

Course Tag Reflection Exemplar
Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

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HFS 452: Mindfulness in Children and Youth

Identify the course learning objectives in the syllabus that are clearly aligned to Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion and respective assignment(s).

The following three learning objectives are connected to ethics, integrity, and commitment to diversity and inclusion:

(3) analyze the role of mindfulness in education and other child and youth settings
(4) acquire strategies for supporting mindfulness in education and other child and youth settings

(6) describe their experience of mindfulness through self-practice

(3) We read about and discuss various forms of oppression that exist in society and how mindfulness can be used as tool for students, educators, parents, and others who work with diverse children and families to help address some of the systemic biases that exist in education and society. Many of the mindfulness curricula that we read about were created with attention to oppression and we dissect these programs and discuss the biases that they address. For example, we review examples of how mindfulness can be used in schools to replace detention or suspension and hear the voices of youth, educators, and principals who led these efforts in authentic and effective ways. However, the material also warns against implementing these practices for children without addressing the biased perspectives of the teachers. The course also includes material that highlights the importance of youth having mindfulness instructors who are “like them” with respect to identities that reflect race, gender, and ability.

(4) The students explore different mindfulness-based techniques to use with diverse samples of children, including children living in poverty, exposed to violence, dealing with trauma, and living with a disability, such as Autism, ADHD, deafness, and physical limitations. The students co-lead exercises that include movement (yoga) and breath in the classroom to help develop their own skills and think about modifications for children in different settings.

(6) As the students read about these programs for youth, they are also working through a mindfulness text for adults and reflecting on oppression that they have experienced and/or witnessed. Through these exercises, students become more aware of their own biases and question the systems that shaped those biases. They also practice contemplative practices that focus on accepting oneself and others. These include loving kindness meditations that encourage individuals to recognize that we all have struggles and we all deserve safety, happiness, love, and acceptance.

Explain the connection between specific assignment(s) and Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion. At least 30% of the course grade must engage students in the selected competency for the course to be tagged.

Co-leading experiential exercise. Students are paired with a partner to lead the class through a child-focused mindfulness exercise. Each group needs to ensure that they are presenting unique exercises that another group has not yet led. This assignment includes a written component that is due 1 week after facilitation (9% grade).

Blog-assignments. Students complete two blog assignments that include reflections on meaningful photos that they take as well as reviewing a children's book that introduces mindfulness and related concepts, including empathy, emotion knowledge, silence, and gratitude, with diverse groups of children. (12% grade)

Quizzes. Knowledge and application of these concepts is tested via multiple-choice and short answer questions. (27% grade)

Reflective Journals: Students keep a reflective journal across the semester where they are asked to describe their experiences (both to practices and readings) and engage in self-inquiry to explore their reactions. Some of the practices and/or readings have prompts specifically to engage students in acknowledging their biases and reflecting on how they see themselves and others. These are graded twice with a rubric (12% grade)

Describe in detail the instructional strategies faculty use to intentionally teach Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion in the course.

The faculty member leads the class in paired and whole-group discussions and assignments to process their connections with the material and awareness of DEAI-related concerns within the field of mindfulness. The course also includes a variety of experiential exercises, both done independently and during class, that are focused on increasing our awareness of our thoughts and feelings. The students also lead the class through practices and reflect on these experiences as part of an individual assignment. Students also post reflections to private and public blogs in Blackboard.

Describe the feedback tool(s) faculty use to support students' competency development on Ethics, Integrity, and Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion.

Students receive feedback via rubrics for all assignments. The reflective journal includes feedback at both mid-term and end of the semester. The faculty member will also meet with individual students or student pairs to discuss the material and/or prepare for the assignments.