

A Holistic Approach to Inclusion in a School of Nursing

Teresa Twomey, EdD, MSN, RN, Quinnipiac University

Co-Author(s): Cynthia Barrere, PhD, RN, CNS, AHN-BC, FAAN, Quinnipiac University; Tyler Traister, DNP, RN-BC, OCN, NPD-BC, CNE, CTN-A, Quinnipiac University

Topic: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Category: Quality Improvement/Evidence-Based Practice Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction

Quinnipiac University's leadership introduced an Action Plan to enhance equity and inclusion. Aligned with this Plan, the School of Nursing implemented an evidence-based improvement initiative to address: Faculty and Staff Training to explore roots of racism and actions to counter discrimination.

Purpose

Literature suggests means by which faculty, staff and students can develop new lenses when considering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and design inclusive teaching and learning strategies for application. The project goal was to educate and empower nursing faculty/staff to make positive behavioral changes related to DEI and incorporate inclusive student-centered learning. The Personal Self-Assessment of Anti-Bias Behavior administered to faculty/staff confirmed the need and readiness to change perspectives and learn/apply best practice inclusive education to prepare students for holistic practice in a diverse healthcare environment.

Methods or Processes/Procedures

A three-level faculty/staff reflective learning process was designed: (1) Systemic Perspectives of Historic Realities, (2) Interpersonal Lenses and Biases, (3) Individual Realizations and New Realities into Action. Students offer valued input from diverse student perspectives and serve as a barometer of project efforts. Kolb's Theory, presence, relationships, and reflection are integral to the process.

Results

Levels 1 and 2 self-assessments and focus groups demonstrated a genuine realization by faculty/staff of own knowledge gaps and biases. Lessons learned inspired specific innovative learning activities for Level 3. Coaching has helped faculty "pause, unpack, reflect and remain open to relearn new ways of being".

Limitations

Measuring DEI progress can be challenging. Metrics may not capture the full picture of human experience and impact on workplace culture. Progress is not always linear, and small victories may not be reflected in data.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice

It is anticipated all three levels of education will create a sustainable School climate that renounces marginalizing behaviors and prioritizes an environment where the entire community feels valued, supported and empowered; increasing safe spaces for student learning.

Biography

Dr. Teresa Twomey is an associate professor of nursing in Quinnipiac University's School of Nursing. She is the Chair, Undergraduate Programs and Director of Global Nursing Experiences. Dr. Twomey has been in nursing education for 19 years. Her clinical expertise is in neonatal intensive care nursing, children with special healthcare needs and pediatrics. Dr. Twomey's passion lies in educating nursing students around the area of cultural relativism, global citizenship and leading them towards a holistic nursing practice that embraces diversity, equity and inclusivity. Dr. Twomey's scholarly interests focus on these specific areas of education.

Contact Information

Teresa Twomey, EdD, MSN, RN

Chair, Undergrad Nursing Programs/Director, Global Nursing Experiences

Quinnipiac University

teresa.twomey@quinnipiac.edu

(203) 582-8873
