Abstract:

Objective: To assess self-awareness in the required curriculum and examine how existing assignments contribute to a meaningful, intentional thread.

Methods: An inventory of existing assignments within the required didactic and experiential curriculum and required co-curriculum was undertaken. Faculty were asked to describe assignments where students reflect upon an activity/ experience, participate in their creation, and describe applicability toward future practice/behaviors.

Student instructions, assignment status (required/bonus/remedial), number of times administered, grading status and mechanisms of student feedback were collected for each assignment. A gap analysis was performed using a curricular design framework developed by the ACPHS Assistant Dean of Curricular Assessment to assess the existing curricular thread.

Results: There are eleven distinct assignments (7 required, 2 bonus, 2 remedial), most occurring multiple times in the required curriculum. A typical ACPHS student will complete at least 40 reflections upon graduation (P1=12, P2=10, P3=5, P4=7). More are possible with bonus assignments, elective courses and remediation. Reflection topics include P1 orientation, white coat ceremony, habits of mind, exam performance, assignment performance, experiential learning, and co-curricular domains; reflections for remediation include professionalism and poor IPPs/PE performance. Rubrics are used to grade 11 of 11 assignment types (54.5%). While most reflection assignments are graded for completion, faculty feedback on student reflections is atypical. The gap analysis revealed several areas for further development including: (1) the need for better defined outcomes for self-awareness, (2) documentation of curricular organization and structure for critical reflection (3) prospective, consistent collection and analysis of student achievement data to inform further change/continuous improvement.

Implications: Self-awareness is well developed in the ACPHS required curriculum and students meet the outcome through completion of reflection assignments. The gap analysis revealed areas for further development and quality improvement of the self-awareness curriculum.

Background:

ACPE Standards 2016

Standard 4: Personal and Professional Development: Key Element 4.1 Self-awareness. The graduate is able to examine and reflect on personal knowledge, skills, abilities, beliefs, biases, motivations, and emotions that could enhance or limit personal and professional growth.

Reflection is a commonly employed method used to increase self-awareness. It is often used to support education of student pharmacists engaging in practice or service learning experiences, interprofessional collaborations, and co-curricular professional development activities. Critical reflection involves describing an activity/experience to gain understanding, denoting the importance of the activity, and reflecting on how the activity will personally effect a change in perspective or future behavior. This process of critical self-reflection has been noted to enhance professional competency as well as self-awareness, a key curricular element in contemporary pharmacy curricula. Learning how to critically reflect is not necessarily intuitive, and consequently for many learners, it takes consistent practice to develop. The habit of critical reflection is important to introduce early in the pharmacy didactic curriculum with the goal of early adoption leading to lifelong practice as a reflective practitioner. It is important for colleges of pharmacy to assure that they offer ample opportunity for students to engage in critical reflection throughout the didactic and experiential curriculum, and within the co-curriculum.

Bibliography:


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