Mexico-U.S. Academic Partnerships: Bridging Cultures and Breaking Barriers

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Poster Presentation Goals

• This presentation focuses on the partnership between University of Texas-Pan American and Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon-Monterrey, Mexico.
• Describe the development of a partnership between the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon-Monterrey, Mexico School of Nursing and the University of Texas-Pan American Nursing Department.
• Discuss the similarities between the two schools.
• Demonstrate the success of one collaborative international academic partnership project

Rationale for Building Mexico-U.S. Partnership

• Knowledge of global health care is an essential component of nursing in the 21st century. One avenue to impart this knowledge to nursing students is the creation of international partnerships.
• International partnerships promote educational experiences that allow nursing students to learn about educational and health care systems and develop cultural awareness.
• Nursing students living in the U.S.-Mexico border will become more sensitive to the importance of connecting with each other and globally.

Why build U.S. border-Mexico bridges?

• Geographically the Rio Grande Valley (USA) and Monterrey, Mexico are separated by the Rio Grande River.
• Culturally we are separated by the border and for many by language, customs, and traditions.

UANL Campus

• Baccalaureate in Nursing
• Masters of Science in Nursing (MCE)
• DSN
Chronicity, HIV/AIDS, Drugs Prevention

UT Campus

• Baccalaureate in Nursing
• Masters of Science in Nursing
FNP

Project Activities

UT: Nursing Department Chair scholarly presentations at UANL campus via telecast
UANL: student exchanges twice a year Mexico students attend class and clinical experiences; Students stay at dorms or local hotels; Eat on campus.
UANL Nursing Faculty scholarly presentations at UTPA conferences
UTANL students, faculty, and community attend Nursing Research Day

UT Challenges

• Finding financial resources to have faculty assigned to students
• Faculty buy-in to the collaboration
• Student workloads are heavy
• Faculty workloads are heavy
• Busy faculty with multiple projects
• Faculty and student ethnocentricity

UT Barriers

• Time
• Workload
• Language (40% speak Spanish/ most colloquial)
• Distance
• Culture/Ethnocentricity

UANL Challenge

• Finding financial resources
• Faculty challenges
• Faculty with multiple projects

Lessons Learned

• The river does not divide but unite
• There are many cultural similarities between the two.
• Collaborative arrangements take much time and dedication
• Real friendships can be formed

UT & UANL Nursing Student Profile

• UT 87% Mexican-American
• UANL 98.5 % Mexican nationals
• UT 22% males
• UANL 35 % males
• UT 80% of students either speak or understand Spanish
• UANL 5 % of students speak English

Primary Academic Partnership Objectives

• Permit students and faculty at both institutions to develop an awareness of the academic services offered in the US and Mexico
• Develop strategic alliances that will enrich student and faculty learning
• Encourage the development of international collaboration among neighbor nursing schools

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