DESIGNING AND ASSESSING SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

Carolyn Dufault, Ph.D., Office of Education
Washington University School of Medicine
Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to...

- Design effective and engaging small group teaching sessions.
- Describe the advantages and drawbacks of common small group teaching methods.
- Identify opportunities for incorporating assessments into small group teaching and learning.
Today’s topics...

- Methods of teaching in small groups
- Structuring effective and interactive small group sessions
- Assessing learning in small groups
- Small group FAQs
Who uses small groups and how?

1. How do you use small groups in your teaching?

2. What would you like to be doing with small group teaching that you are not doing now?
Small Groups in WUMS I and II

- WUMS I
  - Patient Session
  - Team Learning
  - Small Groups
  - Lab
  - Lecture

- WUMS II
  - Patient Session
  - Team Learning
  - Small Groups
  - Lab
  - Lecture
Small Group Teaching Methods

- Discussions
  - Case-based
  - Topic-based

- Clinical Skills session

- PBL

- TBL

- Lecture*
  - *As introduction to small group session
  - *As an intended discussion

RESOURCES: Edmunds & Brown, 2010; Michaelsen et al., 2008
Designing Small Group Teaching

- Preparing a small group session
- Structuring the session

WUMS Cardiology faculty sessions leaders meeting to discuss and plan heart exam small group session. (Sept, 2013)
Preparing a Small Group Session

Ask 3 key questions …

1. What do I want my students to learn?
2. How do I want them to learn it?
3. How will I find out if they have learned it?

Prepare learning objectives

(Edmunds and Brown, 2010)
Designing Learning Objectives

- Are they session-specific?
- Are they student-centered?
- Can they be assessed?

- “I will teach students to listen attentively while taking a patient history”

- By the end of this session, students will understand how to listen attentively while taking a patient history.”

- By the end of this session, students will be able to demonstrate at least three characteristics of active listening while taking a patient history.”
Structuring the Session

- **R.E.S.T.**
  - Rapport
  - Expectations
  - Structure
  - Tasks

- **Assess**
  - Preparation
  - Participation
  - Learning
Structuring the Session

- Things to define, decide and discuss before the session:
  - Group and session-leader assignments
    - Keep stable or rotate?
  - Cases and content
    - Where to find these?
    - Uniformity of implementation across groups – meet with session leaders ahead of time to discuss
  - Expectations
    - Students’ expectations of small groups
    - Your expectations of the students
Assessing Small Group Learning

- Assessments that typically do not measure student learning:
  - Attendance
  - Course exams
  - Student evaluations of teaching

- How do you measure small group learning in your teaching?
Assessing Small Group Learning

Assessments that typically **do** measure student learning:

- Quizzes on session material (in class or take-home)
- Peer-assessments
  - Preparation for and contributions to learning
  - Professionalism and participation in group activities
  - Communication skills
- Student reflective writing
- Preceptor evaluations
The Clinical Encounter / Tuesday, September 10, 2013 / Dr. Gregory M. Polites
Group #6 / 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM / FLTC Room #206

Michael Madigan
Signature: ____________________________
Participation? Yes ☐ No ☐ Professionalism Concern? Yes ☐ No ☐
Comments: ____________________________

Matthew Matlock
Signature: ____________________________
Participation? Yes ☐ No ☐ Professionalism Concern? Yes ☐ No ☐
Comments: ____________________________

Ashley Osborne
Signature: ____________________________
Participation? Yes ☐ No ☐ Professionalism Concern? Yes ☐ No ☐
Comments: ____________________________
APPENDIX 9.C
Method #4: Koles Method

TEAM-BASED LEARNING
PEER FEEDBACK

Team: __________________ Colleague you are evaluating: __________________

Period of Evaluation:

PART ONE: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT (CHECK ONE BOX FOR EACH OF THESE 12 AREAS)

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CASE STUDY: RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS
A previously healthy 40 year old female is referred by her primary care physician because of persistent joint pain that is unresponsive to NSAIDs. For the past 3 months she has pain and swelling in her wrists, fingers, jaws, and ankles that has caused her to miss several days of work. Her pain is worse in the morning and she feels stiff until noon. It often wakes her from sleep.
Case-based Small Group Activity

- Working in groups of 2 or 3, review and discuss the sample case-based small group session and describe:
  1. Strengths of this case as a teaching tool.
  2. Suggested structure of 1-hour small group session built around this case.

