A Paradigm Shift: An Innovative Interdisciplinary Team Mentoring Public Health Research Education Program

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Introduction

- The core objective of the Institute for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health (Institute) is the development of an innovative research education curriculum.
- The curriculum enhances knowledge of best practices for drug abuse and co-occurring disorders in children and adolescents, while providing a foundation for translational research and implementation science, and a model for interdisciplinary partnerships in research.
- Developers of the program aim to positively affect the career trajectories of student researchers and community based practitioners in the direction of translational research and implementation science.

Paradigm Shift

- Research Implementation Science/Translation of Evidence Based Practices
- Local, Ancillary, or Incidental Communication
- Service Delivery
- Child and Adolescent Drug Abuse and Mental Health

Program Structure

- **Institute Scholars:** The Institute funds 15 Scholars per cohort, and up to 5 are professionals from community-based partner organizations. Scholars are diverse and represent departments of criminology, public health, social work, nursing, school psychology, and mental health rehabilitation and counseling.
- **Coursework:** The Institute is designed around a 4 semester, 15 credit Graduate Certificate in Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health. Web-based core curricula (12 credit hours) is integrated with a community-based service learning experience.
- **Service Learning:** Institute Scholars work with Community Collaborating Partners on research projects in children’s behavioral health, with emphasis on translational research and implementation science. Our community-based partners are leaders in the Tampa Bay area in the provision of children’s drug abuse and mental health treatment and prevention services.
- **Conference:** Institute Scholars attend the national Children’s Mental Health Research & Policy Conference in their first semester and receive orientation to the program. Scholars attend the conference again in their final semester to present their research findings.
- **Mentoring Team:** The Institute applies a cross-disciplinary team mentoring approach to ensure that Scholars have support to accomplish learning outcomes and the practical skills of participatory research. Local and national mentors provide expertise in research, administration, and service delivery.
- **National Advisory Board and National Mentors:** National Advisory Board members provide support to all efforts of the Institute and oversight to the Executive Committee on program development and evaluation.

Method

- Curriculum Committee
- Executive Committee
- Project Director
- National Advisory Board
- Team Mentoring Experience
- Community Partners
- National Mentors
- Academic Mentors
- Institute Scholars

Conclusion

- **Ongoing assessments indicate that use of adult learning theory, blended learning, multidisciplinary teams, and interdisciplinary team mentoring is an innovative approach to public health education.**
- **Challenges include incorporating coursework into existing degree course requirements for a variety of students and implementing service learning projects that are feasible in the time period.**

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