Cultural Humility and Teaching Towards Justice and Equity: Addressing Oppression in the Classroom Providing Inclusive Educational Spaces.

Presented By:

Elizabeth Russell, PhD, LCSW; Pamela Viggiani, PhD, LMSW; Margy Meath, LCSW & Debra Fromm Faria, LCSW

October 5, 2017

The College at Brockport
17th Annual Diversity Conference
Session Objectives

• Define cultural humility and how it relates to classroom teaching.

• Identify the challenges and benefits of understanding and discussing cultural humility.

• Provide examples of how to address and incorporate cultural humility in curricula and in practice.
Cultural Humility

Three dimensions:

• Lifelong learning & critical self-reflection

• Recognizing and challenging power imbalances for respectful partnerships

• Institutional accountability

Cultural Humility

• A quick history

  • Originally created within the health professions
  
  • Intended to effectively confront the inequities in our society that result in disparate health outcomes (social disparities in health) based on various intersecting areas of diversity
    • i.e. race, class, gender, religion, LGBTQ status, ability/disability
  
  • Originated on the West Coast after the police beating of Rodney King and the ensuing riots
  
  • **Drs. Tervaln and Murray-Garcia are credited with its origination**

Tervaln & Murray-Garcia, 1998
Cultural Humility

• Institutional Accountability is a key component of Cultural Humility

  • Individuals within institutions first must learn and then utilize cultural humility within their work (and lives)

  • Individuals then must hold the institutions in which they work accountable to operating in a culturally humble away

  • Individuals must also then hold broader sociopolitical institutions accountable
Cultural Humility

• Recognizes that knowledge of different cultural backgrounds is not sufficient to changing the

• Shifts the focus from the accumulation of knowledge to individual self-understanding

• Includes a personal/professional stance that is characterized by openness to learning and a lack of superiority

(Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington & Utsey, 2013)
Cultural Humility and Brockport College Mission and Goals

• President MacPherson’s Opening Remarks during the 2017 Faculty/Staff Convocation included:

• Words from the new Strategic Plan: Building a Better Brockport:
  • “to build a better Brockport, we are focused on Community, Engagement, Excellence, and Transformation.”

• MacPherson went on to say:
  • “We have revised our mission statement to read: “The College at Brockport is an inclusive learning community that inspires excellence through growth, engagement, and transformation.” And our goals are easy to remember, if perhaps not simple to achieve:
    • To be a great college at which to learn
    • To be a college engaged with its community
    • To be a sustainable institution for the 21st century
    • To be a great college at which to work
Cultural Humility and Brockport College’s Better Community Statement

• “As members of the State University of New York College at Brockport, we choose to be a part of an academic community that is dedicated to principles that foster integrity, civility and justice”

• (https://www.brockport.edu/about/diversity/better_community, 2017)
Cultural Humility and Brockport’s College Better Community Statement

• We respect the dignity of all persons and assume the best about them.
• We challenge and reject all forms of bigotry while striving to learn from each other’s differences.
• We celebrate our differences while appreciating our similarities. We value an inclusive environment that is accepting of each other’s cultural, physical, cognitive, social and professional differences.
• We respect the rights of each and every member of the community, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, medical condition, disability or socioeconomic status.
• We realize that our common interests exceed our individual differences.

• (https://www.brockport.edu/about/diversity/better_community, 2017)
Cultural Humility and Brockport College

The three dimensions of cultural humility (lifelong learning & critical self-reflection; recognizing and challenging power imbalances; & institutional accountability) will help us achieve Brockport College’s Goals of being:

• To be a great college at which to learn
• To be a college engaged with its community
• To be a great college at which to work

• As well as achieve the vision of the Better Community Statement:
  • “To be a part of an academic community that is dedicated to principles that foster **integrity, civility and justice**”
How Cultural Humility is put into Practice in the GRC MSW Program (Brockport & Nazareth Collaboration)

- Currently:
  - The tenets of cultural humility are infused throughout the curriculum beginning in the foundation year diversity class and continued across the curriculum culminating in a capstone Master’s Project Thesis that requires students to address intersectionality as well as social justice within their chosen topics
  - Students participate in Project Homeless Connect as a GRC MSW community
    - This event is organized by: organized by Jed Metzger, PhD, LCSW another GRC Faculty
  - GRC MSW faculty encourage and included experiential and service learning opportunities in their individual courses
  - GRC MSW Convocation 10 Ways to Fight Hate, Southern Poverty Law Center
Anti-Racism Work & Cultural Humility & MSW Program

• A social service agency known for its work in the areas of both poverty and race invited agencies in Rochester to participate in a two-year initiative titled:

  • Calling Out Structural Racism in the Agencies Where We Live

• Currently there are 25 participating agencies throughout the Rochester area, involving over 150 people
Cultural Humility and Anti-Racism Work

• The goals of this initiative are to strategize about how organizations want to proceed in:

  • discussing & identifying how structural racism impacts agencies and programs

  • Identifying and implementing ways in which structural racism impacts our agencies and programs
Cultural Humility and Anti-Racism Work

• One of the ways in which the Greater Rochester Collaborative is attempting to both work toward dismantling structural racism in our program and preparing our students to dismantle structural racism in their future work as MSWs is incorporating cultural humility into our curriculum.
Cultural Humility & Anti-Racism in the GRC MSW Program

• Currently the program is undergoing a curricular change that is based on the tenets of the cultural humility model
  • The full-time faculty included the entire program in its development rolling it out to adjuncts and staff last spring – using a world café model for full participation of faculty, adjunct & staff
  • Developing new curriculum that includes:
    • A stand-alone cultural humility class that all 2 year and advanced standing students will be required to take
    • Creating a curriculum that infuses the tenets of cultural humility in all of its courses
    • Utilizing the existing MSW Convocation as an opportunity to involve students in social change projects
    • Continuing to use Project Homeless Connect as GRC MSW Program wide event
The World Cafe

Seven Key Principles:

1. **Clarify the Context**: Clarify the purpose and broad parameters within which the dialogue will unfold.

2. **Create Hospitable Space**: Ensure the welcoming environment and psychological safety that nurtures personal safety and mutual respect.

3. **Explore Questions That Matter**: Focus collective attention on powerful questions that attract collaborative engagement.

4. **Encourage Each Person’s Contribution**: Enliven the relationship between the “me” and the “we” by inviting full participation and mutual interaction.

5. **Cross-pollinate and Connect Diverse Perspectives**: Intentionally increase the diversity and density of connections between perspectives while retaining a common focus on core questions.

6. **Listen Together for Patterns, Insights, and Deeper Questions**: Focus shared attention in ways that nurture coherence of thought without losing individual contributions.

7. **Harvest and Share Collective Discoveries**: Make collective knowledge and insight visible and actionable.

The World Café

• Discuss ways in which cultural humility can be incorporated into your department, program, course

• Discuss any strengths or resources your department, program, or course has that will facilitate the inclusion of cultural humility into its curriculum and/or functioning

• Discuss any obstacles or barriers your department, program, or course has that will hinder the inclusion of cultural humility into their curriculum

