



INTERSECTIONS

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IPEC Core Competencies in Action: Developing Emory's IPE-ACTS Program through Collaborative Interprofessional Teamwork

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TAKE HOME POINT – In this “How-to,” we describe the development of IPE-ACTS (Interprofessional Education – Achieving Collaborative Team Solutions), a new required interprofessional (IPE) training program for first-year Woodruff Health Sciences Center (WHSC) students at Emory University.

INTRODUCTION

IPE-ACTS is Emory's new applied IPE program that trains first-year students in the schools of medicine, nursing, and public health in the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) core competencies and challenges them to solve an Atlanta-based health problem through an interprofessional team-based competition. Emory's WHSC is rich with knowledgeable interprofessional educators who are helping us build this innovative interprofessional educational program for our students. IPE-ACTS enables learners to tackle real-world health problems in an interprofessional team and embody our office's mission of “providing better health together.”

SPARKING THE CONCEPT

With support from the Woodruff Health Sciences Center for the establishment of the WHSC Office of Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice (IPECP), there is momentum to move Emory to the forefront of interprofessional education. To generate interprofessional educational ideas for Emory's health professional students, the directors of the Office of IPECP brought together the deans of Emory's schools of medicine, nursing, and public health in February 2023. Since 2007, the Interprofessional Team Training Day program had provided WHSC students with IPE training at Emory. Building upon this impressive IPE foundation and using student evaluation data, we developed the concept for this applied interprofessional experience.

INNOVATING THROUGH COLLABORATIVE INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAMWORK

The Office moved swiftly from concept to detailed framework for IPE-ACTS for a planned launch in fall 2023. To guide program development, we developed and led a Leadership Team that included educators from the schools of medicine, nursing, and public health. Members from the medical school included representatives from three of the six medical school degree programs (MD, DPT, and MMSc-PA). Each Leadership Team member served as the lead of one of the working groups (Figure 1), and the Office of IPECP's Advisory Committee has provided insightful perspectives on the program's content and delivery as we have refined program goals, curricular objectives, and activities.



Figure 1: IPE-ACTS Leadership Team and Working Groups

Program development was methodical: early on, we presented IPE-ACTS to WHSC school administrators, curricular committees, and registrars and established as an official course for student enrollment. We then refined the IPEC curriculum, developed a logo and comprehensive communications plan, determined the 2023-2024 Health Challenges and Faculty Champions, and began the granular logistics work required of a complex IPE program serving over 1,300 students that includes multiple deliverables, evaluation, and scholarship. Through this collaborative process, we have maintained our innovative programmatic goals and are following a plan to ensure successful implementation.

IPE-ACTS IN ACTION

First-year WHSC health professional students enrolled in the Interprofessional Education and Public Health Leadership course (PUBH 501) in November 2023 and will participate in IPE-ACTS during spring semester 2024. PUBH 501 is a required, 0-credit course that includes didactic online IPEC modules and an applied team-based competition.

Emory faculty members and Emory Healthcare professionals serve as Faculty Champions and have developed the competition's 10 Health Challenges that address disparate issues affecting Atlanta, with an emphasis on conditions

that disproportionately impact the city's underserved and most vulnerable populations (Figure 2). Some challenges focus on community health while others involve clinical settings. The 2024 Health Challenges were chosen by the Faculty Champions working group to meet some of Atlanta's most pressing health issues. It is our hope that next year, faculty will apply to lead a 2025 Health Challenge.

Each Health Challenge was planned for 12-14 interprofessional teams of 10 students. During the spring semester, each IPE team will develop a solution to its health challenge that could be quickly feasible or a longer-term visionary solution.

2024 Health Challenges and Faculty Champions



Figure 2: IPE-ACTS Health Challenges and Faculty Champions

After enrollment in November, students had until December 1, 2023 to rank the top 3 Health Challenges on which they would like to work. With this information, we assigned students to interprofessional teams and they will be asked to complete their IPE pre-test and didactic modules prior to IPE-ACTS Day on January 26, 2024. The online modules provide instruction in

the IPEC competencies and the background knowledge needed for the interprofessional teams to work in groups grounded in mutual respect and effective communication while learning about different health professions.

