The Impact of a Culinary Medicine Course on the Nutrition Care Attitudes of Pre-Health Profession Students

**Background**
- Few healthcare professionals outside of registered dietitian nutritionists are adequately prepared to provide evidence-based nutrition education.
- Cooking skill-based learning may increase knowledge and improve nutrition attitudes more than traditional knowledge-based approaches.
- Current educational strategies may not prepare future healthcare professionals to become empathetic and innovative problem-solvers who have the skills to provide evidence-based and practical nutrition advice.

**Objective**
- To investigate how a culinary medicine course for pre-health profession college students impacts nutrition care attitudes.

**Methods**
- 25 pre-health profession undergraduate students enrolled in an experiential culinary medicine course
- Pre-post course surveys to assess:
  - Nutrition care attitudes
  - Sociodemographic characteristics
- Analysis:
  - Descriptive statistics
  - Paired t-tests
  - Wilcoxon signed-rank tests
  - ANOVA with post-hoc analysis

**Results**
- Hispanic students had more negative attitudes regarding:
  - Nutrition counseling \( (p=0.001) \) (Figure 1)
  - Including nutrition in routine patient care \( (p=0.013) \)
- Hispanic students had more positive attitudes regarding:
  - The importance of taste in improving dietary patterns \( (p=0.002) \) (Figure 1)
- Aspiring doctors, dentists, and physician assistants had more negative attitudes about nutrition counseling than future dietitians \( (p=0.008) \) and nurses \( (p=0.049) \) (Figure 2).
- No significant changes were seen in attitude scores.

**Conclusion**
- The differences based on ethnicity and career aspirations warrant further investigation.
- Strategies to cultivate positive attitudes regarding the role of nutrition across health disciplines should be identified to better develop competency.