Development and implementation of peer-led weekly review sessions and the assessment of their impact on student learning

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Abstract
Peer tutoring services for a pathophysiology and therapeutics course have historically been made available to pharmacy students, but they were greatly underutilized. The role of peer tutors had been exclusively to hold office hours during which students could ask questions or review material. Peer tutoring services were updated and expanded based on the needs of the students. The objectives of this project were to develop, implement, and assess the impact of peer-led organized weekly review sessions in a pathophysiology and therapeutics course.

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Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Comments
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Objective
Peer tutoring services for a pathophysiology and therapeutics course have historically been made available to pharmacy students, but they were greatly underutilized. The role of peer tutors had been exclusively to hold office hours during which students could ask questions or review material. Peer tutoring services were updated and expanded based on the needs of the students. The objectives of this project were to develop, implement, and assess the impact of peer-led organized weekly review sessions in a pathophysiology and therapeutics course.

Methods
At the start of the semester, a survey was administered to second-year pharmacy students. All surveys were developed using Qualtrics® survey software and questions were designed to determine the current level of satisfaction with available tutoring services as well as what types of other resources they would utilize. Based on the results of the initial survey, weekly review sessions pertaining to current course material were developed. The peer tutors approached faculty members each week to determine key concepts to address. A PowerPoint presentation was then developed that included imbedded cases, reviews of key concepts, and cumulative questions leading up to each exam. These presentations were given at a once weekly meeting throughout the semester and lasted approximately 45 minutes. After one semester of implementing this new approach, the students were once again surveyed to assess their satisfaction with the weekly review sessions. Yes or no questions determined if students used the new tutoring services. The students that utilized these resources were then asked additional questions. The aims of these questions was to assess the students’ satisfaction and perceived usefulness of the services.

Results
A total of 63 out of 82 students responded to the pre-survey. Out of these, 62% of respondents reported that holding short weekly review sessions of the course material would encourage them to utilize the tutoring services more often. Throughout the semester, a total of 11 review sessions were held, and on average, 70% of the class was in attendance.

At the end of the semester, a post-survey was administered. A total of 71 out of 82 students completed this survey. Of the completed surveys, 91% at attended at least one of the weekly review sessions. Of these students, 50% reported that they had attended every weekly review session that was offered. All students (100%) that attended at least one review session throughout the semester reported that they were satisfied with the review sessions. Furthermore, 95% and 93% of students felt that the review sessions increased their confidence going into an exam and that the weekly review session improved their performance on an exam, respectively. At the end of the semester, 99% of students that attended the exam (~60 min) felt that attending the weekly review sessions increased their confidence going into the exam. All students (100%) that attended at least one review session throughout the semester reported that they felt that the weekly review sessions accurately reflected the material that was on the exams.

Conclusions
The use of weekly review sessions was successful. Substantial increases in utilization of the tutoring services were seen and were deemed beneficial to learning according to student opinion. It was recommended that this method of providing tutoring services be continued. Future studies may look at how these services directly correlate to the grades obtained on formal examinations.

Disclosures
Authors of this presentation have personal or financial interest in the subject matter of this presentation.

References