

Inclusive Practices in Health Sciences: Equity Proofing Higher Education Programs

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Abstract : Given that the cultural make-up of programs of study in institutions of higher learning is becoming increasingly diverse, much has been written about cultural diversity from a university-level perspective. However, there are little data in the way of specific programs and how they address inclusive practices when teaching and working with marginalized populations. This research study aimed to discover baseline knowledge and attitudes of health sciences faculty, instructional staff, and students related to inclusive teaching/learning and interactions. Quantitative data were collected via an anonymous online survey (one designed for students and another designed for faculty/instructional staff) using a web-based program called Qualtrics. Quantitative data were analyzed amongst the faculty/instructional staff and students, respectively, using descriptive and comparative statistics (t-tests). Additionally, some participants voluntarily engaged in a focus group discussion in which qualitative data were collected around these same variables. Collecting qualitative data to triangulate the quantitative data added trustworthiness to the overall data. The research team analyzed collected data and compared identified categories and trends, comparing those data between faculty/staff and students, and reported results as well as implications for future study and professional practice.

Keywords : inclusion, higher education, pedagogy, equity, diversity

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