

Promoting Learner Engagement with Team-Based Learning: Implications to EPAs

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Abstract

- Osteopathic medical schools are called to use the adapted Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) as published by AACOM.¹ This necessitates a shift in thinking about assessment and a change of pedagogy.
- In the midst of undergoing a major curriculum transformation, the Heritage College has focused on teaching models that promote learner engagement.
- Team-Based Learning (TBL) provides a forum for the type of learner engagement required toward mastery of EPAs.

Introduction

- Learner engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion learners demonstrate.
- It is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired.²
- Medical students will be motivated when challenged to learn what is needed for excellent patient care.



The Heritage College is exploring the possibility of applying the concept of Team-Based Learning (TBL). TBL is designed to provide students with both conceptual and procedural knowledge and is well suited to be key in developing EPAs.³

“EPAs are units of professional practice, defined as tasks or responsibilities trainees are entrusted to perform unsupervised once they have attained sufficient specific competence. EPAs are independently executable, observable, and measurable in their process and outcome, and, therefore, suitable for entrustment decisions.”⁴

Design Steps for TBL⁵

1. Situational Factors
2. Learning Objectives
3. Application of Activities
4. Readiness Assurance Activities
5. Preparation/Learning Materials
6. Colleague/Peer Review
7. Piloting

Methods

1. Identifying a critical need in the new curriculum that addresses EPAs.
2. Researching TBL.
3. Inviting TBL expert to conduct introductory workshop.
4. Participating of faculty team in a national TBL workshop.
5. Investigating feasibility of TBL with needs assessment of faculty and learners.
6. Developing goals, objectives, assessment, and evaluation of specific blocks and courses that will apply TBL.
7. Monitoring implementation.
8. Evaluating teaching model.
9. Reporting and sharing best practices.

Results and Discussion

While it is too early to share results, the Heritage College is excited about the potential of TBL. As with any change to a medical school curriculum, there are risks and benefits. We would like to minimize the risks, maximize the benefits, while identifying and considering the many factors that will be impacted: students, personnel (faculty, curriculum and assessment office staff), time (students, faculty, staff), facilities (space, equipment), funding/budget (direct financial and hidden cost), and administrative mechanisms (structure, communication, operations).

So far:

- Five “early adaptors” using and demonstrating TBL
- Six “early adaptors” recently attended the Team-Based Learning Collaborative (TBLC) annual meeting participating in TBL 101 Certificate Program.⁶
- 22 faculty and staff participated in a 3-hour faculty development workshop facilitated by national TBLC leader
- Curriculum Transition Teams are setting standards for the new curriculum (beginning Fall of 2018).



References

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