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**Understanding Department and Institutional Culture: An Important Responsibility for Department Chairs David A. Birch**

Understanding the culture of the department and university community is an essential task for department chairs. Important elements of this culture include history, traditions, core values, aspirations, strategic plans, faculty teaching and research interests, organizational structure, policy, governance, and perceptions of the department held by students, faculty and others. In this article, sources of information are presented along with strategies intended to enable a chair to develop and maintain an understanding of the culture.

**Sexuality Education—Changes or Status Quo?**

**Clint E. Bruess, Jerrold S. Greenberg**

The old saying: "The more things change, the more they stay the same" applies to sexuality education. Those who have followed developments in sexuality education know that it was present in many ways throughout history. However, as an education concern it can be traced back about 125 years. As early as the 1880s groups such as the American Purity Alliance, the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Child Study Association sponsored programs on topics related to sexuality. As people became more interested in sexuality education in the 1960s, groups opposed to sexuality education came into being. Also in the 1960s, two important groups related to sexuality education were formed—SIECUS (The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States), and AASECT (The American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists). In the 1970s, we started teaching courses in human sexuality and in sexuality education. While there were pretty good resources on human sexuality, it was difficult to find a good sexuality education textbook. This motivated us to collaborate on a sexuality education text published in 1981—*Sexuality Education: Theory and Practice* (Bruess and Greenberg, 1981). Through the years there were revisions of that text, and the fourth edition was published in 2004 (Bruess and Greenberg, 2004). While doing the revisions, we wondered how things changed during the years we were revising our sexuality education text—almost 25 years. This article relates what we found.

**Objective and Subjective Knowledge and HIV Testing Among College Students**

**Su-I Hou**

Little research has been conducted on the knowledge domain specifically related to HIV testing among college students. Students (age 18-24) were recruited from a major university in the Southeastern United States to participate in a web-based survey during Spring 2003 (N=440). About 21% of the students reported previous voluntary HIV tests. Reliability of the overall knowledge test demonstrated good internal consistency ( $\alpha=0.71$ ). Students scored higher on items related to HIV/AIDS in general (percent correct=82.3%), and lower on items related to HIV testing (percent correct=70.8%). Subjective rating on HIV testing knowledge (mode=low) was also lower than that of HIV/AIDS in general (mode=medium). Although analyses of knowledge and prior testing revealed significant associations, when using both objective and subjective

knowledge in predicting prior HIV testing, only subjective HIV testing knowledge revealed a significant coefficient (OR=2.63). Results indicated both objective knowledge scores and subjective knowledge rating were low. Continued efforts on HIV education and prevention are needed among young college students. HIV prevention programs focusing on encouraging HIV testing should pay special attention to participants' subjective knowledge related to HIV testing. The study has implications on using web-based surveys to assess the effectiveness of Internet-delivered HIV prevention programs.

### **Breaking Up Is Hard To Do!**

#### **Warren McNab**

One of the most difficult things for young people to deal with during adolescence is ending a dating relationship. Often this creates a situation involving emotions that may result in hurt feelings, anger, and even violent acts. The United States Surgeon General's office substantiates that violence is a major public health problem. Violent acts create major physical and mental health problems in this country. Violence reaches all levels of society; however, young children, adolescents, and minorities seem to be more susceptible (McNab, 1992; Thorton, 2002). One out of every ten high school students was a victim of violence in the last 12 months. (Child Trends Databank, 2002) Adams (1992) indicates that 70% of students have gone steady with someone at least twice by their senior year and, when these relationships end, individuals often have feelings of personal failure and inadequacy. He describes the "Dumped Person" as the individual who feels the worst emotionally. This person has feelings of rejection, hurt, abandonment, anger, shame, self-pity, and devastation. The "Dumper" may also have feelings of guilt and blame. If these emotions are not dealt with in a positive way, acts of violence (suicide, and physical or mental abuse) to get back at an individual may result in mental and or emotional harm to one or both people ending the relationship (Adams, 1992). Byrne (1999) states that for young people to find a compatible partner, even for a short time, is not easy. She indicates that most of these relationships are transitory, and reciprocity (compatibility and mutual attraction) is more unlikely than likely; therefore, the failure of such relationships should not result in feelings of rejection or inadequacy. According to Byrne (1999), it is important to convey to young people in dating relationships that breaking up is a normative, predictable, transitional stage for many young people.

### **Exploring Your Environmental Risks: A Community Perspective**

#### **Nancy Parsons**

"I conceive that the land belongs to a vast family. Of this family, many are dead, few are living, and countless members are still unborn." Nigerian Chief Human ecology is a subject that has received little to no attention. Human ecology is simply how humans interact with the environment; that interaction may be good or bad for our environmental future (ReVelle & ReVelle, 1992). Our society is currently suffering from pollutants that are affecting our water, soil, and air (ReVelle & ReVelle, 1992). More education needs to take place at all levels of our education system to better prepare the youth of our society. Educating future generations to protect the environment will allow them to reduce the harmful pollutants that are killing our natural resources and their own health. As health educators our goal is to increase the healthy life

span of all Americans through education (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion [ODPHP], 2004). For the profession of health education to be really successful we must start educating the youth about the problems facing our health and environment. This teaching strategy educates students about problems facing their environment and their own health. Using technology and communication skills the students will research a location on the planet and describe the location's environmental concerns and possible health problems. Once the activity is completed, each student will present his or her findings using a variety of communication methods to educate the class about the environmental location.

### **Are Interventions for Informed, Efficacious Pre-Contemplators Unethical?**

**John Sciacca**

This paper is an examination of whether it is ethical for health educators to try to change the behavior of people who are informed about the risks of engaging in an unhealthy behavior, have the skills and confidence to change the behavior, but nevertheless choose not to change. Questions are raised about whether interventions for such precontemplators are manipulative and incompatible with the ethical principle of individual autonomy and whether health educators who attempt to change the behaviors of these precontemplators violate the *Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession*. The paper concludes with the argument that health educators violate the *Code of Ethics* if they knowingly subject informed, efficacious people who have decided not to change, to interventions designed to promote change.

### **A Review Committee as a Way to Teach Grant Writing Skills**

**Susan Wooley**

Introduction: Many health educators' jobs depend upon their ability to get grant funding -- for community outreach projects, for research at a university, for materials development, or for special projects. Obtaining grant funding requires several skill sets. When teaching any skill set, opportunities to practice and receive feedback help students acquire the skill. In the real world of grant seeking, people rarely have the opportunity to find out how reviewers make their decisions or receive sufficient feedback to help them refine their skills. This teaching technique exposes students to a variety of grant sources and Request for Proposals (RFPs) of varying complexities. It also provides students with a glimpse into the federal review process. The results of the technique described below are that several students have submitted their applications to funding sources and been awarded funding.