

Country Roads to Care: A Journey to Rural Appalachian Pharmacy Service Learning

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PROPEL AIM 2 Goals

- Develop a Community Care for the Underserved specialization track within our PharmD curriculum
- Develop and implement immersive domestic service-learning trips in rural and urban underserved communities that align with the PharmD curriculum**
- Expansion of Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) infrastructure and partner sites to ensure opportunities for students to complete rotations in either underserved urban or rural settings

Rural Appalachian Pharmacy Service-Learning

Elective course was designed to prepare P2 and P3 students for an immersive learning experience in rural work settings that exposed them to rural Appalachian history, culture, and social determinants of health (SDOH) considerations

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate an understanding of Appalachian history, culture, and current events
- Recognize health disparities and the impact on healthcare access and outcomes in Appalachia
- Use problem-solving and critical thinking skills, along with an innovative mindset, to address challenges and promote positive change
- Exhibit attitudes and behaviors to build and maintain trust with traveling class cohort, other healthcare professionals, and community servants

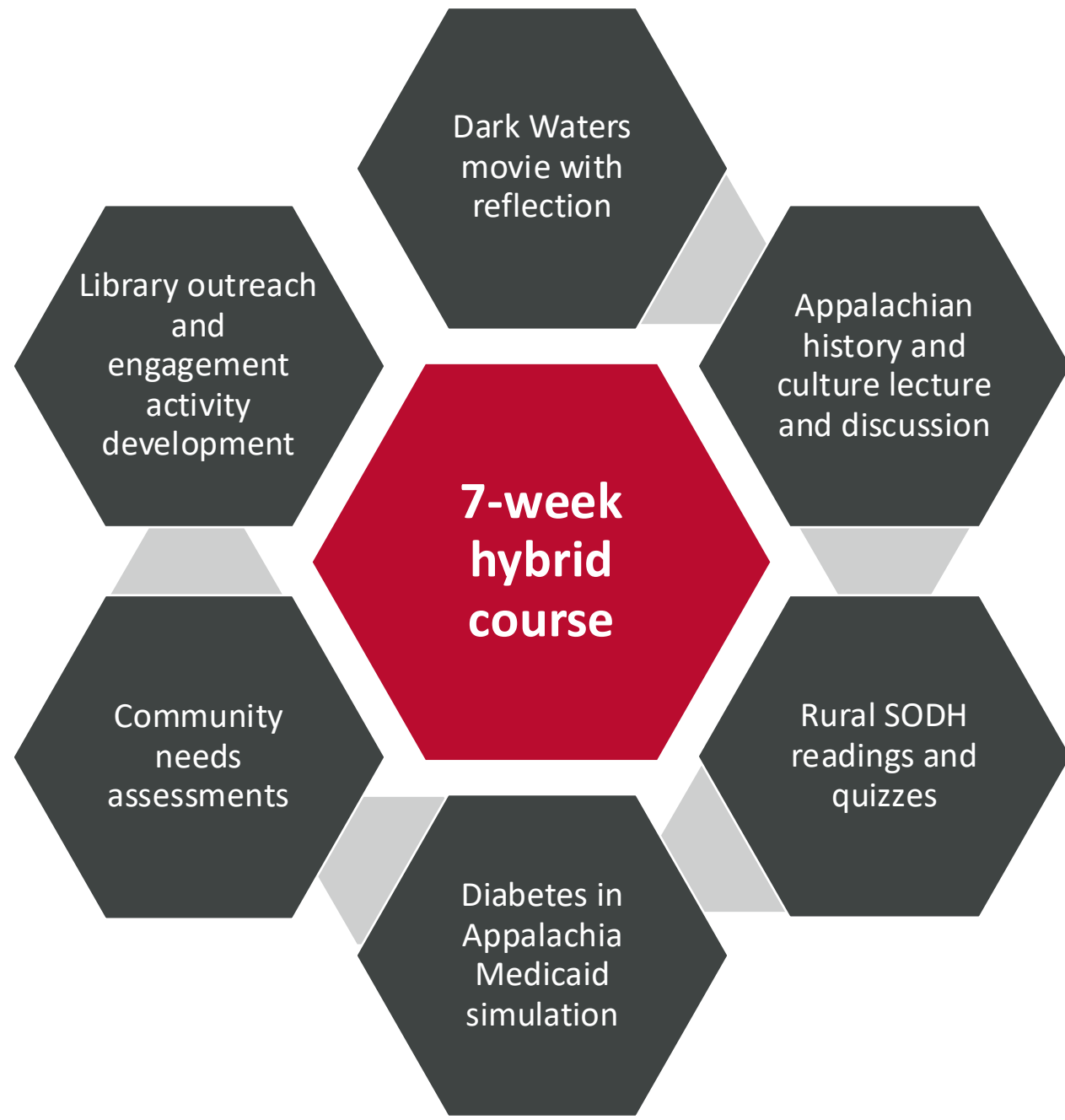
Student Trip Highlights and Overview



Follow the QR code to find out more about the trip itself and hear what the students had to say



