**CYC Cultural Sensitivity Project - Summary Report**

**Submitted By:** Child & Youth Care Program, Faculty of Health and Human Services

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In the Spring of 2013, the CYC program put in a proposal for an Internationalization Grant with the aim of implementing the cultural sensitivity model framework and curriculum changes that were created in Phase I of the *CYC Cultural Sensitivity Project*. Phase I involved revising and enhancing curriculum in order to meet program goals of increasing cultural awareness and cultural competence among students.

Expected outcomes of Phase II project activities were articulated as follows:

*Building on the work of the first internationalization grant (Phase I), our expectations for the proposed Phase II of our internationalization project would be have students more aware and prepared for practice in a multi-cultural environment. We anticipate that the implementation of our revised curriculum will enable students to respond more effectively in an increasingly diverse society.*

The outcomes were based on the goal of strengthening diversity and inclusive practice education in the CYC program. The outcomes were further aligned with the work of the CYC Diversity Sub-committee which identified various learning outcomes across all four years of the program. The following is a sample of learning outcomes identified in each year.

***Year One:***

* *Increase one’s cultural competence to encompass an understanding of specific cultural norms, values, traditions, and child-rearing practices*
* *Explore key definitions that relate to pluralism, diversity, culture and identity*

***Year Two:***

* *Develop cultural self-awareness and understanding of self in relation to others*
* *Explain how personal perceptions, biases, and assumptions of diversity may impact working with children, youth and families*

***Year Three***

* *Develop an understanding of how a child, youth, or family’s cultural background will impact participation in provision of services.*
* *Integrate alternate ways of knowing and being into the service planning process*

***Year Four***

* *Describe strategies for conducting culturally competent practice in order to provide services to children, youth and families*
* *Demonstrate respect for and respond with sensitivity to families of varied cultural, lifestyle, educational and racial backgrounds.*

The Child & Youth Care program is grateful to International Education for providing a grant for Phase II of the *CYC Cultural Sensitivity Project* thereby allowing this significant work to continue. We also appreciate the assistance of Mackenzie Sillem who has been very generous in providing mentorship and resources.

 The following work occurred during the past year in the implementation of Phase II.

**Preparation for Implementation**

* The CYC faculty committed to participating in the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) group and individual process which took place during the months of May and June 2013.
* Consultation occurred with Kyra Garson, the Interculturalization Coordinator at Thompson Rivers University regarding plans for Phase II implementation.
* A designated faculty member who is in the role of coordinator of the CYC Cultural Sensitivity Project, attended the Second International Indigenous Voices in Social Work conference in Winnipeg, MB in July of 2014. This faculty member also participated in a webinar with Kyra Garson that was hosted by International Education in October, 2013.
* A decision was made to delay implementation of curriculum changes until the Spring 2014 term to allow additional time for reflection and preparation as a faculty team.
* An evaluation form was created for students to complete at the end of each course for the Spring term.
* The CYC faculty team decided to subsequently adopt a more formalized evaluation tool that could be administered to students at the beginning and end of the four year degree program. This would assist in determining the effectiveness of the cultural sensitivity project in raising cultural awareness and sensitivity among CYC students.
* A number of evaluation tools were explored with regards to cost, convenience and resources. In the end, it was decided to use the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) which is under the auspices of the Kozai Group. In determining relevance of the IES for the CYC program, five faculty members completed the survey and then subsequently met to share impressions. The IES is scheduled to be administered to the first group of students in the Fall of 2014. A faculty member has taken on the responsibility of including the IES in her course which will involve administration of the survey as well as a preparation and debriefing process with students.

**Implementation**

* Curriculum changes were implemented during the Spring 2014 term among regular faculty members. It is anticipated that for the Fall 2014 term all faculty including sessional instructors will participate in implementing curriculum changes.
* The student evaluation that was created in the Fall term was utilized by instructors in the Spring term courses. Evaluation results were subsequently collated and shared with the faculty team at a faculty meeting – faculty members also shared their experiences and provided feedback to both the faculty team and the project coordinator. Further changes to curriculum were made as a result of these meetings. As this is an ongoing and fluid process, it is anticipated that there will be additional changes over the next few years as the result of ongoing feedback.
* Over the past three years, the Child & Youth Care program has been involved in a review and revamping of their entire four-year curriculum. The new and revised curriculum structure received final approval this past Spring and will go into effect in 2015 (Fall term). As a result, there have been some new courses added to the CYC curriculum. In preparation for 2015, the Project Coordinator is currently working on the identification and integration of additional readings, activities and assignments for the new courses.
* Ongoing sharing of project work and outcomes with other programs occurred through a number of forums such as: Health and Human Services Annual Retreat, the Global VIU Showcase that took place in February 2014, consultations and informal conversations. As a result of this sharing, the Social Work program made the decision to internationalize their curriculum, a process that is scheduled to occur during the 2014-2015 academic year.
* With the assistance of the Director of the Centre of Innovation and Excellence in Learning, an appropriate conference forum was identified for the purposes of submitting a workshop proposal. The Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education’s annual conference is scheduled to be held in Vancouver in June of 2015. The CYC program plans to submit a proposal with the aim of presenting outcomes regarding three years of development and implementation of their Cultural Sensitivity Project.
* The concept of a longitudinal research project was explored at various levels. Given the magnitude of such an initiative, discussions are ongoing regarding the potential of a future interdisciplinary endeavor.

In addition to the Cultural Sensitivity Project, the Child & Youth Care program has implemented a number of other initiatives to raise global awareness and cultural sensitivity among their students. These include the Here and There Social Justice Initiative and regular participation in an interdisciplinary field school in Indonesia. The Here and There project was launched as a way to heighten awareness and engage students in social justice work both locally and globally. To that end, the project includes three primary goals:

* For Child and Youth Care (CYC) students to appreciate and understand social justice both locally and internationally as an integral part of CYC Practice.
* To raise awareness of both local and global social justice issues within the CYC student population, VIU population and the broader community.
* In collaboration with both local and international organizations engage CYC students in social justice work that involves advocating for social change and serving local and international communities

In conclusion, we would like to express our thanks for the opportunity that was provided to us to internationalize our curriculum. We believe the efforts of the past two years have strengthened both our curriculum and our ability to better prepare students for practice in a diverse world. We look forward to the continued journey…