On January 26, 2024, IPE-ACTS Day will bring the IPE teams together with their

Faculty Champion who will present a comprehensive overview of their Atlanta-based Health Challenge. This event will also provide an in-person review of the IPEC competencies and additional information regarding competition deliverables.

After meeting with their Faculty Champion, each student team will draft its team contract, which will guide the team's working style, and begin brainstorming its Health Challenge solution. Over the next two months, teams will meet independently at least three times to develop their solutions and deliverables using the IPEC competencies. The 132 student teams will participate in the competition's first round, submitting a 5-minute video of their Health Challenge solution. The top team from each of the 10 Health Challenges will advance to the 10-team final round that includes an in-person presentation and Q&A with the three WHSC deans who will serve as judges. See Figure 3 for program timeline.

2023 – 2024 IPE-ACTS Timeline

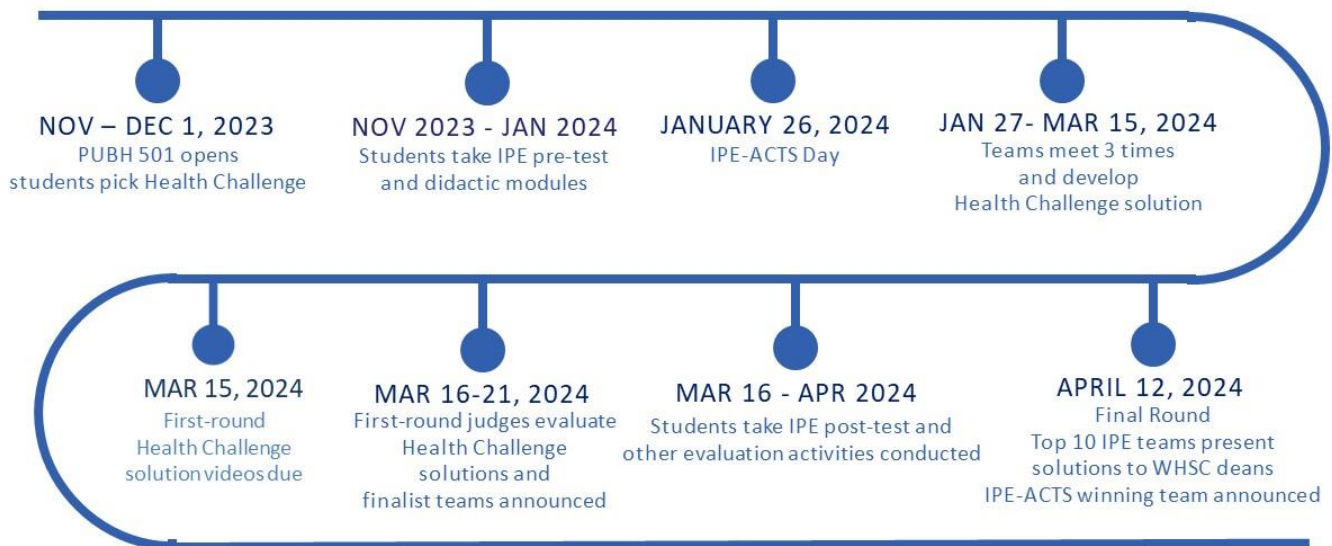


Figure 3: 2023-2024 IPE-ACTS Timeline

CONCLUSION

Developing and implementing this program is ambitious given its multiple components and applied style, the

substantial number of students, and the rapid 2023-2024 launch. However, we are confident that IPE-ACTS is an exciting and meaningful new way for students to learn

and practice IPEC competencies. Our students do not often get the chance to work and learn with students in other schools and programs;. IPE-ACTS provides that opportunity. We believe that by enabling students to work in interprofessional teams to develop thoughtful responses to positively change the outcomes associated with their

Health Challenges, IPE-ACTS not only trains Emory's health professional students to work together effectively but also demonstrates why it is important. IPE-ACTS moves beyond didactics to an application of these core competencies to effect change on real-world problems that prevent Atlantans from enjoying their healthiest lives.

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