

Integration of Disability Studies Frameworks into the Master of Science in Genetic Counseling Program at UCLA

Although both healthcare and disability studies have evolved substantially over the past several decades, disability frameworks and perspectives have largely remained separate from the healthcare system and education of healthcare professionals. The goal of this project is to pinpoint and narrow this gap by developing recommendations for the integration of disability studies into the curricular framework and pedagogy of UCLA's Genetic Counseling graduate program. Through an extensive literature review and analysis of program syllabi, key opportunities have been identified for integrating the medical, social, empowerment, and justice models of disability into this program. These methods include modifying existing reflection questions in various courses and adding in reflection opportunities in other courses, assigning salient readings that serve to elucidate how course concepts connect to disability frameworks, and providing opportunities to better understand the lived experiences and different identities of individuals served by genetic counselors. Incorporating disability studies scholarship into the framework of these programs serves to equip aspiring genetic counselors with a balanced, disability-informed lens in order to bridge the gap between disability studies and healthcare in the future.

2020 Undergraduate Research Showcase Presentation:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scaxOo_dLyw