

EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS, PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, AND HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIOURS OF STUDENTS IN HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Steve Provost^a, Stephen Myers^b, Airdre Grant^c

Presenting author: Steve Provost (steve.provost@scu.edu.au)

^aSchool of Health and Human Sciences, Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450, Australia

^bSchool of Health and Human Sciences, Southern Cross University, Lismore NSW 2480, Australia

^cTeaching and Learning Centre, Southern Cross University, Lismore NSW 2480, Australia

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ABSTRACT

Although our graduate attributes often suggest that a university education will have some impact upon values and behaviours relevant to a student's chosen area of study, in most instances we have little information about our students' beliefs and characteristics either when they commence study or when they graduate. This discrepancy between our educational goals and knowledge of our students' behaviour is especially problematic in disciplines such as psychology and natural and complementary medicine where "lay" views prevalent in the student population are most likely to diverge from the values and attributes given priority by academic educators. We surveyed all students enrolled in courses taught within the School of Health and Human Sciences (Nursing, Psychology, Natural and Complementary Medicine, Sports and Exercise Science, and Occupational Therapy) during second semester, 2010. The survey instrument included items assessing epistemological beliefs, approaches to studying, personality characteristics, health-related behaviours, and importance of graduate attributes. The outcomes of this survey will be discussed in terms of their implications for the assessment of threshold concepts underpinning graduate attributes and the development of curriculum to support their development in our degree programs

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