



Design, Development and Implementation of a Successful Pathology Course for Students from Diverse Programs

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Abstract:

Learning the basic science aspects of disease processes without focusing on their relevance in the real world can be difficult, uninspiring, and de-motivating for students, irrespective of the quality of face-to-face teaching. These problems were particularly noticeable in those students enrolled in a Stage 3 Pathology course (PATH3207-Musculoskeletal Diseases) from diverse programs including Medical Science, Science, Advanced Science, Biomedical Engineering and Exercise Physiology. A sound knowledge of the fundamental concepts of disease processes is key for these students' future careers in biomedical research, biomedical and tissue engineering, biotechnology and allied health. In that context, PATH3207 was designed with the intention of providing practical experiences that motivate students and enhance learning. The course is unique in that it incorporates a series of highly relevant lectures by invited experts. These are reinforced by weekly team-based learning and integrated practical classes that utilise highly innovative on-line teaching resources. The course is further enhanced by assessments that engender learning. These include: (i) strategically timed online formative assessments that provide students with timely feedback and (ii) evidence-based symposia. The latter are designed to encourage collaborative work, communication and peer review, which are key capabilities for future clinicians and researchers. This innovative approach made PATH3207 one of the top-rated courses in the University for the last 12 years.