A New Osteopathic Medical School with Unique Curriculum in a Serene Town of USA

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Abstract

California Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine is a newly established osteopathic medical school in Clovis, California, USA. The school will begin its inaugural class on July 27, 2020. The two-pass integrated system makes this school unique in its curriculum as it includes Team-Based Learning, nutritional instruction and, HoloAnatomy. As the curriculum manager with no background in health or medicine, I learned a lot about the uniqueness of the curriculum in a few short months. I am excited to embark on this journey with the entire CHSU faculty and staff who exert passion and drive every single day in efforts to educate our future healthcare professionals.

Keywords: New curriculum model; TBL; HoloAnatomy; Integration of nutrition

Introduction

As a new curriculum manager possessing a doctorate in social sciences vs. health sciences, I joined the California Health Sciences University College of Osteopathic Medicine (CHSU COM) team with very minimal knowledge in osteopathic medicine. My expertise fell more into the development of curriculum in the social sciences field. Fast forward four months into my role and I have gained good knowledge in osteopathic medical school curricula, the taught content of the courses, the unique instructional designs, and utilized technology.

When one thinks of California, they think of largely populated cities, traffic, noise, and the lifestyles of the elite. What is often overlooked are the rural and underserved areas in the beautiful Golden State. In the Central Valley, exists a quaint city named Clovis that is home to California Health Sciences University (CHSU). Situated in the northeast angle of the Fresno Clovis Metro Area, Clovis sits in the middle of agriculturally affluent San Joaquin Valley. The city of Clovis incorporates a 23 square mile area with a total population of about 112,000.
Curriculum Uniqueness

Most recently, CHSU COM received its status of pre-accreditation from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation. To support the mission of inspiring diverse students in serving and improving the healthcare outcomes of the Central Valley population, the institution will officially begin with its inaugural class on July 27, 2020.

As I continued training in my role as a curriculum manager, I understood that the curricula contain three unique phases: the TBL model, the nutrition integration, and HoloAnatomy education.

The major modality to be used in the biomedical science courses in a two-pass integrated system will be the Team-Based Learning (TBL) structure. As a newly established DO institution, CHSU COM will be one of the first to implement team-based learning (TBL) into its two-pass-system based curriculum beginning day one of the classes. Team-based learning as an instructional education has proven to improve student commitment, the value of teamwork, and performance on standardized assessments in comparison to customary lecture-based education (Johnson, 2009).

Furthermore, I have come to recognize that preventative care is the core factor in osteopathic medicine. In general, knowledge of nutrition is important in preventing unhealthy lifestyles and habits, yet this is often a forgotten science in medicine. There is a scarcity of educating medical students on nutrition. Fortunately, CHSU COM will be including nutritional instruction in all systems. Additionally, a teaching kitchen will also accommodate all students for demonstration and instruction on healthy cooking. All of this, in my opinion, is imperative in the training of future physicians to promote quality healthcare.

Lastly, HoloAnatomy—a full anatomy curriculum using a device called HoloLens to provide holographic instruction to medical students will be utilized in conjunction with all the biomedical courses. Case Western University Reserve (CWUR) in Cleveland, OH, began developing and testing elements of what became known as HoloAnatomy. Today, CWUR has included 12 partnering institutions in the use of Holographic instruction, CHSU COM being one of them. Holographic instruction will allow students to work individually and as a group on 3D holograms to become familiarized with all the parts of the anatomy. HoloLens provides the students’ sight of a full-size transparent body with a full skeleton (Nyland, 2019). Who knew anatomy would be easier to study using technology rather than an actual cadaver?

Conclusion

Starting employment at CHSU COM with some experience in curriculum and course development, I had never had the opportunity to create and implement a new curriculum. My experience fell in enhancing previously developed curriculum and course content. This school is providing me the opportunity to be involved in the curricula process from the development to the implementation phase, which is beyond exciting and rewarding. The drive and enthusiasm that surges through the faculty and staff are notable. Each with their own experiences and expertise in medicine and academia brings immense amounts of intellectual and innovative ideas daily. Teamwork is very evident because all departments constantly work together for the common goal. The passion everyone has for educating our future healthcare professionals is remarkable and will indeed be making a great impact on the lives of the students it will serve, as well as the Central Valley community in California. I feel very blessed to be a part of such a dynamic team.
Take Home Messages

1. California Health Sciences University (CHSU) is a new osteopathic medical school in Clovis, CA, USA that will begin its inaugural class on July 27, 2020.
2. The mission of CHSU is to support the mission of inspiring diverse students in serving and improving the healthcare outcomes of the Central Valley population.
3. The school’s unique curriculum focuses on a two-pass integrated system using the Team-Based Learning structure, HoloAnatomy, and nutrition education.

Notes On Contributors

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Appendices

None.

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