Use of a post-exam survey to encourage pharmacy student metacognition in therapeutics courses

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DISCUSSION

When analyzing the cardiology exam, no significant difference in study methods were found between the A+B group and the C+F group. However, it was found that students scoring an A on the first cardiology study exam fewer hours than those scoring a C or F on the exam. Students in Group C+F were more likely to indicate they did not understand the question, had difficulty choosing between two answers, changed their answers, and experienced more test anxiety/inability to focus when compared to Group A+B. Significant differences were found across levels of preparedness between Group C+F and Group A+B with Group C+F rating they felt not at all/somewhat prepared more often than Group A+B.

Analysis of the nephrology exam did not show a statistically significant difference in number of hours studied between Groups A+B and Group C+F. There were some differences in study techniques employed with Group C+F being more likely to re-read the textbook, review in-class application exercises and review the peer-prepared study guide than Group A+B. Students in Group C+F again reported more difficulty choosing between two answers and test anxiety/inability to focus as causes of missed questions. There were no significant differences found across levels of preparedness on the nephrology exam.

Exam performance did improve across the two exams. Considering that lowering performance student reported test anxiety and difficulty choosing between answers, faculty may consider providing additional resources to help students in managing their anxiety.

CONCLUSION

- No significant differences were seen in most study methods used between students receiving a grade of A+B versus those receiving a C+F.
- More poorly performing students reported re-reading the textbook, reviewing in-class activities and the study guide on the second exam wrapper.
- Differences in preparation were revealed; those receiving C+F grades reporting feeling less prepared than those earning A+B grades on the first exam wrapper but not the second.
- While exam performance did improve across the two exams, significant numbers of students continued to report test anxiety and difficulty in choosing between answers on both exams, indicating a need for education of both students and faculty on future exams.

REFERENCES


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