

Diverse Perceptions of Issues in Diversity, Gloria Valdez, RN, MSN, CDE, Covenant School of Nursing, Lubbock, TX

Minority health is a prevalent issue and concern. It is incumbent upon us to create a strong healthcare workforce composed of individuals that are representative of the increasingly diverse demographic population. The minority and English as a Second Language (ESL) student attrition rates continue to be significant and have a direct impact on failure in school and in institutions of higher learning.

A significant percentage of the current student population speaks English as a second language. These students have particularly special needs that must be addressed on an individual basis. Through the provision of mentors and tutors, we can facilitate their learning, strengthen social support systems and provide avenues for financial assistance. Through the implementation of a structured and formal program we can strengthen both BICS and CALP to develop ESL students and prepare them for higher education. One method is through the creation of a self-assessment tool for the students which may provide the educators insight as to what issues are directly affecting that students and promote specific understanding and appropriate modifications.

Through the partnering and provision of community resources we can assist students to strengthen their BICS and CALP skills to become better students and enable them to be responsible for the development of these skills. Through the implementation of a carefully orchestrated program we will make a significant contribution to the healthcare workforce diversity by promoting health professions among minority students, ensuring academic success and resources to facilitate their needs and improve health among the minority population.

Workshop Notes

- Develop cultural thinking skills
- What assessment measures can help us prepare for success?
- What tools can be used for early intervention?

- Where do tutors come from?
 - Mentor/volunteer time – funding.
 - Support for mentor programs.
 - Speed mentor selection – let people pick their own mentors at quick meeting sessions (like speed dating).
 - Retention specialist.
 - Retention for cultural competence.
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- Use older and retired workforce for mentoring.
 - Community involvement.
 - Build relationships with community partners.
 - Teach study skills
 - Diversity support for health workforce diversity from the bottom up and in for the long haul.