Course Structure



Library outreach and Engagement



Students at Glouster Library offering harm reduction kits

Intentional Design and Reproducibility

Leveraging expertise and connections



Service-Learning Trip

Outreach and Engagement

Students designed tailored outreach education activities at each of the four Athens library branches. Activities were focused on health topics relevant to the community:

The Plains Branch	- Cold and flu over-the-counter recommendations - Tea making activity
The Athens Branch	- Vaccine consultations - Interactive Tic-Tac-Vax game
The Glouster Branch	- Safe medication use - Build a harm reduction and safety kit
The Nelsonville Branch	- Blood sugar screenings - Build winter preparedness kits

Pharmacy Experiences

- All students sorted medications and helped patients at Rising Suns Non-profit Pharmacy
- Shadowing opportunities included Shrivvers Pharmacy and Wellness, OhioHealth O'Bleness Hospital, OhioHealth O'Bleness Anticoagulation Clinic, and Appalachian Behavioral Health

Rising Suns Non-Profit Pharmacy



Students sorting medications donated by nursing homes to be re-packaged for distribution to patients at the pharmacy

Course Outcomes

Survey Results and Student Reflections

- Students valued learning about pharmacy in a rural setting and the hands-on experiences that helped them gain a better understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities
- Students most enjoyed designing outreach events and volunteering at the non-profit pharmacy
- Students identified the rural pharmacist as often having clinical, administrative and advocacy roles connecting patients to resources

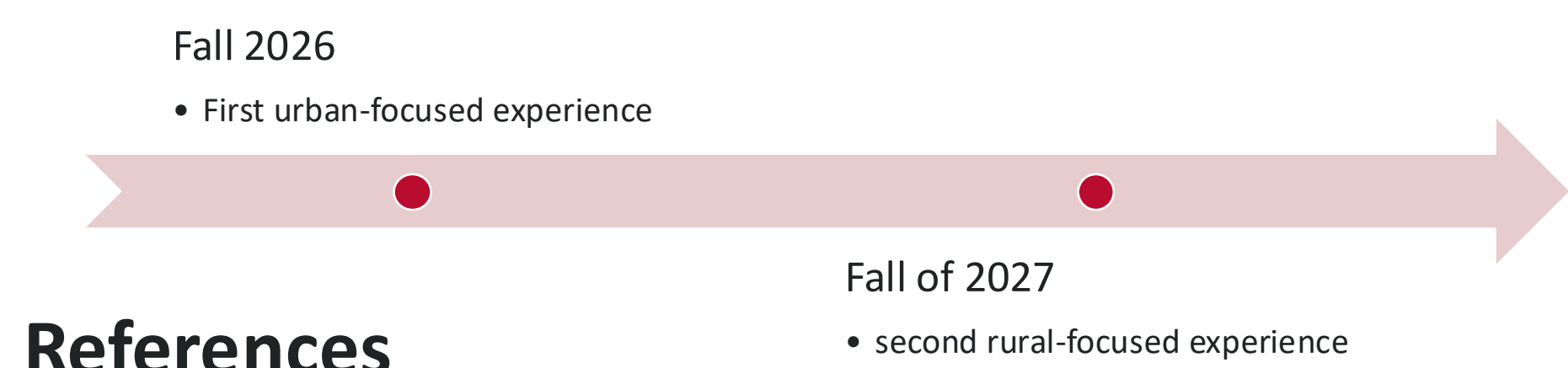
Survey Results

Knowledge	Mean Score	Confidence	Mean Score
Appalachian History	4.58	Researching Community Needs	4.33
Appalachian Culture	4.58	Identifying Community organizations	4.42
Barrier to healthcare in SEO	4.92	Designing a community service	4.50
Healthcare outcomes in SEO	4.83	Collaborating with local partners	4.75
Roles for Pharmacists in rural communities	4.83	Implementing a community service initiative	4.75

Results above are a selection from a 40-item course evaluation survey was created by faculty involved in the course provided to students one week after the trip through the online learning management system. Survey questions utilized a Likert scale of 1-5, one being strongly disagree and five being strongly agree.

Next Steps and Sustainability

- Goal of the grant funding is to improve pharmacy graduates' readiness to provide care in Ohio's rural and urban communities by developing training that familiarizes students with local culture and history, factors that contribute to gaps and deficiencies in health care access and strategies to address and improve outcomes
- Program costs and student engagement are being assessed to plan sustainability beyond grant funds



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