INTRODUCTION

- Student government is an important institution serving to represent student interests to School faculty and administration, enact and enforce policies pertaining to both academic and co-curricular activities, and facilitate interactions among the student body.
- Available literature addresses the general importance of student governance and basic overviews of structure, but best practices for efficient governing, especially in a PharmD program, are lacking.1,2
- In August 2016, the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy Student Senate structure and general assembly meeting underwent a transformation to address perceived limitations, such as unidirectional information exchange, minimal discussion, and unengaged student leaders.
- A formal council was created in which one leader from each student organization served as a Council member at Senate meetings now held in a roundtable format.

METHODS

- A 12-item Qualtrics survey was created to evaluate student perceptions of the new Senate Council to assess the effectiveness of achieving the Council’s objectives in the following areas:
  1. Interorganizational relations
  2. Communication
  3. Collaboration
  4. Efficiencies
- Council members (i.e. PY1, PY2, and PY3 students) who had participated in >1 Senate Council meeting during the 2016-2017 academic year were invited to complete the survey.
- Descriptive statistics were used to summarize agreement frequencies among survey items.

KEY FINDINGS

- PURPOSE: To evaluate student perceptions of a transformed Senate Council (i.e., pharmacy student government) structure and meeting format.
  - Changes included defined seats on the Council, appointed delegates serving as Council members, newly defined roles and responsibilities of each delegate, and restructured monthly meetings held in roundtable format.
  - The majority of Council member students agreed or strongly agreed that the new Senate Council format facilitated inter-organizational relations, communication, and collaboration.
  - Ninety-three percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the new Senate Council format improved efficiencies.
  - Ninety-six percent preferred the new Senate Council meeting format over the previous Student Senate meeting format.

RESULTS

- 28 of the 29 Council members completed the survey.
  - Greater than 85% of Council members agreed or strongly agreed that the new Senate Council format facilitated inter-organizational relations, communication, and collaboration.
  - 93% agreed or strongly agreed that the new format improved efficiencies.
  - 93% were satisfied or highly satisfied with the new meeting format.
  - 96% preferred the new Senate Council meeting format over the former Senate General Body Meeting format.

Survey Item n (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I prefer the new Senate Council Meeting format rather than the former Senate General Body Meeting</td>
<td>27 (96.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Senate Council Meeting format has facilitated inter-organizational conversations that otherwise would not have occurred in the former Senate General Body Meeting format</td>
<td>26 (92.9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Senate Council Meeting format has improved collaboration among student organizations</td>
<td>24 (85.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Senate Council Meeting format has improved inter-organizational relations</td>
<td>24 (85.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Senate Council Meeting format facilitates the sharing of best practices in organizational planning and development</td>
<td>27 (96.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Senate Council Meeting structure has provided an improved venue to voice organization opinions/concerns compared to the former Senate General Body Meeting structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Senate Council Meeting format has improved the dissemination of information (i.e. upcoming events, potential opportunities, important announcements from administration)</td>
<td>23 (82.1)</td>
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<td>Taking into consideration question 1-8, the Senate Council meeting met its goal to improve efficiency when compared to the Senate General Body Meeting</td>
<td>26 (92.7)</td>
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IMPLICATIONS

- Student government is an important institution within academia necessitating student involvement and engagement for both its functioning and success.
- Results of this study suggest a council structure and meeting format may effectively support inter-organization relations, communication, collaboration, and efficiencies within student body government.
- These findings help address deficits in the current literature, providing insight into opportunities for enhancing student government in a professional pharmacy program.

REFERENCES