

MICUA

Maryland Independent College
and University Association

Annual Health Disparities Reduction Reports

as required by

§ 20-904 of the Health-General Article

MICUA Member Institutions Required to Report:

**Hood College
Johns Hopkins University
Notre Dame of Maryland University
Stevenson University
Washington Adventist University**

December 27, 2021



Maryland Independent College and University Association

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MEMBERS

Capitol Technology University

Goucher College

Hood College

Johns Hopkins University

Loyola University Maryland

Maryland Institute College of Art

McDaniel College

Mount St. Mary's University

Notre Dame of Maryland University

St. John's College

Stevenson University

Washington Adventist University

Washington College

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Ner Israel Rabbinical College

St. Mary's Seminary & University

December 27, 2021

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President
Senate of Maryland
State House, H-107
Annapolis Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker
Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Report required by Health-General Article § 20-904 (MSAR # 9026)

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

On behalf of the member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA), I am pleased to submit the MICUA Health Disparities Reduction Reports for 2021. These reports are required by § 20-904 of the Health-General Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as enacted by the *Maryland Health Improvement and Disparities Reduction Act of 2012*. The law requires an annual report from “each institution of higher education in the State that offers a program necessary for the licensing of health care professionals in the State ...on the actions taken by the institution to reduce health disparities.” Five MICUA institutions were required to report: Hood College, Johns Hopkins University, Notre Dame of Maryland University, Stevenson University, and Washington Adventist University.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this information and we thank the Governor and the members of the General Assembly for the meaningful inquiry into these policies and practices. If you have any questions about information contained within these reports or would like further information, please contact Irnande Altema, Associate Vice President for Government and Business Affairs, at ialtema@micua.org.

Sincerely,

Sara Fidler
President

Enclosure

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

2021 REPORT – INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING AND OTHER HEALTH DISPARITIES REDUCTION ACTIVITIES

HOOD COLLEGE

Preparing students to engage in cross-cultural practice settings has always been an important component of Hood College’s social work program; however, nearly every required and elective course in the curriculum now includes attention to cross-cultural knowledge (including cultural sensitivity, cultural competency) at the micro (individual) and macro (community/society) levels. For example, in 2017, Hood added a new course to the required curriculum—Human Rights and Social Justice—to help students understand, challenge, and combat oppression, unequal access to resources, and social inequities. This course examines human rights and social justice values, principles, and types of rights and their interrelationship with holistic well-being (i.e., physical, mental, social/cultural, economic, environmental, and political/legal well-being).

In 2017, the Hood College Social Work Program was reaccredited for seven years under the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. This current set of standards set forth by the Council on Social Work Education requires social work programs to “describe the specific and continuous efforts [made] to provide a learning environment in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity and difference is practiced, how the learning environment models affirmation and respect for diversity and difference, and discuss specific plans to improve the learning environment to affirm and support persons with diverse identities” ([CSWE EPAS, 2015](#)). Hood utilizes National Association of Social Workers’ (NASW) Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence (2015) to emphasize content in cross-cultural knowledge and skills. Hood trains field instructors to assess these areas for students who are engaged in field practicum experiences.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Johns Hopkins University has taken to address reduction of health disparities as part of its educational offerings. Hopkins hosts a myriad of health care programs with most being offered through the Bloomberg School of Public Health, the School of Medicine, and the School of Nursing. Each of these schools provides a range of curricular and experiential offerings carefully designed to prepare culturally competent future health care professionals to understand and actively address health care disparities. A sampling of these offerings is included in the attached table.

Hopkins is upheld to high diversity and inclusion standards required by all of the specialized accreditors that accredit its various healthcare programs. Given those requirements as well as Hopkins' own internal focus on diversity and inclusion, there is confidence that Hopkins-trained healthcare providers possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to meet the needs of their patients regardless of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

