Preparing Students to be Collaboration-Ready: Putting Team Theory and Skills in Action in an Early Interprofessional Course

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Problem Statement

Background/Rationale: Teamwork is the basis of interprofessional(IP) education and collaborative practice and is included in the Interprofessional Competencies. The goal of Interprofessional Education (IPE) is to graduate collaboration-ready practitioners. How does one place 300+ students into IP teams in the first IP course?

Background

Interprofessional Education (IPE) is essential to prepare students for effective delivery of health care in the future. Interprofessional Practice (IPP) is best practice to improve quality, safety, and patient outcomes. The IPE Program at Saint Louis University, (SLU) a large, Midwestern university, is unique among many program across the country that state they have IPE in their curriculum, but have limited participation, or have stand-alone IPE days, IPE seminars, or IPE community-based activities.

Method

Students are taught team theory and basic communication and collaboration skills needed for interprofessional collaboration in practice in an early IPE course. Students are required to meet as an interprofessional (IP) team weekly outside of class as they work on a team project and discuss team concepts learned in class. Students then individually reflect on their team meetings and the application of the information presented in class to team functioning. Students also are asked to work in teams during class, applying course material to cases, rehearsing techniques learned, and discussing material presented.
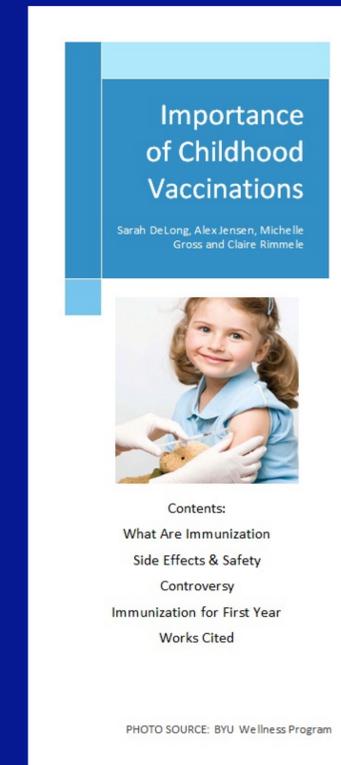
Development of an Introductory IPE Course

Getting Started

Registration
- Two classes each semester of approximately 150 students
- Students from 12 different health professions with equal percent distribution in each class

Education Facilities
- Large lecture hall
- Allows for team discussion and work during class

Setting class time
- Must be by agreement of all Academic Programs
- Late in the day and early in the morning to accommodate student athletic schedules, work schedules and other activities

Plan use of technology: SLU Global Blackboard
- All assignments submitted online
- Graduate student mentor/graders access assignments and reflections online for grading

Faculty meet weekly outside of class during the semester

Course Content

Professional Roles and Responsibilities

Teamwork skills
- Communication
- Conflict resolution
- Collaboration
- Feedback Skills

Pedagogical Strategies

Experiential learning
- In-class discussions and projects
- Final project: team prepares and writes a brochure with a public health topic
  - Weekly collaborative student team meetings
    - Plan brochure
    - Discuss team concepts and skills
    - Apply course concepts

Reflection
- Individual reflection on course concepts, team stage and team skills used during weekly meetings

Observational Learning
- Faculty demonstration of professional roles & responsibilities
  - Grand Rounds (two per semester)
  - During examples in each lecture session
  - Faculty role team processes in class
  - Video

Individual application of professional roles and responsibilities
- Case study discussions and writing activity

Playground Safety

Contents:
Playground Injuries
How to find a safe playground
What can you do as a parent or teacher
Why Recess
Sources

Photo Reference:
http://212access.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2009-04-21_Hampton_Forest_Apartment_Homes_playground.jpeg

Importance of Childhood Vaccinations

Sarah DeLong, Alex Jensen, Michelle Gross and Claire Rimmele

Contents:
What Are Immunization
Side Effects & Safety
Controversy
Immunization for First Year
Works Cited

PHOTO SOURCE: BYU Wellness Program

Reflection

"At this meeting we held each other accountable for none of us being quite finished writing up our individual sections. We promised each other to all have our sections finished by the next meeting. … I believe we are just about easing into the norming stage since we seem to have a plan of action and are now sticking to it from here on out. I believe we are all in an intermediate phase for collaboration because we are only giving minor feedback on each other's work as of now. We like what we see thus far, but are more concerned about substance than format for the time being. "

Results

Through student evaluations of self and team members and the final product of team projects, course coordinators are convinced that the students learn basic teamwork skills well and apply them in their IP team meetings.

Conclusions

Asking students to practice teamwork skills in an IP team while learning didactic theories and skills for teamwork appears to be an effective method of preparing students to apply teamwork skills.

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