"Shared Experiences are Part of Building Community": Community and Connection Within and Across Distributed Learning Sites

Author(s): Elly Park, Kanika Jackson, Daisy Linden, Katie Lee Bunting
Presenter: Katie Lee Bunting
Time: 2:15 – 3:15

Across Canada, health profession education programs (HPEP) are expanding to meet public demand for practitioners. One approach to expansion is the development of distributed learning sites, where information and communication technologies enable student learning across geographically distanced locations. While positive student connection and community can improve student learning and success, there is a lack of research that explores how sense of community and connection are fostered, particularly within and across distributed HPEP learning sites. Through this descriptive qualitative study we explored: What are Master of Occupational Therapy student perspectives on the meaning, creation, and maintenance of community and connection in and across distributed HPEP learning sites? How do sense of community and connection affect student learning? Participants were Master of Occupational Therapy students from a large urban university, learning at a distributed site in Canada. Applying a constructivist paradigm and critical inquiry lens, this study used individual interviews to gather experiences from 3/16 students of community, connection, and learning. Reflexive thematic analysis and Found Poetry were used to analyze interview transcripts. Reflexive journaling, an audit trail, iterative discussions, and member-checking supported study credibility. Findings were organized into three themes: (1) connection between and across, (2) technology [dis]connects, and (3) community, connection and learning. The third theme included subthemes: intentional faculty engagement and intentional curricular design. Suggestions are included to better foster community and connection for health profession students in distributed learning environments.

Student and Faculty Perceptions and Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Written Portfolio Reflections

Author(s): Lindsay Richardson, Vincent Arockiasamy, Niyati Kasana, Heather Buckley
Presenter: Lindsay Richardson
Time: 2:15 – 3:15

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly used in our personal and professional lives, including within medical education. “AI refers to artificial intelligence systems that can generate new content—such as texts, images, audio, and video—in response to prompts by a user, after being trained on an earlier set of data” (UBC CTLT, 2023).

Portfolio is one of the four assessment modalities used in the MDUP where medical students attend scheduled group sessions and submit written reflections. Students in the program are discouraged from using AI. Despite this guidance, there were concerns that students may use AI to generate their written submissions. The purpose of this study was to assess perceptions, use and/or intention to use AI in their written reflections.

Data was collected through surveys with Year 1 to 4 students and faculty. Perspectives on AI use were summarized using descriptive statistics.

Findings revealed that approximately 50% of faculty do not think students should be using AI for their written reflections. However, there was a disconnect between faculty perceptions of how students would use AI versus how students used, or ‘planned’ to use, AI. Most students who used AI, or were open to using it in the future, indicated they would primarily use it to edit the format and content of their written submissions, rather than using AI to generate their original reflections.

Piloting Hybrid Learning: Enhancing Student Flexibility in Health Professions Education

Work-in-Progress Presentation

Author(s): Jocelyn Micallef, Marion Pearson, Robert Pammett, Arkin Au, Jasmin Kaur Gill, Kerry Wilbur, Katherine Seto, Ginette Vallée, Leonie Harper
Presenter: Jocelyn Micallef
Time: 2:15 – 3:15

Both students and instructors can benefit from flexible teaching and learning strategies. Hybrid delivery and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are two evidence-based approaches to embedding flexibility in ways that meet students' learning needs, primarily through increasing modes of access and engagement. In UBC's Entry-to-Practice PharmD curriculum, hybrid delivery refers to the integration of online asynchronous learning activities (ALAs) to complement in-person learning experiences. Through pedagogically appropriate opportunities and flexible modalities, we are striving to enhance learner access and autonomy while meeting program outcomes.

Three ALAs were recently piloted and six more are in development. Areas identified for ALAs include health-care communications, anatomy and physiology, introductions for individual disease states, and calculations. Evaluation findings indicate that students engaged with the ALAs as intended, felt the ALAs complemented the associated in-person sessions, and were satisfied with the autonomy and varied approaches the ALAs afforded for different learning needs and preferences. This presentation will outline principles for selecting appropriate content suitable for the design of high quality, learner-centred ALAs, outcomes from piloting these activities, and considerations for broader application in health-care education settings.

In this session, participants will:

1. Become aware of a UDL-informed hybrid learning approach to support student autonomy and flexibility
2. Identify processes, resourcing needs, and strategies used in the development of ALAs that may be relevant to additional teaching contexts
3. Discuss findings from the pilot project sites and implications for broader implementation including future ALA development, and the reimagination of faculty and student time in and out of the classroom

RTVS Simulation Residency Site Project (RSRSP)

Work-in-Progress Presentation

Author(s): Lisa Wissink, Dr. Scot Mountain, Dr. Jeanne Macleod, Nicole Moon, Hareem Minai
Presenter: Lisa Wissink
Time: 2:15 – 3:15

Rural and remote communities in British Columbia (BC) face challenges recruiting physicians due to concerns regarding professional isolation and limited support.

In 2023, Real-Time Virtual Support (RTVS) on-demand peer-to-peer consultation piloted the RTVS Simulation Residency Site Project (RSRSP), which evaluated the impact of simulation-based education on residents' confidence, comfort, and interest in rural practice by integrating RTVS simulations into their training.

Between March 2023 and March 2024, RTVS Simulation sessions were conducted at eleven UBC Family Practice residency sites, including seven standalone rural sites. Residents participated in virtual clinical simulations involving RTVS calls, with data collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews.

Survey responses and interview feedback indicated a significant increase in residents' confidence and comfort with rural practice. The experiential learning component was particularly effective, as residents who practiced using RTVS reported better understanding of its value and practical application. Many expressed reduced apprehension about potential isolation and a higher interest in pursuing rural practice post-residency.

The RSRSP successfully enhanced family practice residents' interest in rural practice by addressing key concerns. Experiencing real-time support from RTVS providers during challenging clinical cases alleviated fears related to professional isolation and uncertainty in rural settings, and introducing RTVS with hands-on simulation contributed to greater appreciation of available support.

This work highlights the importance of experiential learning in medical education, showing that such approaches can change attitudes and possibly impact career decisions by reducing perceived barriers. Promoting rural practice through innovative educational strategies is crucial for addressing healthcare disparities in underserved rural areas.