Interdisciplinary Education Curriculum Revision: Application of a Change Leading Model

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Session Title:  
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References:


Abstract Summary:  
The leadership journey was guided by the application of the Influencer Change Model to create a study abroad course that met learning objectives for multi-disciplinary students across the university. Leadership skills were also applied to facilitate the adoption and implementation of the course in collaboration with a Costa Rican university.

Learning Activity:

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE |
Demonstrate application of the Influencer Change Model

Describe an innovative curricular strategy that integrates course credit across interdisciplinary courses

Explore a leadership journey that culminates in the offering of an abroad course at a private university in Costa Rica.

I. Influencer Change Model- A) Motivation (Personal, Social & Structural) B) Ability (Personal, Social & Structural)


Abstract Text:

Project Overview: The Influencer Change Model was used to demonstrate how a three-credit study abroad course could meet the university's course credit requirement. Undergraduate and graduate students will travel together to Costa Rica where they will attend didactic sessions and complete practicum hours in service learning projects. Each student stays with a host-family, immersed in the foreign culture for three weeks. Nursing students will enroll in Fall 2018 while other university programs will be added in the coming years.

The *Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing* (AACN, 2008) indicted a minimum skillset for entry into practice includes foundational knowledge of global health, caring for diverse populations, and the interdependence of multiple disciplines necessary to meet these goals. Competition in higher education has encouraged credit requirement standardization and tuition cost reduction (Baum, Kurose & McPherson, 2013; Tanner, 2013). Curricular framework from the National League for Nursing demonstrated that content isolation should be avoided and integration of concepts may improve learning effectiveness (Schug, 2012). This Midwest University was charged to decrease credits needed for a baccalaureate of science in nursing degree (BSN) from 126 to 120 in order to remain competitive with local universities, while meeting university-wide and school of nursing program outcomes that include concepts of global health, cultural diversity, interprofessional education, and service learning. Short term study abroad courses have shown promise in meeting multiple learning objectives (Ballestas & Roller, 2013; Wagner & Christensen, 2015).

Six different sources of influence discussed in the Influencer Change Theory (Grenny et al, 2013) were used to demonstrate how a three-credit study abroad course could be applied to the following university programs (undergrad or graduate): nursing, physician's assistant, pharmacy, physical, occupational, and speech therapies, social work, pre-seminary, major or minor in Spanish, and education. Undergraduate and graduate students will travel together to one private Costa Rica university where they will attend several global health seminars, daily Spanish classes, create service-learning projects, and travel the country. Unique daily practicum experiences will be created to meet individualized student goals through collaboration with the private university in Costa Rica. These experiences may involve patient care in
multiple environments (surgery, clinic, home care, acute hospital, rehabilitation centers, or palliative care), or a K-12 school. Service learning may be incorporated into any of the above, or within additional underprivileged community environments. Each student stays with a host-family, immersed in the foreign culture for three weeks. This study abroad course may be led by faculty from any of the above disciplines.

Administrative turnover within the EEAI attendant’s university created an atmosphere of career self-determination. Faculty united and led without leaders. Administrative job description revisions created workload challenges that prevented career moves. Implementation of the study abroad course and its integration across programs was a leadership initiative started because of the EEAI workshop. This journey began with self-identification of leadership traits, and those of the opinion leaders needed to implement change. Recognizing individual strengths that may stimulate change in academia was vital for the project success. Working with new administrative leaders has slowed progression of this project, but not deterred its finality. The Influencer Model has provided structure and confidence for integrated curricular change.

Journey Reflections: The project was occurring while the nursing program experienced leadership turnover, posing an uncertainty of personal leadership goals in the current setting. Even so, faculty united and supported my efforts with the project. Though the project was initially slowed by a change in nursing administration, approval for the course was obtained from the nursing faculty. Leadership skills and strengths (connectedness and achiever) led to project completion. While I had originally planned for a leadership role within my own organization, the targeted position I was preparing for was posted with a reduction in managerial time and an increase in teaching commitment. Though this position has now been filled, I will continue to seek a position that will allow me to build on my strengths and knowledge learned from the EEAI.