A Student-Led Arts in Medicine Elective for MS1 and MS2 Students
Enhancing Preclinical Education through Integration of the Arts
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Rationale for Elective

Creative artistic expression has positive effects on many aspects of human life. It has been shown to promote better problem solving capabilities, an increased capacity to learn new concepts, and more resound emotional coping mechanisms when confronting life’s stresses.

The relationship between artistic engagement and patients’ health has also been well documented. Multiple studies strongly suggest that artistic engagement has a positive effect on health. For this reason, many health care professionals have begun implementing creative exercises as a form of health-care into their practice.

This course was designed to help medical students learn how the arts can help them develop both critical thinking and empathy to better understand their patients’ illness experiences, the medical team-patient relationships, physician self-care, and various other aspects of healthcare.

Elective Outcomes

- Student Satisfaction with Elective was High
  - See graphs below for impact of the elective on student educational experience, stress levels and involvement in self-care activities.

- Award Worthy Final Projects
  - Integrative Medicine Symposium Art Competition:
    - My Oath: 2nd Place Overall Finish
    - Squamish View: Honorable Mention
    - The Jeep Life: Honorable Mention

- Spurred Student Innovation
  - A novel medical education company was founded by medical students, in part as a result of their participation in this elective.
  - (The company, VAXED, creates virtual reality patient encounters to enhance preclinical medical education)

Objectives & Course Format

1. To learn about the historic relationship between Art and Medicine
2. To gain an appreciation for how art can be integrated into medical practice.
3. To develop participant’s artistic acumen and learn to use art as a coping mechanism for the stresses of life as a medical student and physician.
4. Ultimately, students created a work of art to present in a show at the end of the course.

Impact of Elective on Overall Educational Experience

- Student Stress Levels
  - Significantly Detracted
  - Detracted
  - No Impact
  - Enhanced
  - Significantly Enhanced

Educational Experience

- % of Medical Student Respondents

“Historical perspective with elective was High”

“Student satisfaction was high”

“I love this elective! It was a fun way to meet other students and learn about how we can incorporate art into practice.”

TTUHSC 1st Year Medical Student

“TTUHSC 2nd Year Medical Student”

“TTUHSC 2nd Year Medical Student”

“TTUHSC 2nd Year Medical Student”

“The Art in Medicine Elective helped in expanding our understanding of medicine outside of the scientific realm. The elective really showed how art can be a useful thing in therapy of both patients and physicians.”

TTUHSC 1st Year Medical Student