Empathy Training in Gero-NURS 3205

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Principles of Gerontology

In this course, students focus on the physical, mental and emotional changes that occur through aging. Our primary population is 65 years and older. We consider how individuals feel as they navigate through some of these challenges. Students are challenged to experience some of these changes and reflect on methods that can embrace them as well as improve the quality of life. A primary focus is differentiating between sympathy verses empathy.

High Impact Practices

1. Collaborative Assignment and Projects where the students worked together on various empathy simulations
2. Diversity/Global Learning
3. Service Learning, Community-based

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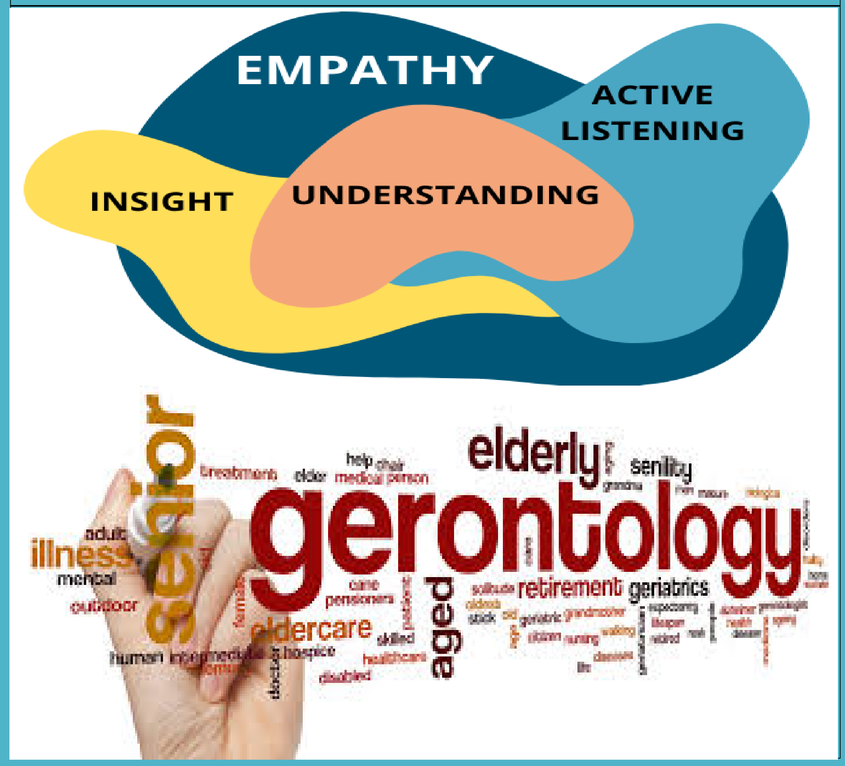
CENTER FOR HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

At the end of every class, students are given the opportunity to actively simulate various age-related conditions that many older adults experience. These vary from changes in taste and smell, neuropathy, visual disturbances, stroke, hearing changes etc.

Image Caption: This photo shows a student e actively participating in a simulation where sight and mobility are affected

HIPs Elements

- Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback
- Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
- Interactions with faculty and peers
- Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time

Lesson Plan

1. Students took an empathy evaluation at the beginning of the course and again at the end.
2. Students practiced Empathy Care mapping which encouraged the students to put themselves in their clients shoes and consider alternatives to situations and activities
3. Students volunteered hours assisting the elderly at the end of the course for Service Learning.
4. Students wrote in a reflective journal evaluating their experience and overall growth as it related to Empathy