Integrating Diversity and Inclusion into Degree Completion Programs for Non-Traditional Adult Learners

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INTRODUCTION

- While there is much research on the value of diversifying the curriculum to promote multiculturalism and create inclusive learning environments for traditional students, strategies for integrating diversity and inclusion within programs for non-traditional adult learners have not been well examined.
- Promoting inclusive pedagogy through diverse content and inclusive teaching practice creates more opportunities for all non-traditional adult learners, but particularly for those from underrepresented groups.
- We have applied successful approaches within our programs:
  1. Bachelor’s in Health Sciences Management (BPHM)
  2. Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (BIS)

Diverse and globally focused content added to our courses in a variety of formats.

Benefits of Incorporating Diversity & Inclusion in Adult Completion Programs

- Enriches the educational experience.
- Promotes personal growth and a healthy society.
- Challenges stereotyped preconceptions.
- Encourages critical thinking: helps students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds.
- Builds & strengthens communities and the workplace.
- Fosters mutual respect and teamwork.
- Advances cognitive growth and self-reflection.
- Contributes to the richness and breadth of the educational environment for teaching and learning in a democratic society.
- Incorporates diversity and global learning into program and curriculum design = High Impact Practice (HIP)

BPHM Program at the University of Virginia

- A fully online, part-time degree program for working healthcare professionals.
- Prepares students with allied healthcare backgrounds for healthcare management roles.
- Program is working towards AUPHA Certification in 2020
- Students transfer in with:
  - Associate of Applied Science
  - National certification
  - 60 transferable credits
  - GPA of 3.0

BPHM Program & Curriculum Design

We have incorporated courses which include:

- Diversity and Global Issues
- Cultural Competency in Health Care
- Understanding Diversity in Healthcare or treating diverse or minority groups

Course Selections:

- Understanding Diversity in Healthcare
- Global Health Care
- Women’s Health Issues: Access & Treatment

Health Care Management: Course Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Health Care Management</td>
<td>Cultural Competency Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding Diversity in Health Care</td>
<td>Diversity Case Studies</td>
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<td>American Health Care: Challenges &amp; Opportunities</td>
<td>Cross Cultural Interview Paper</td>
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<td>Cultural Competency Training Presentation</td>
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<td>Comparative Analysis of Health Systems Paper: Between U.S. and Another Country’s Health Care</td>
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BIS Program at the University of Virginia

- Flexible, part-time adult degree completion program with online, blended and in-person classes.
- Program emphasis: Clear written and verbal communication, critical thinking, habits of individual and collective learning that develop and sustain life-long learners.
- Students transfer in 60 credits and complete 60 additional credits to earn degree.

BIS Program & Curriculum Design

Program-level initiatives:

- Online faculty meetings on inclusive syllabus design, discussions, and pedagogy
- Increasing diversity of faculty
- Adding diverse content to courses and creating new courses focusing on diversity

Examples of courses:

- World Religions
- Social Inequality
- Global Architecture (Changed from Western Architecture)

BIS Program: Courses

Transformations: Reading, Thinking, Communicating in the Liberal Arts
- Multiple perspectives as integral to educational process

Conduct of Inquiry
- 2 or more disciplinary approaches to similar content

Social Inequality
- Systems of social inequality in comparative framework – regionally and through time.