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Facilitating Transformative Interdisciplinary Collaborative Projects: The IMPACT (Interdisciplinary, McMaster, Project/Practice, Applied, Collaborative/Community, Transformative) Project

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ABSTRACT

To promote the transformation of learning groups into learning communities, we developed and implemented our IMPACT Project model for interdisciplinary collaborative projects. The model's activities (tutorials and think-tank sessions) cohere ideas into practical tools by honing research knowledge with the added value of community outreach. In this session, we will discuss our model for linking expertise and disseminating insights across diverse disciplines (Engineering, Science, Rehabilitation Sciences) with the goal of creating meaningful transformative change in the local community. Our interdisciplinary model has successfully assisted a real-life challenge faced by a client (arthritis). The central learning objective for our students focuses upon the ability to work as members of a team to address a unique, open-ended problem with their own creativity, and applied knowledge. Using our model, students learn and develop teamwork skills, interpersonal communication skills, design/development skills, and leadership. Participants will receive handouts, which describe our model's organizational structure and how we scaffold online pedagogical technology and learning activities. During this interactive session, we anticipate that participants will acquire a new appreciation of how interdisciplinary organizational components can be easily integrated to facilitate diverse groups in the collaborative transformation and fostering of citizenship across diverse disciplines.