Course Title	Course Description	Degree Level	# of Course Credits
PH.410.611. Under Pressure: Health, Wealth & Poverty	Explores the relationship between health, wealth, poverty, and public policy in the U.S. as well as internationally; assesses past and future strategies to remedy inequities in health and health care. Addresses theories of social class; distribution of poverty across gender, age, and ethnic/racial groups; antipoverty programs and their effects; effects of changes in health care organization on the poor; and possible modifications to provide greater equity. Investigates how a dramatically changing media landscape influences patterns of belief about the causes of poverty and its remedies. Synthesizes scientific evidence with a variety of genres and disciplines including: history, psychology, political science, religious thought, philosophy, geography, literary theory, popular culture, film/media studies, and music.	Masters	3
PH.221.664. Prevention of Unintentional Injuries in American Indian Communities	Introduces the basic skills and knowledge required to address the injury burden in the Native American Community. Based upon the nine Core Competencies for Injury and Violence Prevention, provides students with opportunities to practice these skills through application sessions. Prepares students to enter a network of injury prevention colleagues with a specific interest in the prevention of injuries in the Native American community.	Masters	3
PH.224.694. Mental Health Intervention Programming in Low and Middle-Income Countries	Introduces students to mental illness symptoms and syndromes found across contexts and the variety of strategies used to treat such symptoms. Discusses mental health services as an integral part of global health program development. Addresses methods of adapting and developing interventions in low-resource countries and humanitarian contexts, as well as research designs used to evaluate these interventions. Challenges students to use critical and creative thinking skills throughout to discuss the issues involved in this relatively new field. Focuses on cross-cultural challenges in conducting mental health research in these settings. Topics covered include an overview of mental health issues in low-resource countries and humanitarian	Masters	3

	contexts; cross-cultural challenges; developing, modifying and disseminating prevention and intervention strategies; and the interplay between mental health and related topics such as nutrition, fitness and diabetes; HIV; substance abuse; and violence.		
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ME.800.640 Topics in Interdisciplinary Medicine – Health and Health Care Disparities and Inequities	This three-day course occurs immediately after orientation in Year One. The students hear talks from experts from the School of Medicine, School of Public Health, legislators, and community activists, and engage in small-group discussions with their peers. Activities include a tour of Baltimore City and an afternoon engaged in service learning with a community organization. By the end of this course, the students will have: Improved awareness of the effect of social needs and demands on care of patients; Improved knowledge of existence of health care disparities and the demographic influences on healthcare quality and effectiveness; Developed self-awareness of personal biases in the approach to health care delivery; and Improved cultural competency communication skills.	Medical Doctorate	n/a
Latino Health Pathway: Clinical Experience with Latino Health	The training will feature topics relevant to Latino patient care, including community engagement, alternative medicine, translation issues and domestic violence, among others. Students will be evaluated on participation and fulfillment of listed requirements, professionalism, cultural competence, interpersonal skills, and knowledge.	Medical Doctorate	n/a
NR.110.615. Health Disparities in Nursing Practice	This course provides the student with a study of health disparities and promotion of health equity across a variety of disease processes. Advanced analysis and evaluation of theories, concepts, and methods related to health equity and disparity, will be examined. Students will have the opportunity to critically examine the links between health outcomes and economics, class, gender, sex, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. Emphasis is on advanced discourse and analysis of health equity and disparity theory and research. The focus of this course will be on multiple levels of analysis from the practitioner-patient interactions to the health care system as a whole. This will include an assessment of the	Masters	2

	social determinants of health. Students will spend a substantial amount of time engaging in online scholarly discourse and in developing their own specific practice based clinical and research interests in this field culminating in an empirical paper and a conference ready presentation of their findings.		
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NR.120.537. Community Outreach to Underserved Communities in Urban Baltimore	This course provides students with an overview of Baltimore’s vulnerable communities and underserved populations. Students gain a broad perspective on factors affecting the health of underserved and vulnerable communities in urban Baltimore. Students will develop cultural competency skills to work effectively in partnership with Baltimore communities. The course includes the history of Johns Hopkins nursing and Baltimore’s history, a broad definition of health focusing on social determinants of health factors such as poverty, housing, violence, substance abuse, disparities in health and health care, social justice, vulnerable populations, employment, safety, and the environment. Students will also examine the influence of implicit bias on communication and interventions as well as the importance of integration of trauma-informed care in urban environments. Selected Baltimore community health interventions are presented with emphasis on health promotion and community organizing. Local community and civic leaders present their roles and discuss current public health issues facing Baltimore. Students will learn about local neighborhoods, community agencies, and resources and gain basic skills in basic community assessment.	Masters	1
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NOTRE DAME OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY

Grounded in Caring Science, the curriculum at the School of Nursing at Notre Dame of Maryland University emphasizes students' role in advocating for clients and disrupting injustices. In the classroom setting, students engage in provocative classroom discussions to examine what is a disparity and their understanding of how disparities become a reality among diverse groups. With a broadened perspective on social determinants of health, students analyzed the effects of social determinants of health on social justice for selected populations. Assignments focused on the five social determinants of health groups, whereby, students deliberated about why Maryland and the Nation should consider the topic a health priority. Student groups presented a summary of a windshield assessment of a Baltimore neighborhood, then digitally telling the story of the neighborhood, and its primary health concerns. Lastly, students created a Public Service Announcement that addressed that neighborhood's health needs.

