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Information Survival Skills: Librarians in Medical Education. Poster presentation at: WGEA 2009 Annual Conf.; 2009 April 18; Santa Fe, NM.

Sarah K. Morley

Ingrid Hendrix

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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

The crisis in scholarly communication and the increased emphasis on evidence-based practice highlight the need for information literate health care professionals.

To address this challenge, UNM library faculty created a medical school elective to prepare students to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information within the context of increasing journal costs and decreasing access to scholarly works.

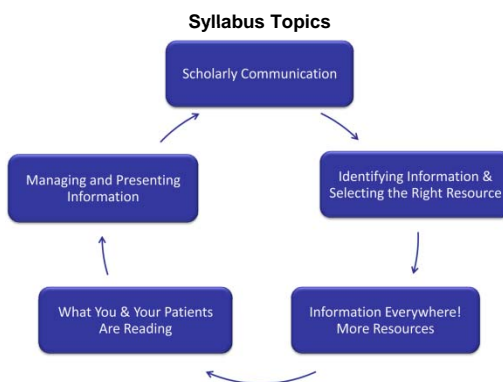
SETTING

The elective, "Information Survival Skills", taught three semesters, had a total enrollment of thirty 2nd and 3rd year medical students.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Train students to:

- Understand the changing nature of scholarly communication and online publishing
- Identify resources and strategies for searching current best evidence
- Apply methods for presenting and managing information



METHODS

Group discussions, hands-on computer work, peer learning, student presentations and minimal lecture.

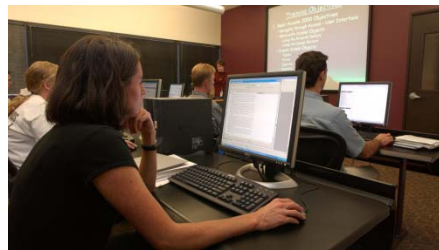


Photo by Barry Staver

EVALUATION & FINDINGS

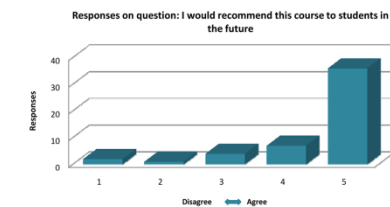
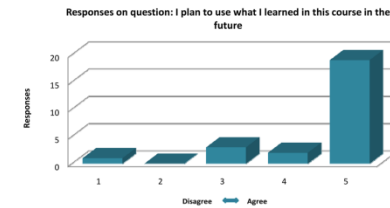
Pre- and post- self-assessments were administered and students were judged on final in-class presentations. Course evaluations collected by the University of New Mexico School of Medicine revealed overall student satisfaction.

Most useful aspects of the elective:

- RefWorks (citation management software)
- PubMed Features (clinical queries, clipboard, etc)
- Patient education resources
- Interactive/hands-on activities (database & web searching, use of RefWorks)

Lessons Learned

- Students that benefited the most from this elective were active in either a clinical or research rotation.
- Final student presentations provided peer learning, practice with presentation skills, and further engaged the students.
- This elective provided feasibility testing for increased library curricular involvement.



CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE WORK

Students have improved understanding of issues related to the evaluation, use, and communication of medical information when educational interventions are provided by health sciences librarians.

Introducing concepts related to information literacy helped students understand the publishing process and their role in it as future authors and the impact that copyright and open access will have on their scholarly production.

Investigators will conduct a follow-up study of previous class participants to determine continued use of skills acquired during this elective.

Contacts:

Sarah Morley: smorley@salud.unm.edu

Ingrid Hendrix: ihendrix@salud.unm.edu