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Writing for Reflection, Action and Impact in Health Sciences

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PURPOSES/AIMS OF PROJECT

• Describe a reflective writing elective to enhance practice, teaching & research
• Strengthen expressive ability in assignments, publications, grant applications & written communication
• Evoke writing that is substantive, effective, persuasive & mindful
• Indirectly improve outcomes for clients, students & care providers

RATIONALE/BACKGROUND

• Literature notes that reflective writing is currently weak for all levels of students
• Evidence suggests that students often fail to integrate the conceptual/philosophical & operational components of courses
• Effective, consistent reflective writing may improve capacity for innovative practice, teaching & research

DESCRIPTION: APPROACH, METHODS, PROCESS

• Course was developed by 3 faculty members, representing domains of practice, teaching & research
• Developed by nursing faculty, but may appeal to other health care professionals
• Format: seminars, guest lectures, integration of arts into reflective writing

GENERAL CONTENT OUTLINE

• Foundations
  • What is reflective writing? Why does it matter?
  • What is narrative knowing? How does it link to reflective writing? Narrative & action, history, & the self/writer
  • Why writing-as-action? Writing in forms [eg, formal text, blogs, poems, other]. Writing on place, self, loss, change, our work in health care. Why does writing work?

• Contexts for writing
  • Nursing practice
  • Nursing education/teaching
  • Nursing research
  • Life, growth, expression/becoming

• The act of writing
  • Translating ideas, perceptions, experiences from mind to the written word
  • Writing as a site for exploration, meaning, interpretation, transformation, intention & action
  • Sharing the written works: the importance of editing, dissemination & publication

• Exemplars, discourse, reflections on the substance & process of writing
  • Products & outcomes of reflective writing in the course
  • Choices for disseminating our work
  • Maintaining productivity, utilizing resources

• Course outcomes
  • Two brief reflective papers, submission-ready
  • An original poem or verse
  • Annotated bibliography for writing reflectively, effectively & powerfully
  • Tracking writing output for students in the course

• Conclusions, implications, recommendations
  • As a new course, it will need to be implemented & evaluated
  • Has potential to engage participants from multiple disciplines
  • May identify/focus writing-related resources for on-ground & web-based applications

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