Faculty adjusted community health experiences at the height of the pandemic. While some students participated in vaccination clinics, other students created a knowledge library for Interfaith Works of Montgomery County. When community agencies lifted restrictions for students, students volunteered for food runs, sorted through donations, and set up for an event at the Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc. At the end of the clinical experiences, students reflected on questions about what they learned about themselves within a framework of implicit bias and stereotypes. Additionally, students described ways to address health disparities as a public health nurse.

Since the School of Pharmacy's inception in 2008, cultural competence and its associated concepts and skills are taught in required courses (Care of Diverse Populations, Public Health, Pharmacist Care Lab sequence, Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences) and embedded into the required Service Learning Program (AdvoCaring). Each course has learning objectives that are associated with this content. The skills labs and experiential learning components are activities that are designed to address the knowledge and skills needed for a pharmacist to provide culturally competent care.

STEVENSON UNIVERSITY

Stevenson University has several courses that embed principles of cultural competency:

Healthcare Management (HCM; M.S.)

In HCM 600, Managerial Epidemiology and Statistics, the signature assignment requires students to complete an original 8-page research paper analyzing a chronic disease using descriptive, analytical, and/or experimental statistics. In completing this assignment, students often focus on a chronic disease that impacts their lives or the lives of their family members. Some examples of recent topics include: alcohol and substance abuse disorders, diabetes mellitus, infant mortality, Crohn's Disease, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and Alzheimer's disease. After completing the first assignment, many students comment on how the research has made them rethink their own diet, exercise, or other behaviors, as well as how to help their families.

Medical Laboratory Science (MLS; B.S.)

There are multiple places in the MLS curriculum where activities or course requirements enable students to be exposed to interprofessional collaboration and issues relating to diverse patient populations. A high-fidelity simulation scenario involving a critical care situation in which MLS students work with nursing students was introduced into MLS 430, Professional Research and Writing, in Spring 2021. Additionally, MLS 311, Communication and Culture in Health Care, is a new program requirement that is cross-listed with NURS 311. This course explicitly addresses cultural competence and sensitivity in healthcare using theoretical models and assessment tools to examine cultural beliefs, values, practices, legal-ethical concerns, and communication issues which impact the health of individuals, families, and groups. This course also provides additional opportunities for interprofessional collaboration with nursing students.

Nursing (B.S.; M.S.)

The undergraduate and graduate nursing programs both contain courses and coursework that align specifically to the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Key Element III-G, which requires that teaching/learning strategies “expose students to individuals with diverse life experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.” Example assignments include written brochures and translation of discharge instructions for diverse patient audiences (NURS 311 Culture and Communication in Healthcare and NURS 318 Pathophysiology and Pharmacology), discussions and written reflections evaluating the effectiveness and benefits of telehealth and other virtual services in the context of the needs of underserved and disenfranchised communities (NURS 315 Information Technology in Nursing and Healthcare), and discussion boards that include critiquing global health policies and assignments involving practicing cultural sensitivity in the context of conducting health assessments or teaching others to conduct health assessments (NURS 547 Global Health Perspectives and NURS 615 Advanced Health Assessment).

WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

The concepts of Health Care Disparities are taught throughout the nursing curriculum at Washington Adventist University. These concepts are described in NURS 222 Fundamental of Nursing Practice as noted in the course objective “Describe socio-cultural components of health, illness, and caring patterns.” A co-requisite of NURS 222 is NURS 244 Health Assessment. In this class, a learning objective is to “utilize the nursing process to achieve the goals of *Healthy People 2030* to address the health needs of individuals and families.” Furthermore, in the senior one semester, the concept of Health Care Disparities and the full impact of these disparities is taught in the course designated as NURS 478 (Healthcare Policy and Politics). In this course, four out of seven objectives directly or indirectly address health care disparity through concepts such as social justice, economic impacts on health care, and an ethical framework for vulnerable populations.