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Evaluation of a Student-Centered Digital Education Project in Health Science Education

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Background & Purpose

Student-centered learning is essential and evidence shows higher levels of achievement when students are engaged with educational activities that include critical thinking and effective communication in addition to creativity. The millennial generation of students are comfortable with technology and this project introduces new platforms for presenting healthcare information. The aim of this course assessment was to evaluate a student-centered digital education project during a course about physical therapy (PT) management of chronic diseases.

Digital Education Project Learning Description & Grading Criteria

Instructions: The intended audience for the projects is an advanced reader with a background in healthcare, such as a physical therapist as part of the interprofessional medical team.

Student Learning Objectives

1. Apply content through a well thought-out, complete, concise and clear project on a selected chronic health condition as it relates physical therapy.
2. Critically analyze information, consider multiple points of view, and make connections to class material on chronic diseases related to physical therapy.

Table: Student Learning Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Group or Individual</th>
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<tbody>
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Self- and Peer-Assessment: Following completion of the project, each student who worked in a group provided a peer- and self-assessment of the following: punctuality to meetings, timely submission of group deadlines, shared in the workload with meaningful contributions, provided quality work, was respectful of group members and ideas, and timely submission of group project during a course about physical therapy (PT) management of chronic diseases.

Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thoroughness</th>
<th>Coherence/Logical</th>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>Presentation of Material</th>
<th>Spelling/Grammar</th>
<th>Meets Project Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides well-thought-out, complete and detailed information on a topic that can be covered in the format selected.</td>
<td>Ideas and topics are clear and presented concisely to formulate logical thoughts.</td>
<td>Clear evidence of critical thinking. Critically analyzes information, considers multiple points of view beyond class notes. Depth of content appropriate for graduate school-level work and advanced reader with background in healthcare.</td>
<td>Visually pleasing presentation of topic, organized, appropriate use of citations (AMA or APA format), including copyrighted material.</td>
<td>Including copyrighted material.</td>
<td>Topic and Project Format Selection Form, Digital Project, Self-Assessment, Peer-Assessment (for groups).</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Results

Data analyzed from three cohorts of DPT students from 2014-2016 (n=137) show most choose to work in groups (96%) and most selected the format of an infographic. Student perceptions show this digital education project was well-received. Faculty noted an excitement by students about their completed projects and eagerness to share with others. Analysis included existing data without identifiers (not human subject research) so no IRB review or approval was necessary.

Examples of Student Digital Education Projects

All projects were shared with the classmates at the end of the semester.

Conclusions

These results support the use of a student-centered educational project allowing students to make connections between course material related to physical therapy and chronic diseases with an individualized project plan to present information digitally.

References

Students Choices for Project

Topic (project due date)

Format (PechaKucha, Screencast, Infographic)

Group or Individual