



Presentation of the
Intercultural Program in
Special Care Counselling at
« Cégep régional de
Lanaudière à Joliette »

Presentation Plan Outline

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Introduction

Audrey Pelletier, from the Special care Counselling department at Cégep régional de Lanaudière à Joliette has been involved in the internationalisation process of the program for 24 years and more intensively since 2008.

Historical Landmarks of the Intercultural Program

- Dynamic partnership with the Social Work Institute at Tours, France (Institut de Travail social à Tours) for 24 years in the mutual reception of participants in the internship program. More than 60 students from here have gone to Tours, and about 150 students from Tours have come here for their internship in approximately 50 different organizations mainly in Lanaudière..
- In 2009 :
 - Comparative analysis of the two programs (Special Care Counselling and the Social Work Institute) in order to
 - ✓ share concerns,
 - ✓ Improve the pedagogical supervision of the students during oversea's internship
- We standardize the pedagogical supervision and managing of interns from abroad, we intensify their training by offering formal classes (30 hours per session) and joining them to accompanying groups which are added to their internship hours.

Historical Landmarks of the Intercultural program

- In 2009 we receive interns in Special Care Counselling from Strasbourg, Marseille, Clermont-Ferrand, Tours, Montpellier, Switzerland and Belgium.

From 6 European intern students in 2008, the number increased to 20 the following year

Historical Landmarks of the Intercultural program

- Fall 2009: Arrival of Belgian Students for their internship (without any additional resource from our college). Planned visit in Belgium concerning the supervision and pedagogical aspects of the program. That meeting led to the idea of double-degrees.
- June 2010: Writing double-degrees guidelines for HELMO (Haute École Libre Mosane) students; Fall 2010, the first 3 Belgian teachers come to Collège régional de Lanaudière, in Joliette for a full year of training in order to obtain a Québec degree. This was a first in the province of Québec.

First Conclusions

- These repeated experiences with international intern students lead teachers of the department to:
 - open up to their understanding of the role of an educator
 - adapt courses contents and teaching strategies
 - perfect their competences in intercultural communication
 - Strengthen their understanding of the role of an educator in Québec in an historico-cultural perspective.

Important Turning Point

- Winter 2010: a team of final-year students carry on their integration project in Cuba, more precisely in Bayamo, in collaboration with Granma University. Since then, 40 students from Joliette Cégep have gone to that city for their internship or their final-year integration project. This experience is very promising for the students, for the Special Care Counselling program, for the college and the Cégep.
- Fall 2011: 3 students leave for their internship in Chile. An agreement with the Jesuit University of Santiago. That internship is organized with the collaboration of Lanaudière Youth Centers.

Second Conclusions

- Our observations of the students
 - A more solid professional identity which results in:
 - A better capacity of de-centring oneself and focusing on others
 - A greater open-mind toward people differences and an interest in these differences.
 - An improvement in their communication skills in an intercultural context.
 - A deeper understanding of the role of a special care counsellor/educator in Québec..
 - An accute development of their creativity, experiencing a lack of reference marks forcing them to use their own ressources which they would never have thought of otherwise.
 - A capacity to adapt their practice and transfer their procedural skills.
 - More self-confidence in their personal and professional competences.

Second Conclusions

- The projects related to student mobility of the 6 last years, whether concerning visiting students or home students travelling abroad, have forced us to **reflect collectively about our own teacher training as to:**
 - **Better prepare our students for an international internship**
 - **Better supervise and support those we receive from abroad**

With this, the idea of an Intercultural program will emerge and consequently the necessity to revise our whole program.

The New Program is based on:

- the changing demographic situation of Lanaudière
- One of the orientations of the Strategic Development Plan of Cégep régional de Lanaudière.

Whose goal is:

- Teach using cross-disciplinary strategies the following competence: : *Interact with different service users from different cultural and ethnic communities*

Intercultural Program

- The intercultural program will give students with an interest in intervention work in special care education in foreign locations or intercultural environments opportunities to explore some of the issues and challenges frequently encountered. They will do an internship/ or integration project in one of these contexts during their third year.
- During the program, students will benefit from better targeted supervision, and will experience various professional activities oriented toward intervention in one of these contexts.
- Students registered in this program will gradually understand better the issue of immigration in Québec and in their region.

Knowing

- Knowing oneself personally, professionally and culturally.
- Identifying characteristics of Québec identity.
- Describing some realities of immigrants and first nation communities.
- Understanding the ways of thinking and acting of people according to their cultural or ethnic background .
- Identifying intercultural issues.
- Deciphering people's ways of thinking and behavior according to their cultural or ethnic background
- Knowing the notions of cultural shock and migration path.
- Knowing the legal context concerning people from a different cultural community and their rights.
- Identifying intervention strategies adapted to situations that present intercultural issues. .
- Identifying intervention strategies adapted to situations presenting intercultural issues.

Communicating

- Identifying factors that could affect intercultural communication positively or negatively.
- Demonstrate an attitude of intercultural empathy (taking the necessary time, rejecting absolute truths, developing tolerance).
- Evaluating one's capacity to establish a relationship with people of different cultures.
- Communicating while taking into account one's own sets of cultural values and traditional norms and also taking into account the sets of values and traditional norms of another culture.
- Communicating using a second or a third language.

Adapting

- Adapting one's oral communication and gesture according to the analysis of the intercultural context.
- Adapting oneself to different cultural environments and situations by showing: open-mindedness to new experiences, availability to learn, creativity, and a capacity to activate change and innovation.
- Updating intervention strategies adapted to situations with intercultural issues.

Getting Involved

- Developing an awareness campaign, an information or action project aiming at joining different cultures; from acquired knowledge of intercultural and international domains.
- Conceiving and carrying-out an intervention project in an intercultural context.
- Cooperating in the planning and implementation of a project with a common goal, in partnership with one or some cultures different from one's own culture (in Québec or abroad).
- Evaluating the impact of an intervention project in an intercultural context with an international and/or intercultural perspective in one's own community or in another.
- Promoting and protecting the rights and the respect of people from a different cultural community.

From Student Mobility to the Implementation of the Intercultural Program

Internationalization has helped the department to adapt its professional practices, to open up to new perspectives of the role of an educator and consequently to become more competent and coherent with its teaching strategies and contents.

- International projects have led the department to experience networking with a variety of local partners which is a key component in international intervention.
- International projects have also helped students to develop a capacity to decentre themselves, become more creative, improve their communication skills in an intercultural context, develop a deeper understanding of the role of an educator in Québec, adapt their practice by transferring intervention skills, and increase their confidence in their personal and professional competences.
- The new program, and more specifically the International profile, reflects the regional realities which require the development of intercultural intervention competences.

From Student Mobility to the Implementation of the International Program

- The International program gives students the opportunity to contrast their knowledge with the realities of the world that surrounds them; to develop their capacity of adaptation, communication and leadership.
- We believe that the students of the International program, who are changed from their experience with various cultural communities, become convinced and convincing agent of change and who favor openness toward cultural differences, tolerance and acceptance of others.