Distance Learning that Works for All Professions: A Model of Student and faculty Engagement

Collaborating Across Borders VI 2017

Abstract

Crafting effective interprofessional learning experiences can be very challenging. Often, creating opportunities in which students can learn “with, from, and about” each other may be difficult to orchestrate. The online environment offers new ways to educate students about core interprofessional competencies and to introduce them to team members and roles they may not encounter regularly in their education. It is essential that online materials represent different health professions accurately and provide practical information that will enhance teamwork. Delivery needs to align with technologies commonly used by students. The purpose of this presentation is to describe the development of distance modules that have successfully navigated these interprofessional challenges by fully engaging students multiple professions in their design.

In our experience, many of the available IP distance materials had been designed for a single profession by that profession and contained inaccuracies and stereotypes about other professions. Others were prepared for outdated learning platforms. We launched a project with funding from the Josiah Macy Jr Foundation and the Arizona Graduate Nursing Education grant to design distance modules that could be used across all health disciplines and made available on a variety of current technologies including mobile devices.

An interprofessional Student Advisory Committee (SAC) was created as a pivotal component of the design plan for new distance modules on core IP competencies and IP primary care practice. Names for participants for the SAC were solicited from faculty members involved in IP initiatives and grants. Each nominated student was invited to participate. Nineteen students from five professions served as members of the SAC for the development of eight modules. An online orientation program for students was developed that included an overview of the module review process, introduction to technical aspects of the module interface, and norms for developing constructive improvement recommendations. Students were asked to provide feedback on aspects of learning outcomes, disciplinary content neutrality, technical functionality/usability, and mechanical errors. An online evaluation instrument was utilized to collect student review feedback for each module. Feedback was thematically analyzed for application relevant to optimization of disciplinary content neutrality and technical functionality.

To date, 100% of the SAC members have submitted complete reviews of their assigned modules within the requested timelines. Their comments are thoughtful, provocative and comprehensive. Many submit 3-4 pages of comments and suggestions to make the content and format of the modules more useful or meaningful to members of their profession and other professions.
Engaging students in the design of IP distance learning materials can serve as an outstanding IP learning experience and result in meaningful, technologically appropriate tools. Teamwork and collaboration is at the core of the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation Primary Care Curriculum Implementation and Evaluation grant and its initiatives. Collaborating with interprofessional students resulted in contributions of high quality and high volume feedback, which positively impacted the design of interprofessional distance education modules; and provided an opportunity for the students and project team to learn with, about, and from each other.

Author Information

Jinnette Senecal (Arizona State University); Karen J. Saewert (Arizona State University); Teri Kennedy (Arizona State University, School of Social Work, College of Public Service & Community Solutions); Nina Karamehmedovic (Arizona State University); Yvonne Price (Arizona State University); Gerri Lamb (Arizona State University).

Presenter

Dr. Teri Kennedy (Arizona State University, School of Social Work, College of Public Service & Community Solutions)