- After everyone has had enough time for a brief discussion, we will discuss as a larger group.
Small groups FAQ

- “How do I address concerns about variability across different small groups?”
- “What if I can’t get enough faculty preceptors to ensure that I have small-ish groups?”
- “How do I encourage uniform participation in my session?”
- “Why do students report that they perceive small groups as a ‘waste of time’”?
- Others?
Our Session Objectives Revisited…

By the end of this session, participants should be able to…

- Design effective medical teaching in small groups.
- Describe the advantages and drawbacks of common small group teaching methods.
- Identify opportunities for incorporating assessments into small group teaching and learning.
Small Groups Best-Practices

- Define student-centered learning objectives for small groups sessions.

- Choose content and plan activities that will allow students to achieve the learning objectives.

- Meet with session-leaders beforehand to review and discuss implementation plan.

- Assess student learning — were the learning objectives met?

- Incorporate feedback from students and preceptors to improve future sessions.
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES
References and Resources


References and Resources


Contact Information

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Education Specialist, Office of Education
Washington University School of Medicine
dufaultc@wusm.wustl.edu
Save the Date for i teach 2014: January 9, 2014 in the Knight Center

Biennial Symposium

Held every other year in January, the i teach symposium brings together Washington University faculty from across the disciplines to share insights and ideas on teaching and learning. Each symposium includes interactive presentations by WUSTL faculty and staff, as well as plenty of time for informal discussions among colleagues. To browse past symposia, explore the menu on the left.

Partners

i teach, which began in 2002, is developed and coordinated by Arts & Sciences, the University Libraries, and The Teaching Center.
CBLOs

- Competency-based learning objectives
- Washington University’s CBLOs:
  - MK, PC, ICS, Prof, SBP, PRLI
    - Curriculum mapping – where we are teaching and assessing these CBLOs?
    - Hard to know without learning objectives
- Larger role of any LO => structures teaching, learning, and assessing
- LOs are how you answer the three questions.
# APPENDIX 9.D
Method #5: Texas Tech Method

**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HSC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

**Professionalism and Communication Assessment Form, Page 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Too Little < SCALE > Too Much

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROMPTNESS/RELIABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late—colleagues or instructors kept waiting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY/DEPENDABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of accountability, actively avoids responsibility and seeks easy tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPECT FOR OTHERS/TEAMWORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disrespectful of colleagues or instructors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUMILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant towards others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALTRUISM AND COMPASSION/EMPATHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern for self supersedes concern for others, lack of compassion for others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMITMENT TO COMPETENCE AND EXCELLENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low standards of achievement—strives to just pass</td>
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<tr>
<th>SELF-ASSESSMENT/ASSESSMENT OF OTHERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacks insight—poor judge of others’ abilities—consistently overrates own performance</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOUNTABILITY/CONFIDENTIALITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannot be trusted with duties or confidential information about others—publicly discusses others by name</td>
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<tr>
<th>RESPECT FOR OTHERS’ AUTONOMY AND BELIEFS/TOLERANCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bias against persons with differing beliefs or cultures</td>
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<th>SENSITIVITY TO OTHERS’ AND SOCIETAL NEEDS</th>
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<td>Oblivious of the needs of others</td>
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**PREPARATION FOR LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unprepared for assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Well-prepared for activities, knows answers to questions at level evident of advance preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Inordinate preparation for assignments to detriment of self and family</td>
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**COMMUNICATION/LISTENING SKILLS**

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<td>1</td>
<td>Inadequate verbal and nonverbal communication skills to effectively communicate with colleagues or instructors</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Listens actively to others, restates for understanding when appropriate</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Passively listens—Others control time/pace of discussion</td>
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**COMMENTS (Comments required for assessments scored 1 or 5)**

Date
Fundamentals

APPENDIX 9.C

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PART TWO: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT (write at least one sentence for each item)

1) What is the single most valuable contribution this person makes to your team?

2) What is the single most important thing this person could do to more effectively help your team?

1 Used with permission from Boonshoft School of Medicine at Wright State University.