Development of a Masters' Level Interdisciplinary Policy Course
University of New England College of Graduate and Professional Studies

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Process of Interdisciplinary Collaboration for Course Development

Identify need for Interdisciplinary Policy Course:

- CEPH requirement
- Related competencies from other academic programs
- Departmental buy-in (determination of where the course fits in individual curriculum maps)
- Competencies for each program compiled, course description authored, and learning outcomes proposed

- Program Directors identified a Subject Matter Expert (SME) with extensive policy background in their discipline
- Scope of work explained to each SME in the context of interdisciplinary team
- Proposed learning outcomes and competencies were discussed
- Instructional Designer joins team

- Initial "kick-off" meeting with all SME's and project leader
- Norms for group work created
- Platform for work products identified
- Meeting and development schedule established

- SME's identify scope and sequence of work
- Competencies and learning outcomes formalized
- Assignments created to teach to learning objectives/outcomes
- Textbook(s) adopted

- Program Directors updated on progress of course
- Finalization of weekly outcomes/assignments/discussions
- Rubrics crafted
- Video lectures produced
- Blackboard section created
- Review of course in Blackboard by all SME's
- Syllabus created

- Full review of all course content by Program Directors
- Full review of course design by Instructional Design
- Faculty identified/hired by each program

- Post-run course review with Faculty and Program Directors
- Assess student feedback
- Assess faculty feedback
- Revision based on feedback

Scope of Course Development Process and Activities
An Agile Approach
March 2018 - September 2018

Curriculum Oversight and Development Team

Program Directors	SMEs	Project Facilitator
Erin Connor, PhD	Mary Lou Ciolfi, JD, MS	Sharla Willis, DrPH
Ellie Dodge, PhD	Stephen Dougherty, PhD	**Program Faculty**
Megan Landry, MHA, RN	Leslie Hitch, EdD, MBA	Monique Roy, MS
Jenn O'Neil, MSW	Lori Kaley, MS, RD	**Instructional Designer**
Nang Tin Maung, PhD	Nan Solomons, PhD	Michael Trombley, MEd

Cross-Disciplinary Course Development

- Form Curriculum Oversight Team
- Competencies / Course description / Learning Outcomes
- Finalize learning outcomes / Assessments / Discussion boards
- Map to academic core values / Rubrics / Curricular Review
- 360° course review / Hire Faculty
- Assessment / Course revision

Course Revision

Ongoing assessment is important to ensure that the course is achieving stated learning outcomes. Course review will be ongoing, and will incorporate feedback from contemporaneous faculty notes, end of course faculty reflection, and student course evaluations. Using these data, the curriculum oversight and development team will revise the course as necessary.

Academic Core Values Rubrics

Rubrics are used in all assessments and are vital to measuring competency achievement, allowing instructors across multiple sections to grade consistently. Rubrics were developed to assess the gain in knowledge and skills of students. Rubrics correlate to CGPS college-wide academic core values of critical and innovative thinking and oral and written communication. Incorporation of interprofessional perspective is part of the assessment.

Assessments Discussion Boards

Primary assessments:
- Written Policy Analysis
- Oral Testimony
- Reflection
- Discussion Boards

Discussion board group membership is assigned to maximize diversity among disciplines and emphasize incorporation of peer feedback. Discussion boards create the setting for interprofessional interaction between students and faculty as they work on individual written policy analyses and oral testimony.

Course Description

This course brings together graduate students in public health, education, social work, nutrition, and health informatics to work collaboratively to learn policy-making as applied to the issues of student nutrition and mental health in an educational setting. Students are given a policy scenario and work in interprofessional groups to identify the social problem, describe the policy context, map potential policy solutions, and make final recommendations in an individual written policy analysis and oral testimony that incorporates learning from their interprofessional peers. Students will explore the structure and function of government systems as they relate to values-driven policy decisions.

Course Learning Outcomes Professional Standards or Competencies Addressed

- Perform effectively on interprofessional teams
- Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies
- Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
- Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
- Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity
- Engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being
- Manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being
- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts wellbeing, service delivery, and access to social services
- Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice

Reflection on the Process by Members of Development Team

As part of the process evaluation, team members were asked to describe the development process, to identify the most exciting or helpful and the most challenging parts of the process, the biggest opportunity, and how well their discipline was represented. Team feedback is provided through direct quotes below.

Development Process

"To help someone develop another interdisciplinary course, and I am a true believer in these, those who will be engaged should first talk about what they see the issue is from each person's discipline and then find the commonalities or divergences to ensure these are visible. From there, the focus should be clearly on the end goal, the overall learning, of the course as that can get a little muddy in the process of development."

Helpful or Exciting Part of the Process

"What was most helpful was how open each discipline was with how best to organize the course to both represent all disciplines and also provide an optimal learning experience for the students."

"The exciting part was seeing how ideas coalesced. It is extremely helpful to have a team member who doubles as a project manager."

"Listening to the other disciplines talk about how policy works in their worlds. I hope the students get the same experience in the course as we did developing it."

Challenging

"Weaving everything together so that multiple competencies were met for all of the disciplines."

"Developing a case study that encompasses aspects germane to all of the represented disciplines."

"Making decisions by consensus has always been challenging in curriculum design. Nevertheless -- I would not change that about the process."

Opportunity

"The biggest opportunity is essentially enhanced education-students and educators can become more aware of how different professions impact one another. This increased awareness may present opportunities for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of policies in the field."

"Today people have to think broadly and not just come from their disciplines. They need to be aware of how one factor will or can spin another out of control. In a world that is changing rapidly from globalization, political upheaval and technology, just the existence of this course and others to follow is groundbreaking!"

Representation

Feedback for this topic was difficult to represent through direct quotes, and is summarized here. The selection of the scenario was among the greatest challenges. Team members expressed mixed views on how well their discipline was represented, with public health and nutrition feeling most clearly represented. Others felt that the nature of the scenario may impact how well their discipline will be represented in application. This will be closely considered in the ongoing process of course review. Future plans include developing additional scenarios and consideration of how they can be best used in future iterations of the course.