INTRODUCTION

At Wayne State University College of Pharmacy, a renewed PharmD curriculum was implemented during Fall 2016, to educate and prepare Pharmacy students for the evolving demands of the profession (EACPHS, 2018).

The curriculum implementation plan is as follows:
- 2016-17: First professional year (P1)
- 2017-18: P1 + Second professional year (P2) : Current
- 2018-19: P1 + P2 + Third professional year (P3) : Next Academic Year
- 2019-20: P1 + P2 + P3 + Fourth professional year (P4)

This study presents findings from focus groups on student's learning experiences with the renewed curriculum, during the P1: Fall, Winter and Spring and P2 Fall Semester implementation of the renewed PharmD curriculum.

OBJECTIVES

There were two main objectives driving this evaluation study:
1. Research-based, data-driven quality improvement initiative for student success and teaching excellence - Goals 1 & 2 for Wayne State University’s Strategic Plan; and Critical Issue 1: Curricular Advancement (Strategic Plan for PharmD program at Wayne State University)
2. To gather learning experience feedback data for monitoring and improving renewed curriculum and its implementation.

The process cycle involves longitudinal evaluation of the renewed curriculum across P1 – P4 years, by combining findings from student focus groups and a collaborative course review mechanism; This promotes teaching excellence and improve program performance.

DESIGN AND METHODS

- Focus group methodology has wide acceptance for curriculum evaluation in health education settings.
- Non-directive moderator-style exploratory focus group (Stalmeijer, McNaughton & Van Mook, 2014) was used to assess student perspectives on the learning experiences with the renewed curriculum across every semester of P1 and P2 years.
- Purposeful sampling was done to recruit participants (P1Fall N=24; P1 W N= 22; P1 SS N= 24; P2Fall N=24). Total # in class= 100
- Pre-designed question prompts were used to match each semester specific curricular aspects.
- Focus groups were facilitated by non-faculty academic personnel to eliminate bias.
- Sessions were audio recorded; additional feedback from participants and facilitators notes were collected.
- All qualitative data were transcribed, coded, analyzed and triangulated using Miles &Huberman’s data analysis model (1994): Data Reduction, Data Display and Conclusion Drawing/Verification.

SOME ACTIONS TAKEN

- Opportunity: Identified in Focus Groups (Few Examples) | Action taken
  - Faculty Support
  - Faculty Advisor Meeting
  - Student Focus Groups
  - Opportunities
  - Timely Feedback
  - Pharmacy Calculations
  - Group Sizes in Flipped Class
  - Strengths
  - Collaborative study spaces
  - Faculty Advising
  - Autonomic Pharmacology
  - Opportunities
  - TBL and PPS Learning curve
  - Cultural Sensitivity
  - Workload
  - Review session in PPS

Like any qualitative study, the results and findings from this study cannot be generalized and are pertinent to the program of study. Using the rich, qualitative student focus group feedback data as a component for evaluating longitudinal curricular effectiveness offers a model for a program improvement that can be easily implemented with minimal resources and could benefit many pharmacy programs.

REFERENCES


Correspondence to minakshi.lahiri@wayne.edu