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Using the “Flipped Classroom” and interactive case studies to teach nurse practitioner students clinical management of adult health problems

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Statement of the Problem: Engagement of students and development of critical-thinking skills are always a challenge for advanced practice nursing faculty. Emphasis in the classroom on active learning and application of complex concepts, rather than memorization of content, is an approach endorsed in the educational literature. How can technology be leveraged to allow use of valuable classroom time for active learning strategies without sacrificing delivery of essential didactic content?

Strategy/Intervention: An interprofessional team that included clinical faculty, instructional designers and information technologists collaborated to solve the dilemma of adding active learning strategies while providing methods for conveyance of important didactic knowledge. The “Flipped Classroom” was introduced into selected graduate nurse practitioner courses in a large, urban college of nursing. Faculty served as content experts and developed real-world scenarios and case studies to facilitate meaningful student interactions during classroom time. Weekly quizzes, with unlimited attempts to score 100%, were employed to reinforce learning. The expertise of instructional designers and information technologists was utilized to leverage technology to deliver crucial content. Lectures were chunked into 15-25 minute segments and videos were presented in formats that students could download to various platforms such as smart phones, tablets and iPads. Students met in the classroom every other week for active learning sessions.

Findings: The majority of student feedback was positive regarding the active learning case studies and the weekly quizzes. A small number of students objected to the time commitment of listening to lecture and completing weekly quizzes prior to classroom time. Many students reported being able to process didactic content at their own pace and the ability to replay and review complex concepts as a positive result of the “Flipped Classroom”.

Biography

Sherry L Donaworth is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Nursing at the University of Cincinnati, College of Nursing. She is board certified as an Adult-Acute Care Nurse Practitioner and a Family Nurse Practitioner. Her extensive clinical practice experience has included critical care, cardiology, geriatrics as well as primary care. As a Lead Faculty for advanced pharmacology and clinical management of adult health problems, she has utilized the “Flipped Classroom” and advanced technology in teaching, for both onsite and distance learners. She served as a Content Expert on an ANE HRSA Grant for interactive case studies for distance learning students.

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