

FOSTERING STUDENT FACULTY INTERACTION THROUGH A PROSEMINAR SERIES

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Purpose: An informal voluntary series called the ProSeminar series was developed at the PA Program with the intent of increasing opportunities for students to interact and learn more informally with faculty and to learn about PA experiences in various clinical practice environments. This series is offered to students throughout the didactic year. During each session, a member of the faculty shares his/her practice experiences in a particular area of medicine and engages in dialogue with the students over the lunch hour.

Methods: Students who participated in any of the ProSeminar sessions were asked to complete a survey via Qualtrics at the end of the 2015-2016 didactic year. Students rated the ProSeminar(s) with a six-item survey using a five-point Likert scale. Three items were open ended where participants commented on their experiences and ways to improve the program.

Results/Outcomes/Improvements: Attendance at the ProSeminars (8 sessions) ranged from 11% to 42% of the class; there were nineteen respondents to the survey. All (100%) respondents indicated agree or strongly agree when asked if the ProSeminars allowed him/her to get to know program faculty better and if s/he would recommend the series to peers. When asked which aspect(s) of the ProSeminar series was most valuable, several students indicated appreciating hearing from faculty about their experiences in the field in an informal way. Students' recommendations for improving the series included avoiding scheduling sessions before an exam and allowing more time for questions and answers.

Significance/Implications/Relevance: Overall, students who participated in the ProSeminar sessions found them to be valuable as they all who completed the survey reported they would recommend them to their peers. One identified area of value was getting to know faculty members on a personal level outside of the classroom which was one of the original objectives of the ProSeminar series. Students attended sessions even in practice areas they reported not being interested in, perhaps to interact in a smaller and less formal setting with faculty and/or to expand their knowledge of other practice environments.

References

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