Health Equity in Action: Designing Culturally Competent, Community-Centered Research Programs

Instructor Information

Learning Navigator: Dr. Renarda Jones (Dr. Ren)
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Course Overview

This 6-week self-paced course, led by Dr. Renarda Jones (Dr. Ren), Founder of Diverse Research Now, empowers learners to design equitable, culturally competent, and community-centered research engagement programs. Through the 4-E Model — Educate, Engage, Empower, and Extend — students will learn practical strategies to make research participation inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the needs of diverse populations.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Define and differentiate between health equity, equality, and inclusion.
2. Identify barriers to diversity in research and strategies to overcome them.
3. Apply the 4-E Model (Educate, Engage, Empower, Extend) to research outreach and communication.
4. Design a culturally competent, community-centered research event plan.
5. Reflect on personal and institutional roles in advancing health equity.

Course Format

This is a self-paced online course hosted through an e-learning platform. Students can progress through lessons at their own speed, accessing recorded lectures, readings, and assignments each week.

Each module includes:
• A 10–20 minute recorded lesson
• Discussion and reflection prompts
• A short worksheet or applied exercise
• Optional group discussion board for idea sharing

Evaluation & Certification

To receive a Certificate of Completion, students must complete all module reflections/worksheets and submit the Capstone Project by the end of Week 6.

Weekly Course Outline

Week 1: Foundations of Health Equity

• What is Health Equity?

• Equality vs. Equity: Understanding the Difference

• Building Trust in Research Through Representation

Activities: Watch the Module 1 lesson, review handouts, complete reflection worksheet.

Key Question: Where do inequities show up in your field?

Week 2: Educate – Building Trust Through Teaching

• The Power of Education in Research Engagement

• Principles of Effective Health Communication

• Culturally Competent Education Practices

Activities: Watch Module 2, complete the 'Translate the Jargon' Challenge, submit reflection.

Key Question: What does it mean to 'educate with equity'?

Week 3: Engage – Fostering Community Dialogue

• How to Create Safe, Inclusive Spaces for Discussion

• The Importance of Listening in Research

• Strategies for Meaningful Engagement

Activities: Watch Module 3, participate in discussion board (optional), reflection worksheet.

Key Question: What does authentic engagement look like in your work?

Week 4: Empower – Giving Communities Tools and Voice

• Moving Beyond Education to Action

• Providing Resources and Tools for Participation

• Strengthening Community Capacity

Activities: Watch Module 4, create a Community Resource Plan, reflection worksheet.

Key Question: How can empowerment lead to lasting trust?

Week 5: Extend – Giving Back and Sustaining Trust

• Reciprocity and Sustainability in Research Partnerships

• Giving Back to Participants and Communities

• Building Long-Term Relationships Beyond the Study

Activities: Watch Module 5, design a Give-Back Element for your Capstone, reflection worksheet.

Key Question: What does 'giving back' look like in your community?

Week 6: Capstone – Bringing It All Together

• Designing a Virtual Community Research Event

• Applying the 4-E Model in Practice

• Measuring Success and Impact

Activities: Complete Capstone Project, record short presentation (optional), final reflection.

Capstone Goal: Create a culturally competent, participant-centered community event plan.

Grading Breakdown

• Weekly Reflection Worksheets – 40%
• Participation in Discussions/Exercises – 20%
• Final Capstone Project – 40%

Course Policies

• This course is self-paced; however, all work must be completed within 8 weeks of enrollment.
• Respectful discussion and diverse perspectives are encouraged.
• Plagiarism or uncredited work will result in non-certification.
• Support is available via email for questions or feedback.

Contact Information

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