TITLE: Making the Case for Holistic Admissions: Perspectives from Dentistry (ADEA), Medicine (AAMC), and Nursing (AACN)

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INSTITUTIONS (ALL):
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2. Diversity, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, Washington, DC, United States.
3. Student Affairs and Programs, Association of American Medical Colleges, Washington, DC, United States.

ABSTRACT BODY:

Purpose: Holistic admissions refers to a process of considering the capabilities, experiences, and attributes of applicants beyond grade point averages and standardized test scores. Considering criteria beyond academic metrics allows admissions and selections committees to better assess a student's readiness to engage in graduate or professional education. Holistic admissions processes have been widely adopted by many health profession institutions seeking to identify a diverse student body best capable of meeting their institutional mission and objectives and to enhance diversity in the health professions workforce. This course is designed to introduce physical therapy educators to the value of a holistic admissions process and to promote the adoption of the concept, practice, and utilization of a holistic review framework. Germaine to this process is a review of the considerations related to institutional readiness to consider alternative admissions processes, the legal foundation for diversity considerations in admissions, impact of unconscious bias, race-neutral alternatives, and activities designed to facilitate program adoption of holistic admissions review. Representatives from the American Dental Education Association (ADEA), Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) will share their association's experience in facilitating holistic admissions with their respective member institutions. The promotion and implementation of holistic admissions processes has been collectively identified by the American Council on Academic Physical Therapy, American Physical Therapy Association, and the Education Section of the APTA through the Education Leadership Partnership as a strategic priority for physical therapist education.

Methods and/or Description of Project: Course presenters will describe their profession's experience with developing, implementing, and evaluating holistic admissions processes, including national outcomes to date, during this moderated panel discussion. Course participants will be encouraged to ask questions of the speakers, especially those questions that would inform physical therapy educators as they consider holistic admissions processes in the context of their academic programs.
Results/Outcomes: The professions of dentistry, medicine, and nursing have made significant strides in facilitating an appreciation for the value of holistic admissions review processes. The American Dental Education Association (ADEA) has created a series of workshops to support academic programs and to provide technical assistance with holistic review processes including: ensuring alignment with institutional mission, considering legal issues, appreciating the role of unconscious bias in admissions decisions, and theory and research behind holistic admissions. The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has created resources to support adoption and use of holistic review in admissions, including the "AAMC Holistic Review Project: Achieving Improved Learning and Workforce Outcomes through Admissions" and other documents. Similarly, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has created tools to assist programs in appreciating the role and use of holistic admissions, including text, video, and PowerPoint resources. Their work includes facilitating an online discussion within the profession titled, "Overcoming Barriers to Holistic Admission in Nursing".

Conclusions/Relevance to the conference theme: Through the Looking Glass: Transforming Physical Therapy Education: This course is directly related to the sub theme of this conference, Admissions Perspectives and Challenges—Where are we now? The promotion and implementation of holistic admissions processes has been collectively identified by the American Council on Academic Physical Therapy, American Physical Therapy Association, and the Education Section of the APTA through the Education Leadership Partnership as a strategic priority for physical therapist education. The profession of physical therapy has much to learn from other health professions education groups. As physical therapy educators consider alternative ways of making admissions decisions, considering experiences from dentistry and medicine can facilitate the successful adoption and implementation of holistic admissions processes.

Course Objectives:
1. Understand the importance and benefits of a diverse workforce in the health professions.
2. Describe what constitutes holistic review in admissions, including considerations of non-cognitive variables, implicit bias, and race-neutral alternatives.
3. Identify challenges and opportunities experienced by AAMC, ADEA, and AACN in facilitating a holistic admissions review process.
4. Engage in questions and answers (Q&A) about the benefits of holistic review, and lessons learned.
5. Identify needs of individual programs that seek to adopt and support a holistic admissions review process.

