Impact of SOAP Note Teaching Styles on Student Perception and Knowledge

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KEY IMPLICATIONS

- There is no significant difference found in student perceptions and knowledge when two methods with varying interaction and feedback are utilized in teaching SOAP notes.
- Incorporating multiple teaching modalities may be beneficial to appeal to students with varied learning styles while achieving similar results.

INTRODUCTION

- Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standard 3.6 on Communication states that the pharmacy graduate should "effectively communicate verbally and nonverbally when interacting with individuals, groups, and organizations."[1]
- Additionally, as outlined in the Pharmacists' Patient Care Process by Joint Commission of Pharmacy Practitioners, pharmacists must collaborate, document and communicate with the patient's healthcare team in order to achieve optimal patient health and medication outcomes.[2]
- Therefore, efficient documentation and effective communication skills are an integral aspect of pharmacy education.
- Although different methods of documentation exist, SOAP notes are a common method utilized by pharmacists and other healthcare providers.[3] While there is a general standard for writing SOAP notes, there is not consensus on the ideal way to teach this method.
- Literature search reveals that incorporating various teaching techniques (written cases, patient simulations, etc.) and utilizing peer feedback may enhance student skills.[3,4]

OBJECTIVE

- To assess if incorporating more interactive teaching skills and peer-evaluation to teach SOAP notes improved student perceptions of preparedness to write SOAP notes and/or student knowledge
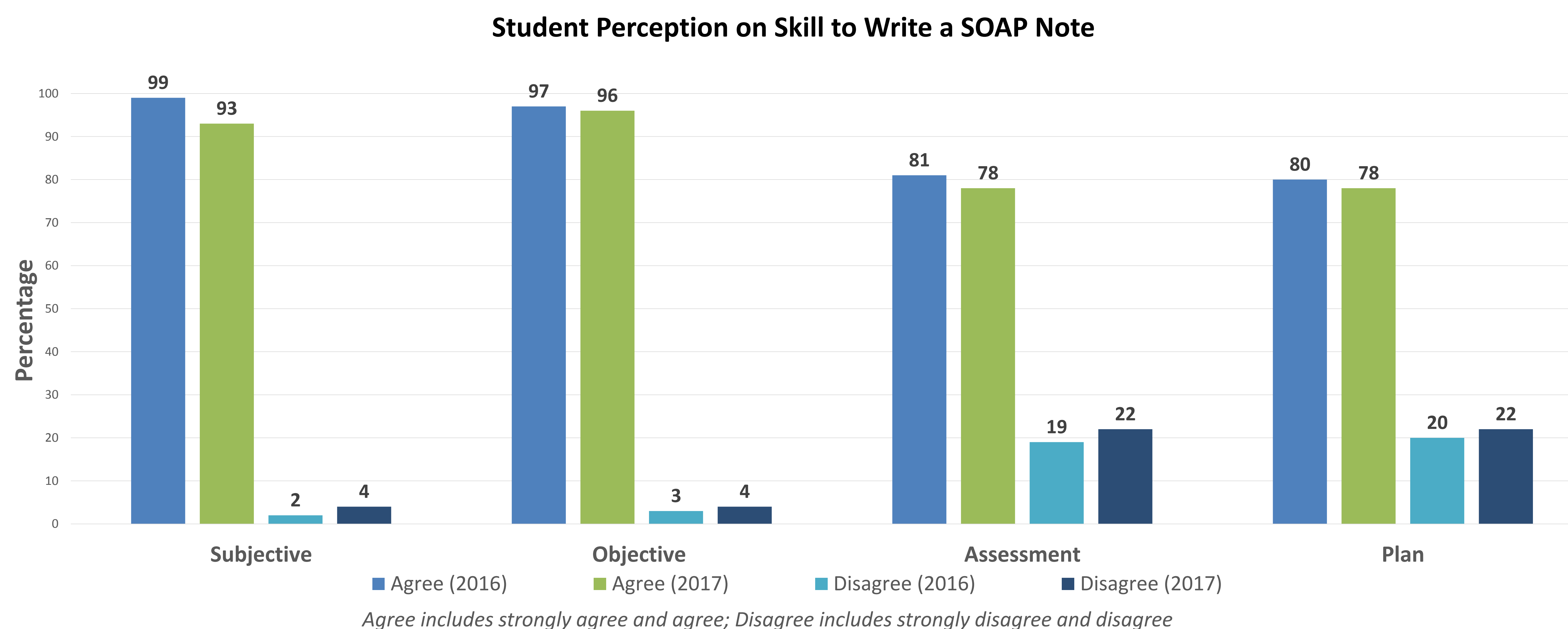
METHODS

