P1 Student Outcomes and Perceptions of a Blended Graduate Level Nutrition Course

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Objective: To evaluate student outcomes and perceptions of the use of a blended format in a graduate level nutrition course.

Target Audience: Master's degree students enrolled in a graduate level nutrition course at a Midwestern university (n = 16).

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Blended learning is commonly described as any combination of online and face-to-face teaching formats within one course. This format can provide flexibility while also promoting oral communication skills important to the dietetics profession. Blended courses may become more relevant to graduate level nutrition programs due to the future change in qualifications to become an entry-level RD.

Description: The nutrition course utilized a blended format. Each week included an online lecture and face-to-face meeting for discussion activities and student presentations regarding material from the online lecture. Final grades included 4 exams and 4 research article presentations per student.

Evaluation: Final grades for students completing the course: 10 A, 3 A-, 1 B+, 1 B, 1 B-. Upon conclusion of the course, students were invited to complete a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the blended format. Nine of the 11 students who completed the questionnaire reported they would enroll in another blended course. Eighty two percent reported the same or higher level of learning compared to a traditional face-to-face course and 70% reported a higher level of learning compared to an online only course. Students liked the flexibility in viewing lectures, but disliked the lack of immediate feedback and amount of student presentations.

Conclusions and Implications: Results indicate this format can be a successful teaching strategy that allows flexibility for students.

Funding: None.

P2 Teaching the Health At Every Size® Curriculum to Dietetics Students: Do Anti-Fat Attitudes Change?

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to determine if teaching about the Health At Every Size (HAES) paradigm, using the recently developed HAES curriculum could decrease anti-fat attitudes among dietetics students.

Target Audience: The aim of this research was to contribute to the literature on possible interventions for

preparing dietetics students to work with people of all shapes and sizes without bias.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Evidence suggests that anti-fat attitudes are pervasive among dietetics students and professionals. According to the theory of cognitive dissonance, teaching the HAES paradigm could shift thinking away from anti-fat attitudes.

Description: A pretest/posttest study design was used to compare changes within a non-random experimental group (n = 31) and between groups using a non-random control (n = 33). Surveys were used to measure three constructs related to anti-fat attitudes: dislike, fear of fat, and willpower, as well as four constructs about HAES: knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and self-efficacy. The experimental group received the HAES curriculum as part of their dietetics coursework and the control received their dietetics coursework without the curriculum.

Evaluation: Results showed that after the curriculum, anti-fat attitudes were significantly decreased in the experimental group, compared to the control (p = .005). Though not significantly, positive attitudes about HAES decreased after the intervention, while positive beliefs and self-efficacy improved. Knowledge about HAES improved significantly (p < .001), compared to the control group.

Conclusions and Implications: These findings provide support for using the HAES curriculum as a way to influence dietetics students' anti-fat attitudes, HAES beliefs and self-efficacy related to preparing them for ethical practice.

Funding: None.

P3 Service Learning: Plate It Up! Kentucky Proud Recipe Development Project

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Objective: The objective of this research was to use student feedback to provide practical recommendations for sustaining service learning (SL) in an upper-level nutrition course.

Target Audience: Over the past 6 years, 400 undergraduate dietetics and human nutrition students have engaged in the Plate It Up! Kentucky Proud (PIUKP) SL activity as a component of a required Experimental Foods course.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: SL is a form of experiential learning that emphasizes relating a community service activity to course learning outcomes through a mutually-beneficial activity. In higher education, SL promotes student engagement, improves critical thinking and communication skills, and augments academic curriculum.

Description: Students use nutrition and food preparation knowledge to develop healthy recipes using locally grown

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fruits and vegetables. Following four-weeks of testing, students present their recipe to a taste panel of community volunteers who provide anonymous online feedback. Select recipes are further evaluated in the community by Family and Consumer Science Extension professionals. To date, 61 recipes have been fully developed as professional printed recipe cards with two million cards distributed throughout Kentucky.

Evaluation: To assess student attitudes towards the SL project, students were invited to complete an anonymous survey at the end of the Spring 2014 and Fall 2014 semesters. On a 7-point scale (7=exceptionally interested), student interest in the PIUKP SL project increased significantly during the course of the semester (beginning: 4.1 ± 1.7 end: 5.2 ± 1.4).

Conclusions and Implications: Student feedback supports the value of real-life applications through SL activities in enhancing student knowledge and interest in nutrition interventions to promote community health and wellness.

Funding: USDA, Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

P4 SNAP Challenge Assignment: Preparing Students for Working With Low-Income Populations

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Objective: To provide dietetics students with experiential opportunities to better understand the reality of challenges facing limited resource populations and to subsequently develop appropriate nutrition programming based on the Social Ecological Model. In alignment with the average weekly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issuance, students completed the "SNAP Challenge" by attempting to follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans for one full week on a budget of only \$32.

Target Audience: Senior-level dietetics students.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: This assignment was designed as a transformative learning opportunity encouraging students to experience food shopping, meal planning, and preparation from the perspective of economically-disadvantaged individuals.

Description: Students were enrolled in Community Nutrition. The learning objectives of the course illustrate the overarching goal to apply nutrition and physical activity principles to current nutrition and physical activity programs, while investigating the political and legislative processes affecting the practice of dietetics.

Evaluation: Students submitted a food cost log, food group and calorie reports and nutrient reports during the SNAP Challenge located at the MyPlate SuperTracker. Students also wrote reflective responses to prompts on their ability to complete the assignment and designing an intervention or program using the Social Ecological Model as a framework to serve SNAP-eligible individuals based on their experiences.

Conclusions and Implications: The SNAP Challenge was successful in helping students elucidate potential

barriers to healthy eating for low-income populations, develop strategies to overcome these barriers and encouraging students to set priorities for improving dietary quality in their target population.

Funding: None.

P5 Extension Educators Widen Reach Through Community-Focused Undergraduate Online Teaching

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Objective: This new online course, taught by extension nutrition educators, aims to increase undergraduate students' knowledge of community interventions that address obesity and related chronic diseases.

Target Audience: Juniors/Seniors enrolled at the State University.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: Historically, the educational domain of Extension Nutrition Educators has been community, not campus, settings, where they utilize practical experience in fostering behavior change to decrease the risk of chronic disease. A new opportunity provided a forum for experienced Extension Nutrition Educators to bring their technical knowledge and teaching/interpersonal skills in the area of obesity and chronic disease prevention to undergraduate students for the first time. Often, universities and their surrounding communities co-exist but remain divided. Teaching online undergraduate courses has allowed Extension faculty to connect students to the larger community, helping to narrow that divide.

Description: An online Junior/Senior colloquium course was created by Extension Educators with nutrition and public health expertise. The course focuses on understanding the causes, assessment, and treatment of obesity and related chronic diseases, as well as an opportunity to explore first hand community programs which target obesity prevention and management. The course is part of a new Extension-sponsored minor in Community Health Outreach which includes a practicum that pairs students with county-based Extension Nutrition Educators for real-world experience in nutrition education and health promotion.

Evaluation: After 3 semesters, and a total of 75 enrolled students, university course evaluations have indicated favorable reviews.

Conclusions and Implications: Extension Nutrition Educators can broaden their reach and engage and benefit new audiences through application of their knowledge and skills in undergraduate online teaching.

Funding: None.

P6 Blogs: Promoting Education Through Entertainment

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