

# Building Interdisciplinary Collaboration Competency Through Engaging Nursing and Nutrition Students in Interprofessional Education Project

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## Abstract

### Background/Introduction

Nutrition-related lifestyle modification (LSM) is a critical component of preventing and treating lifestyle-driven chronic illnesses; however, nutrition-related patient education use is limited in clinical practice. Nurses are in an ideal position to initiate patient lifestyle-related education. LSM education is most effective when using an interdisciplinary team approach; however, the opportunities for interprofessional education (IPE) are limited. Engaging nursing students in the IPE project can enhance their understanding of diverse professional roles and teamwork approaches to implementing nutrition-related LSM education.

### Purpose

The purpose of this project was to provide IPE opportunities for nursing and nutrition students by developing and implementing an after-school nutrition education program for middle school youth.

### Methods or Processes/Procedures

The collaborative effort between the colleges of Health Sciences and Nursing at a large urban university resulted in a project called Food Fusion which was developed and implemented to deliver nutrition-related education at a teaching kitchen to youth. The curriculum was developed and implemented by students from nutrition science and graduate nursing education. Nursing students actively contributed to the topics of sociocultural factors influencing food choices, gastrointestinal anatomy, food allergies, kitchen first aid, and food safety.

### Results

Through the project interaction, both departments had an opportunity to gain insight into each other's roles and disciplines. Nursing students were able to work in a team with nutrition students to implement and effectively deliver nutrition-related LSM education to the youth.

### Limitations

Scheduling synchronous activities to collaborate was difficult between departments. The use of an asynchronous centralized learning management system to access program resources is recommended.

### Conclusions/Implications for Practice

Providing nursing students with IPE opportunities is necessary for their attainment of interdisciplinary practice competency and to provide effective LSM education. Future research should focus on examining the impact of IPE between nursing and nutrition students on the attainment of IPE competencies.

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## Biography

Viktoriya Pleshkan, Ph.D., APRN, FNP-C, is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at the University of Memphis. Dr. Pleshkan's primary research focus is on nursing education and the challenges faced during nursing role transitions. She is particularly dedicated to reshaping the preceptorship experience for nurse practitioners (NPs) both before and after graduation. Dr. Pleshkan has authored publications aimed at guiding the NP preceptorship process. Dr. Pleshkan has collaborated with the College of Health Sciences on the "Food Fusion" project, which commenced in 2021. This project adopts an interprofessional education approach to design and implement a food literacy program for school-aged children.

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