- 2016: SOAP notes were taught through written case examples. Students self-assessed during guided, in-class review. Feedback was offered on a graded project.
- 2017: SOAP notes were taught using written case examples and a video case requiring students to gather patient information. Feedback was offered by guided, formative self and peer evaluation, and on a graded project.
- All feedback was based on the same rubric, including an objective score and specific written comments.
- At the end of each teaching section, a questionnaire gathered student demographics, perceptions of ability to write SOAP notes, and objective knowledge of SOAP notes for between group comparisons. Knowledge was also objectively compared based on final exam scores.
- Descriptive statistics were used to compare demographics. Mann Whitney U and two-sample t-test were used for perception and knowledge comparisons, respectively.
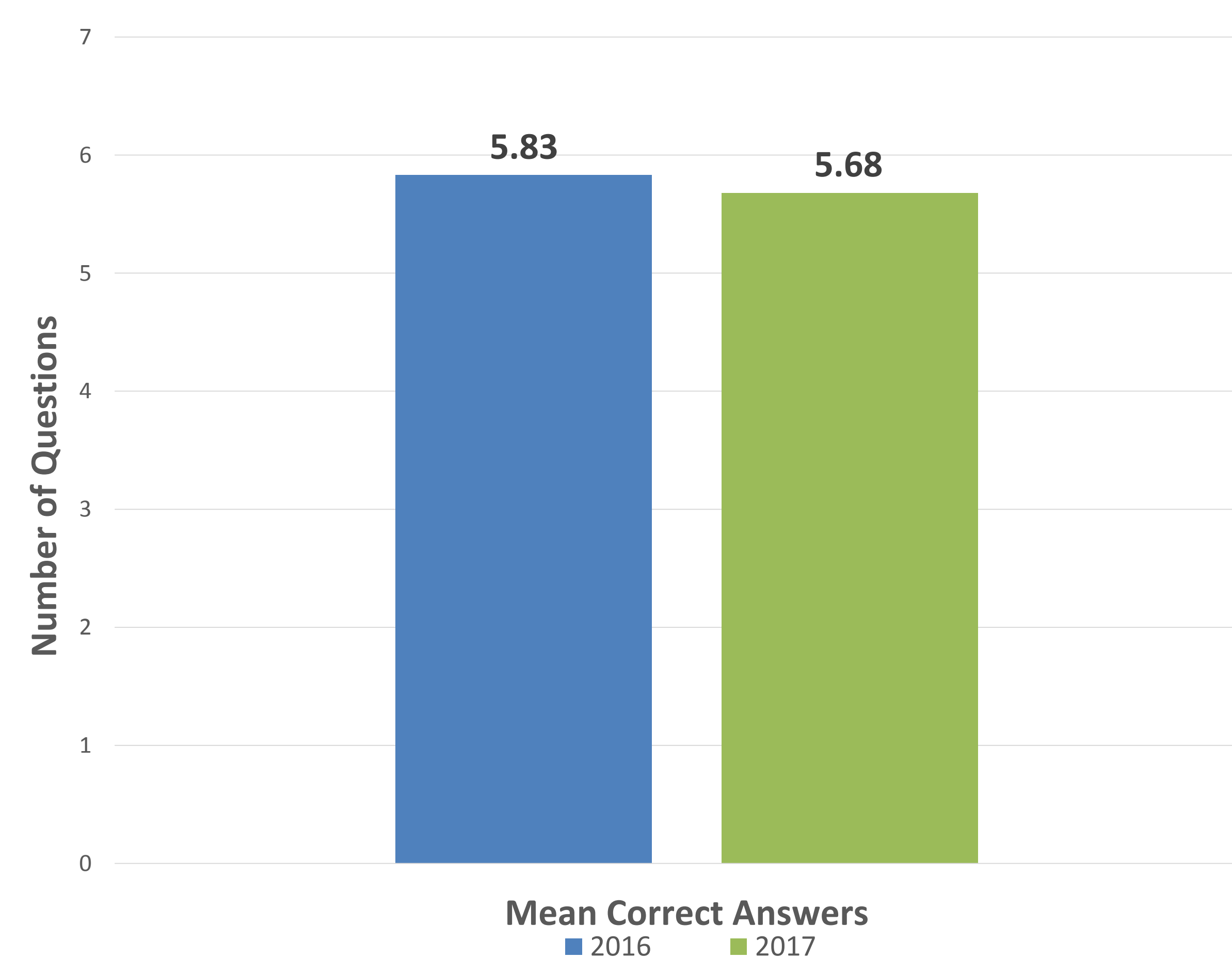
RESULTS

