

Community Engagement and Counseling Psychology Training

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Goals

- Define & provide a rationale for promoting community engagement in the context of social justice literature
- Describe background department and program factors that facilitate engagement efforts
- Describe proximal efforts to promote community engagement among students
- Share specific examples of engagement that integrate science and practice
- Provide recommendations for increasing engagement in other programs

Definition of Community Engagement

To identify, understand, and engage the community in developing solutions for community-based problems faced by residents on a daily basis (Dale, 2008, p. 791).

Aligns very well with recommendations for “Culturally relevant prevention” and with definitions of “Social Justice”

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Aligns with Culturally Relevant Prevention

(Reese & Vera, 2007)

- Respond to the needs of a community and simultaneously employ acceptable and rigorous research methods
- **Cultural tailoring** of prevention programs has (1) an ethical base and (2) builds community investment, support, important for recruitment, retention, etc.
- **Social Justice** in prevention means expanding use of scientific methods (e.g., ethnographic, CBPR, etc.) that may be more consistent with cultural norms of how to implement and adopt something new (e.g., skills, processes, etc.)
- Requires that psychologists change roles



Culturally Relevant Prevention

(Reese & Vera, 2007)

- Specific **cultural knowledge**, history, politics, language, norms, etc.
- Develop **relationships** with and within the community— long gestation periods
- Involve **community members** in design, implementation, and evaluation efforts
- Frame within **ecological model** (see *U Oregon Program for training model: <http://uoregon.edu/copsych>*)



Aligns with Definitions of Social Justice

- **Social Justice praxis has a LONG history, two recent example definitions:**
- **Goodman:** “Scholarship and professional action designed to change societal values, structures, policies, and practices, such that disadvantaged or marginalized groups gain increased access to these tools of self determination” (Goodman et al., 2004, p. 795).
- **Lewis:** The ultimate objective of social justice involves the fair and equitable distribution of rights, opportunities, and resources between individuals between groups of individuals within a given society and the establishment of relations within this society such that all individuals are treated with an equal degree of respect and dignity (Lewis, 2010, p.



Rationale for Community Engagement

1. **Consistency:** With stated goals, values of our program of the discipline.
2. **Responsibility:** As agents of change: With prestige and authority in the greater community we have the opportunity to be effective beyond perceived racial, cultural, economic and professional boundaries (Dale, 2008, p. 792).
3. **Opportunity:** Develop valuable skills, contribute to community, increase sense of belonging, live professional values.
4. **Improves Science:** Linking community needs with best practices, evaluate evidence-based interventions across diverse groups (e.g., Domenech-Rodriguez & colleagues, 2009).

Background Factors that Facilitate our Community Engagement Efforts

- **UO Counseling Psychology & Human Services Department characteristics & mission statement**
- Program factors:
 - GA: Family & Human Services supervision and agency exposure
 - Student selection
 - Program climate
- Faculty characteristics: Collegiality, Collaboration, Cultural competence process, Commitments to community (long term)

UO Department of Counseling Psychology & Human Services

Department Mission Statement

Scientists-Practitioners in the Counseling Psychology and Human Services Department in the College of Education are committed to community-based research and scholarship focused on improving prevention and intervention practice for children, youth, adults, and families. We are committed to training socially aware and multiculturally competent researchers and interventionists who, in partnership with their communities, promote social justice, engage in systems change, enhance individual and family well-being through evidence-based practice, and apply behavioral science toward resolving human problems.

Background Factors that Facilitate our Community Engagement Efforts

- Department characteristics, mission statement
- **Program factors:**
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Promoting Community Engagement

- Setting context via coursework.
Examples:
 - CPSY 6130 Psychology as a Discipline
 - CPSY 643 Community Prevention & Interventions
 - CPSY Child & Family Interventions
 - CPSY Child & Family Practicum
 - SPSY Consultation
- Advocacy as a fundamental skill
 - EDAC, Vets, Intl. Students, LGBTQ, Students w Disabilities
- Communitybased research emphasis



Engagement Examples: ALAS



ALAS: Advocating for Latino Achievement in Schools

Goal: Prevent dropout through the provision of both academic support and advocacy skills training to Spanish speaking Latino/a high school students.

Mechanism: Twice weekly after school intervention by Spanish fluent CPSY students and faculty

Components:

1. Building community and universality
2. Enhancing cultural pride
3. Raising critical consciousness
4. Developing advocacy skills
5. Supporting homework completion and study skills

Engagement Examples: ACCESS

(Dr. Krista Chronister)

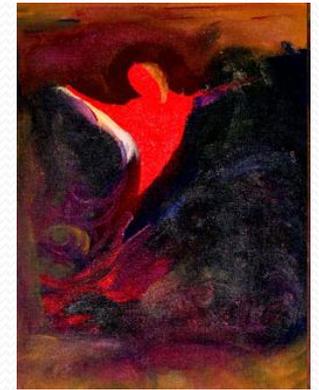
Mission of ACCESS:

To contribute to ending domestic **violence by promoting survivors'** career development and access to work and educational opportunities.

To support survivors' efforts to attain economic stability, achieve their potential, and live free from violence.



Engagement Examples: ACCESS



- DV work in community since 1997
- Identification of major service gap
- Collaboration with advocates, educators, researchers, and social service providers to create ACCESS program
- **Tailored to women's situation**
- Graduate students provide weekly career counseling using ACCESS model, receive weekly supervision and externship credit.
- Program has been requested across US and the world

Recommendations for Increasing Engagement



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- Community collaborators
 - Dale (2008): Establish a network of people in the community, engage in sustained dialogue, create a forum for ongoing dialogue with community
- Faculty commitment
- Structural issues and change (e.g., annual review criteria)
- Any engagement of students in community includes
 - Integration of science & practice
 - Critical reflection component
- Engagement fulfills student program requirements and aligns with clearly stated and measured competencies

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