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### **International Collaboration for a Cross-Cultural Experience**

Description of the session:

Mezirow, 2003 defines transformative learning as “learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations –to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change” (p.58). This session will include a discussion of one method to improve the scholarship of teaching and learning through transformational learning in an international immersion experience. Students who can transform learning from one culture into a broadened perspective will be better prepared to live in a multicultural society (Duffy, 2001). Recent literature has provided rich discussions of these international “immersion” experiences where students live and work in communities in other countries. International experiences involve socialization where shared meanings are communicated within and among diverse groups. Although many of the reports of such experiences have been primarily anecdotal, consensus supports that these experiences generally broaden the participants' world view and contribute to increased cultural awareness and understanding (Ryan, Twibell, Brigham, & Bennett, 2000); (Evanson & Zust, 2004) . This session will address how one nursing school developed a transformational learning process through a course and an associated international immersion experience. Development of the course, planning and outcomes for the international trip as well as benefits and problems related to international collaboration will be discussed.

Objectives of the session:

1. Discuss the development and implementation of a cross-cultural international service-learning experience.
2. Discuss the benefits and problems associated with international collaboration.
3. Discuss outcomes of an international service-learning experience.

Ways of involving the audience in the session:

The audience will participate in a presentation with discussion and then will be able to interact with the speakers, ask questions, and brainstorm how they might develop such experiences in their field.

What attendees can expect to experience and learn:

Attendees can expect to learn the process of international collaboration as well as experience the service-learning project through pictures of the student experiences.

References:

Duffy, M. E. (2001). A critique of cultural education in nursing. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 36(4), 487-495.

Evanson, T. A., & Zust, B. L. (2004). The meaning of participation in an international service experience among baccalaureate nursing students. Retrieved August 4, 2005, from <http://www.bepress.com/ijnes/vol1/art21>

Mezirow, J. (2003). Transformative Learning as Discourse. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 1(1), 58-63.

Ryan, M., Twibell, R., Brigham, C., & Bennett, P. (2000). Learning to Care for Clients in Their World, Not Mine. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 39(9), 401-408.