- A total of 189 students were given the opportunity to complete the survey
- 70 of the 91 students in the 2016 course completed the survey (76.9% response rate) and 82 of the 98 students in the 2017 course completed the survey (83.7% response rate)
- Baseline experience with SOAP notes was similar with > 70% in each year having no experience with them
- Student perception of overall ability to write a SOAP note did not differ significantly with either teaching method (p=0.488)
- A significant difference was found in overall student perceptions regarding skills to write the subjective (p=0.001) and objective (p=0.004) portions of the SOAP note. However, post-hoc analysis found no significant differences.
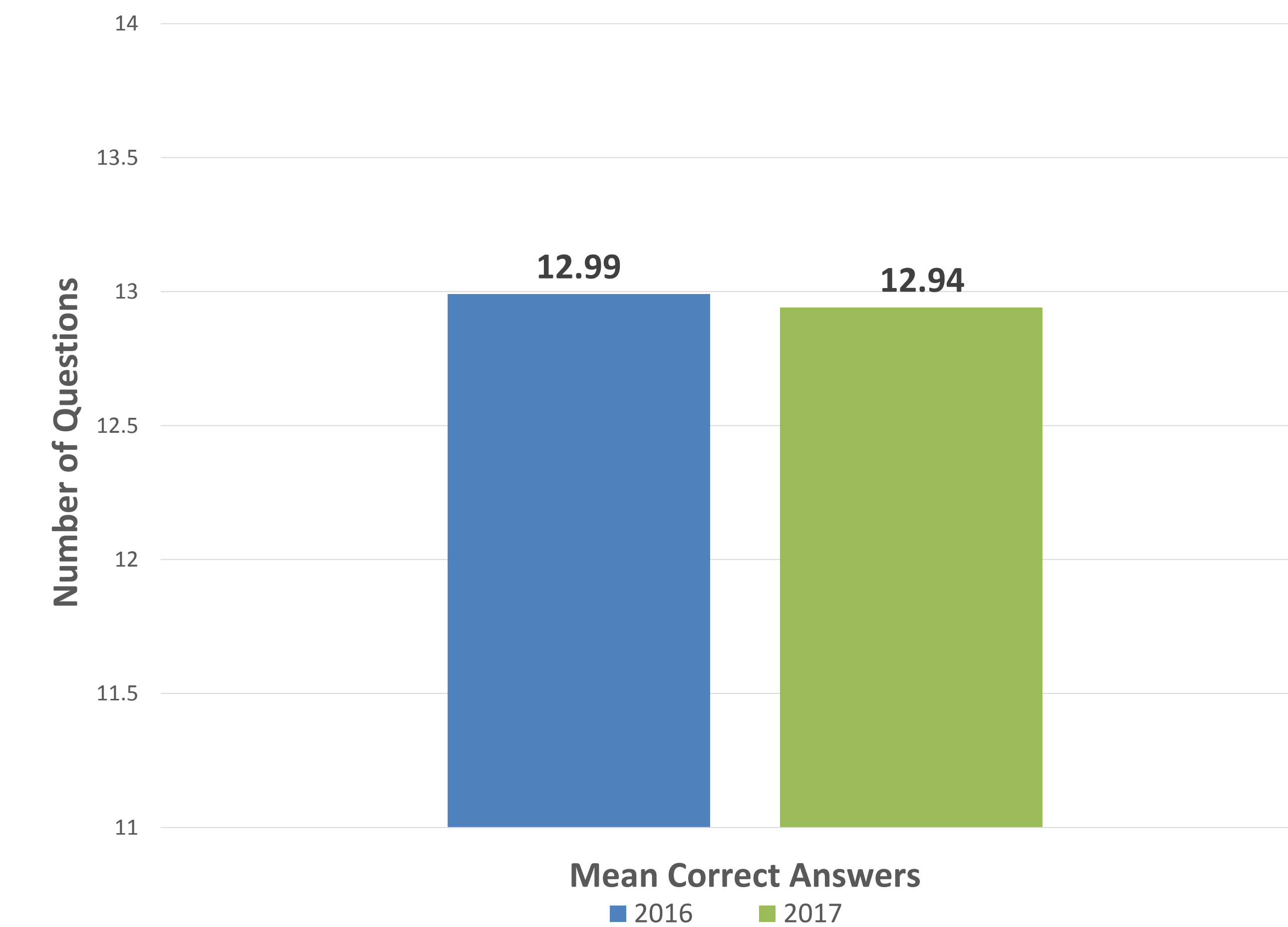
Student Perception

Student Perception on Skill to Write a SOAP Note

Agree includes strongly agree and agree; Disagree includes strongly disagree and disagree

Student Knowledge

Student Performance on SOAP Note Questionnaire

Student Performance on Final Exam Questions

REFERENCES

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