Supporting the Development of a Social Justice Perspective Through Service Learning

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Disclosures:

- **Conflict of Interest:**
  - Catherine S. Thomas reports no conflict of interest
  - Leona A. Konieczny reports no conflict of interest

- **Employer:**
  - Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT USA
Learning Objectives:

1. The learner will be able to understand the potential benefits of providing a service learning experience to support the development of a social justice perspective along with potential logistical barriers to student learning that may present with the use of this as a learning strategy.

2. The learner will be able to expand their knowledge related to the components of both design and implementation phases of a volunteer service learning experience that focuses on the development of a social justice perspective.
Goals for Nursing Education

- Expectations set by the AACN in the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education:
  - Professionalism and the inherent values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice are fundamental to the discipline of nursing.
  - Diversity of this nation’s population mandates attention to diversity in order to provide safe, high quality care.
  - Professional nurse practices in a multicultural environment and must possess the skills to provide culturally appropriate care. [1]
Social Justice and AACN

Definition:

“Acting in accordance with fair treatment regardless of economic status, race, ethnicity, age, citizenship, disability, or sexual orientation

It is one of the core nursing values identified as important in guiding the nurse to embody ethical behaviors when delivering patient care.
Social Justice Considerations

- Cultural concepts (awareness, sensitivity, etc.) and Social justice are intertwined;
- Social justice encompasses a broader systems perspective
- One pedagogical strategy that often incorporates social justice concepts is Service Learning (SL)
- SL has become increasingly commonplace in colleges and universities in the US
- Important to understand SL and community service are NOT interchangeable terms
Challenge for Nurse Educators

- Supporting students in developing a social justice perspective when providing care to diverse populations;

- Actualize the mission of the university and the department of nursing;

- Intentional inclusion of learning pedagogy of SL to achieve program outcomes and meet AACN Essentials;

- Role model service to others as a component of professionalism.
Literature Overview: Service Learning

- Varied definitions of SL exist
- From our perspective; defined as a pedagogical approach that is experiential in nature - which intentionally supports achievement of institution and program goals through structured reciprocal learning activities [4,5]
- Those activities provide students opportunity to experience civic engagement and cultural awareness
- With incorporation of reflection, students are allowed opportunity of a guided exploration of self-awareness and preconceptions that they may have had previously.
Literature Overview: Service Learning

- SL demonstrates benefits for students in terms of personal and social outcomes as well as career development [5].

- Structured activities provided during service learning experience allowed students to engage in 4 of 6 crucial learning attributes for service learning [6].
  - Diversity of interactions, civic competencies, community activities & critical reflection
Case Study: Our SL Experiences

**Planning:**

**Alignment with:**
- College/University Mission & Vision
- Department Mission & Program Outcomes

**Partner Organization Identification**
- Congruence of Mission, Inclusion of Nursing Students
- Availability, Scheduling, Location, Travel time

**College/University: Policies/Procedures & Permissions**

**Proposal:**
- Clear Intent & Goals, Budget, Implementation & Evaluation
Case Study: Our SL Experiences

- **University Mission & Vision:**
  - MISSION: “prepares students to be thoughtful, responsible and successful citizens” [2]
  - Community engagement is 1 of 4 elements of distinction
  - VISION: Graduating broadly educated, culturally and globally aware students who will contribute meaningfully to their communities as engaged professionals and citizens [2]

- **Nursing Department Mission:**
  - Social awareness: “makes socially significant and personally satisfying contributions to society” [2]
  - “mission to serve a wide range of citizenry with varying characteristics and needs” [2]
  - Partnership of fostering lifelong learning with lifelong service to others.
Case Study: Our SL Experiences

- Related CCSU Program Outcomes:
  - Incorporate inter- and intra-professional communication and collaborative skills into the delivery of evidence-based, culturally sensitive patient-centered care.
  - Provide innovative interventions to promote health and prevent illness in vulnerable populations.
  - Practice from a caring, professional nursing perspective by incorporating the values of social justice, diversity, and global awareness” [2]
Case Study: Our SL Experiences

- **Implementation:**
- Student selection
- Orientation
- Travel Knowledge & Safety Issues
- Provision of service & care
  - Flexibility
  - Advocacy - student learning
- Cultural Learning
- Debriefing
Case Study: Our SL Experiences

- Evaluation:
- Formal vs. Informal
- Satisfaction vs. Reflective Learning
- Budget outcomes
- Partner Organization
Case Study: Our SL Experiences

- **Lessons Learned:**
- Expect the Unexpected
- Embrace the Unknown
- Enjoy the Experience
- Trust the Students
Day One of Clinic - Triage Area Prior to Opening

Approximately 5:45 am Saturday Morning

Taken by Catherine Thomas
Day One of Clinic - Helping with Dental Patients

Taken by Catherine Thomas

Approximately 2pm
Day One of Clinic - Triage

Approximately 1pm

Picture was taken by Organization and posted on their Facebook Page
New Orleans
Building Clean up
New Orleans

Lower Ninth Ward - Visiting the new Levee
Questions?

Thank you for your interest!
References


