Small Group and Problem-Based Learning Facilitator Training

Introduction

Lekidelu Taddesse-Heath, MD
Chair, Curriculum Committee
Training Session Objectives

By the end of the session the participants will be able to:

- Describe the purpose of problem and case-based small group teaching format
- List the ideal characteristics of each of the components of problem and case-based small group teaching format (case, facilitator, student)
- Develop a case to incorporate into the small group session based on principles of problem-based learning

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Training Session Objectives

- Demonstrate the skills necessary to facilitate case-based small group sessions
- Describe how to provide a supportive environment
- Demonstrate how to guide students through discussions using case questions
- Demonstrate how to elicit group discussion from students
- Demonstrate how to provide student feedback and evaluation

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Purpose of Case/Problem-Based Learning

- A structured learning experience
- Simulates a real world experience
- Life-long learning skills
  - Engages students to independently identify information
  - gather, organize, validate, and interpret data
- Critical learning skills
  - analyze and synthesize information to solve medical problems
- Learn collaborative team work and communication skills
- The collective thinking is beneficial to all

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Ideal characteristics

- Cases/problems
- Facilitator
- Students
Ideal characteristics

Cases/problems
- Learning objectives clear and measurable
- Case content matched to the learning objective
- Effective questions inserted throughout the case that simulate discussion
- Appropriate content and context
- Authenticity of the case/problem
- Organization of the case clear and logical
- Length of case appropriate for allotted time
- High quality images
- Information accurate and up to date
- Answers provided to facilitator
- Quiz at the end of the case for assessment

Adapted from Dennis Baker, PhD Florida State University

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Ideal characteristics

Facilitator
- Interested, enthusiastic
- Committed and willing to facilitate (attended training)
- Familiar with case (preparation!)
- Meets with other facilitators to discuss before and after sessions
- Begin session on time, end on time
Ideal characteristics

Facilitator

- Provides a supportive collaborative environment
- Engages students with open-ended, follow-up questions to stimulate discussions
- Encourages group discussions (beware of silent ones)
- Does not provide answers, (don’t lecture) leads to the answer by asking questions
- Affirm students efforts and discussions, don’t reject an answer, don’t criticize
- Know and call the students by name
- It is OK to say I don’t know to a question

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Ideal characteristics

- Students
- Interested, enthusiastic
- Committed and willing to fully participate (attendance mandatory)
- Come on time
- Research the case and work through the questions (preparation!)
- Actively discuss, teach to and learn from the group
- Listen effectively
- Identify gap in knowledge and remediate
- Respect the student and facilitator
- Maintain professional behavior

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Student Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback and Evaluation
- Student to faculty ratio permits
- Longitudinal experience (multiple contact)

Small Group
- Soft skills, professionalism, communication skills, team building, commitment to learning

Feedback
- Immediate
- Remediate

Evaluation
- Summative
- Comprehensive

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Obstacles to success

Lack of:
- Commitment
- Clear goals
- Organization
- Adequate time
- Training
- Preparation
Resources

- Desirable Components/Characteristics of Cases for Small Group Learning. Dennis Baker, PhD Florida State University
  - [http://med.fsu.edu/education/FacultyDevelopment/PDF/Desirable%20Criteria%20for%20Cases.pdf](http://med.fsu.edu/education/FacultyDevelopment/PDF/Desirable%20Criteria%20for%20Cases.pdf)

- CETLA
  - LC01 and LC02 workshops

- [http://www.cetla.howard.edu/teaching_strategies/pbl/index.html](http://www.cetla.howard.edu/teaching_strategies/pbl/index.html) and Case webpages

- AAMC MedEdPORTAL
  - [www.aamc.org/mededportal](http://www.aamc.org/mededportal)