Instructional Methods:
1. Describe the holistic admissions review experiences of three health professions education associations
2. Moderated question and answer period
3. Discussion (large group)
Tentative Outline/Schedule:

10 min: Introduction and Welcome (Moderator: Chesbro & Conrad)
20 min: AAMC Speaker (Conrad)
20 min: ADEA Speaker (Booker) 20 min: AACN Speaker (Dewitty)
20 min: Questions and Discussion (Moderator: Chesbro)

SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT & SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS:

Mark A. López, PhD, is a higher education practitioner-scholar with over 15 years of experience in postsecondary education. Dr. López’s experiences with the American Dental Education Association, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the University of Maryland, College Park, South Mountain Community College, and the California State University, Fullerton and Dominguez Hills campuses have positioned him to work towards increasing college student success by advocating at a campus, local, and national level. His expertise includes student access, retention, and success in postsecondary education as well as social justice and diversity education. Dr. López also has extensive experience in providing leadership in program development and grants management at the university and community colleges levels. His accomplishments include leadership around innovative programming for marginalized and underrepresented student populations such as the Summer Health Professions Education Program, the Male Success Alliance, the Minority Male Initiative, and Closing the Gaps for Latina/o Students. Dr. López is a change agent and an advocate for the improvement of postsecondary education by progressively working towards widening access and increasing higher education graduation rates. He holds a doctorate in education policy from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Vernell DeWitty, RN, PhD, MBA, has an extensive background in nursing, healthcare administration and program development. She has served in various administrative capacities in university teaching hospitals as well as community-based hospitals. Currently she is the Chief Diversity Officer for the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Previously, Dr. DeWitty directed the Robert Wood Johnson New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program (NCIN), a nine-year $41 million national collaboration between RWJF and AACN, that provided financial support and resources for academic success to underrepresented and disadvantaged nursing students in 130 nursing schools located in 41 states and the District of Columbia. Dr. DeWitty led the development of strategies that contributed significantly to student success for the NCIN program and has published on academic success and progression for underrepresented students. She earned her doctorate degree in nursing from George Mason University and her MBA from Howard University, where she was selected as a member of the Beta Gamma Sigma Business Honor Society. While attending The Catholic University of America, she earned a master's degree in nursing and was selected as a member of Sigma Theta Tau National Nursing Honor Society. She is a fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives and received a certificate as Healthcare Executive in Diversity and Inclusion from the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC). Dr. DeWitty was the recipient of the American Nurses Association 2014 Mary Mahoney Award for her significant contributions to advancing equal opportunities in nursing for members of minority
groups. She also received the President’s Award from State University of New York, Downstate for her leadership and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Dr. DeWitty has an unwavering passion for improving the health of vulnerable populations as reflected in her work on behalf of health equity, access to care and workforce diversity. Dr. DeWitty believes that having a diverse nursing workforce is a key strategy to increasing access to quality care, achieving health equity, and reducing health disparities among minority and disadvantaged populations. “

Sarah Conrad, MS, has been at the Association of American Medical Colleges for ten years. Before transitioning to the role of director of Advancing Holistic Review in 2015, she was lead researcher in the Diversity Policy and Programs unit, where she looked at a variety of diversity and inclusion topics, with an emphasis on institutional climate and culture. Ms. Conrad earned her Master of Science degree in Human Development and Family Studies from the Pennsylvania State University in 2005, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Maryland Baltimore County in 2001.

Steven B. Chesbro, PT, DPT, EdD, is the Vice President for Education at the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). In this role he provides leadership for the Department of Education that includes the divisions of academic services, accreditation, postprofessional credentialing, and residency and fellowship education. Prior to joining APTA staff in 2016, Dr. Chesbro served as dean of the College of Health Sciences and founder and director of the Center to Advance Rehabilitative Health and Education at Alabama State University. He has also held faculty positions at Howard University and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. The majority of Dr. Chesbro’s career has focused on health professions education, including initiatives to improve diversity in education and workforce environments. He was appointed to a 4-year term to serve on the Diversity Task Force of the NICHD/NIH, served as a board member of the Tuskegee Area Health Education Center, has been a recipient of the APTA’s Diversity Award, received the Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy’s Distinguished Educator Award, and has served as the principal investigator/project director/site director of grants specific to health professions diversity from AHRQ, HRSA, and NIDRR. Dr. Chesbro has published and presented scholarly works related to diverse issues in the healthcare workforce and higher education.

Dr. Chesbro completed a BA and MS (psychology and college teaching) at Northeastern State University, a BS (physical therapy) at Langston University, an MHS (neurologic physical therapy) at the University of Indianapolis, an EdD (occupational and adult education) from Oklahoma State University, and a DPT from MGH Institute of Health Professions. He is a board-certified geriatric clinical specialist.

References:


