come, who have likely contributed the least to global carbon emissions, primarily communities of color in the United States and persons living in low and middle-income countries in the global south. Direct trauma from extreme weather events, heat-related illnesses, exacerbations of chronic disease (predominantly cardiac and respiratory illnesses) as well as mental health impacts are a few of the most pressing health implications that nurses must be prepared to address in their practices. However, most schools of nursing and medicine do not include information about health impacts of climate change in their curricula. This presentation will share the design and outcomes of a cross-college, interprofessional course offered in Spring 2019 at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, titled "Planetary Health, Policy and Social Justice."

**Methods:** Utilizing an immersive, interprofessional education model, students from the Schools of Nursing, Engineering, Education and Arts and Sciences collaborated with local community partners on meaningful solutions to complex local health impacts related to climate change.

**Results:** Student learning outcomes were achieved through the integration of didactic content with project-based learning, resulting in locally relevant and impactful projects centered on improving human health through adaptive mitigation.

#### **Conclusion:**

The complex objective of achieving development with adaptive mitigation was achieved. This course offers a model for utilizing climate change as a scaffold for meaningful interprofessional learning, while preparing nurses and other professionals to address climate issues in their respective fields.

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#### **Title:**

Climate Change as a Scaffold for Interprofessional Learning in Nursing Education

#### **Keywords:**

Climate change, Interprofessional and Social Justice

#### **Abstract Summary:**

Participants will learn how to develop and implement an immersive and interprofessional course preparing students and leaders to address the complex health and ethical challenges of climate change in collaborative teams.

**References:**

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Ziegler is an Assistant Professor of Nursing in the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner Program, and affiliated faculty with the Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health. Her current scholarly work focuses on 1) the role and integration of traditional healers in Western Kenya's health care environment, and 2) the role of primary care providers in facilitating community adaptation to climate stress and aligning human adaptation and development strategies with carbon mitigation policy.