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

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The College at Brockport
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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, LGBTQQ 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

The Greater Rochester Collaborative Master of Social Work Program
Empowerment through Collaboration
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

