Poverty in the United States

- 13.3%, 2008
- 14.3%, 2009
- 15.1%, 2010

(Bishaw & Macartney, 2010).

Poverty - social determinant of health
(CDC, 2009).
Why?

In order to deliver patient-centered care, it is important for nurses to have an understanding of the impact of poverty on health-related decisions (IOM, 2010).
What?

- Extends case-based learning beyond the individual to populations

- Provides learner with broad view of health determinants and societal challenges which impact health
1. Immerse in the lived experience of poverty as an individual and as part of a family.

2. Develop an expanded understanding of the impact of poverty on health.

3. Develop a deeper understanding of the structural barriers faced by people living in poverty.
A three-hour poverty simulation has been implemented at four OHSU School of Nursing Campuses to educate and sensitize participants to the realities of living with poverty.
How?

• Cost of simulation kit is $1500
• Requires a large classroom or gym
• Requires 20 volunteers to play the various community agencies
• Requires 3-4 faculty to facilitate the debrief
• Requires administrative support
Poverty Simulation

- 40-80 participants assume the role of low-income family members
- 20 live actors staff community agencies
Poverty Simulation

- The simulation consists of four 15-minute weeks.
- The goal is to provide food, shelter and family safety.
Poverty Simulation Video

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trWb2Bdv8Bg&feature=related
Debriefing the Simulation
Un-facilitated Family Debriefing

Allows time for the letting go of emotions

Questions
  – What was it like to live on the edge of poverty?
  – What was the biggest challenge you faced as an individual or as a family?

Themes
  – Stressful’ ‘complicated’ ‘depressing
Facilitated Small Group

Compares experiences across families

Questions move from general to specific

Themes
- ‘felt challenged to keep it all going’ ‘felt I couldn’t get out of my situation’
- ‘felt alienated’ ‘felt lost’ ‘felt isolated’
- ‘did things I wouldn’t normally consider doing’
Facilitated Large Group

Elicits broader implications for development of the professional role

Questions
- What did you learn about the life experience of low-income families?

Themes
- ‘lots of waiting in lines’
- ‘sometimes waited without receiving any help’
- ‘things kept falling apart’
- ‘once you’re are down it’s hard to get back on your feet’
Attitudes Toward Poverty

Did your attitudes about poverty change over the month?

- ‘realize how hard it is to get anything done in order to survive’
- ‘health may not be a priority’
- ‘I will be more understanding of the challenge of making appointments’

How will your experience from this simulation impact your nursing practice?

- ‘need to understand the larger picture’
- ‘need to listen to their story’
- ‘need to empathize and not jump to conclusions’
“Now I know what my front line staff go through”

“It was really hard to deny service- but that is what I had to do”

“I was moved by the discussion of parenting---so many observations that there just was not enough time/energy to focus on the kids.”

“During the simulation the “mother” told her “daughter” who was in jail that she was … “sorry you have to stay there over the weekend but at least you will be warm, fed and have a safe place to sleep!”
The Impact of a Poverty Simulation on Nursing Students’ Attitudes Towards Poverty

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Why?

• How do learning activities in a nursing curriculum contribute to students’ understanding of health as it relates to poverty?

• Given the cost, time and labor, does the poverty simulation achieve the learning objectives?
Purpose

Determine the impact of a poverty simulation on undergraduate nursing students’ attitudes towards poverty.
Methods

• Five cohorts of junior baccalaureate nursing students enrolled in a populations course participated in the study;
• Two of the cohorts participated in the poverty simulation and three did not.
• Participants were surveyed at the beginning of the term and again during weeks 8-9.
Survey

- Demographic information was obtained
- Student’s assessment of link between poverty and health
- **Attitudes Towards Poverty – Short Form**
  (Hyun Yun, & Weaver, 2010)
  - 21 item; 5-point Likert scale
  - Global score between 21-105
  - Higher score indicates more positive attitudes
Results

• 178 pre and post tests were matched out of a potential 209
• 103 in experimental group and 75 in control group
• Pre-test scores were higher for the experimental (mean global – 78.75) than the control group (mean – 69.84)
Demographics - Religion

Likelihood ratio = 14.85
p = 0.011
Demographics - Politics

![Bar chart showing the likelihood ratio and p-value for political views between experimental and control groups.]

- Likelihood ratio = 14.28
- p = .001

Display in percentages:
- Experimental:
  - No Answer/Moderate: 30%
  - Liberal: 70%
- Control:
  - No Answer/Moderate: 50%
  - Liberal: 50%

Legend:
- Green: No Answer/Moderate
- Red: Liberal
- Blue: Conservative
Correlations

• A higher pre-test global score was negatively correlated with
  – religious affiliation (Spearman’s rho, -.294, p.=.000)

• A higher pre-test global score was positively correlated with
  – prior poverty exposure (Spearman’s rho, .284, p.=.000)
  – liberal political views (Spearman’s rho, .444, p.=.000).
Global Scores - ANCOVA

F = 7.467; p = .007

Post

Control
Experimental
Poverty Explanation (n=178)

Control group
Chi square 3.7; p = .054

Experimental
Chi square 5.17, p = .023

Displayed in percentages

Control group
Chi square 3.7; p = .054

Experimental
Chi square 5.17, p = .023

Control Post
Control Pre
Experi. Pre
Experi. Post

No/Mult Answer
No Link
Behavior
Living
Drift
Global Scores (Pretest below 78)

- PreTest: 66.738
- PostTest: 74.976

Control n=61
Experimental n=41

F=6.135; p=.015
Implications

The poverty simulation provides:

– Unique, engaging learning experience that has positive impact on nursing students’ attitudes towards poverty. (Noone, et al., 2011)

– Opportunity for students to gain sensitivity working with people living with poverty.

– Opportunity for Inter-professional experience.
Next Steps

• Implement the Poverty Simulation on all five OHSU School of Nursing Campuses

• Provide opportunity for community partners to participate in the simulation
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