SGIM TEACH Workshop

TEACHING IN SMALL GROUPS

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Objectives

 Explain the educational theory that supports small group learning
 Distinguish the types of small group learning
 Describe facilitator and learner behaviors that promote effective small group learning
 Utilize teaching skills that promote more effective small group learning
 Develop skills to manage common small group challenges
Constructivist Theory
J. Bruner

- Learning is an *active* process

- Learners
  - Construct new ideas / concepts based upon current / past knowledge

- Cognitive structure (schema, mental models)
  - Provides meaning and organization
  - Allows you to "go beyond the information given"

From “Teaching in the Small Group Setting”
Eva Aagaard, MD, University of Colorado
Teaching is most effective when...

The instructor *encourages* students to discover principles for themselves through:

- Engaging in an active dialogue (i.e. socratic learning)
- Translating information into a format appropriate to the learner's current state of understanding
- Providing schema: ways to think about things

The curriculum is organized in a spiral manner so that students continually build upon what they have already learned


From “Teaching in the Small Group Setting”
Eva Aagaard, MD, University of Colorado
Small groups provide opportunities to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elaborate</th>
<th>Shared dialogue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>Generate and</td>
<td>Projects</td>
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<td>transform</td>
<td>Labs</td>
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<td>Papers</td>
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<td>Apply</td>
<td>Cases</td>
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<td>Demonstration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generalize</td>
<td>Apply to new, different problems</td>
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</tbody>
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From “Learning in Small Groups”
Christine Taylor, PhD, Cleveland Clinic Foundation
A different approach

- Faculty
- Expert Information giver
- Organizer Catalyst Questioner
- Students
- Receiver
- Analyzer Questioner Self-assessor

From “Learning in Small Groups”
Christine Taylor, PhD, Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Types of small group teaching

- Case-based discussion
- Skills development (PE, communication)
- PBL (Problem Based Learning)
- TBL (Team Based Learning)
- Inpatient clinical teams
- Outpatient clinical teams
- Writing / discussion
- Reflection / support groups
Small Group Facilitation Skills

Starting a small group session

- Appreciative check in (learning about group members)
- Orientation/ground rules/expectations
  - Confidentiality
  - Preparation
  - Assignments
  - Evaluation
  - How to contact facilitator outside group
Small Group Facilitation Skills

- Clarification of concepts
- Content expert vs. facilitator
- Avoid dominating the discussion
- Encouraging all group members to have a voice
- Be mindful of different level of learners
- Timekeeping – including time to summarize the experience
- Time for feedback (longitudinal group)
Challenges/Solutions

- Unprepared student
- Quiet student
- Dominant student
- Uninterested student
- Conflict among group members
- Unexpected emotion

- Setting expectations, individual feedback
- Invite participation, round robin
- Shared responsibility, round robin
- Personal relevance, individual responsibility
- Reflect on group process
- Deal with individually outside of group
Teaching in Small Groups
TEACH Workshop
SGIM Annual Meeting
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References:

References from: “Teaching in the Small Group Setting” courtesy of: Eva Aagaard, MD, University of Colorado

2. http://www.psych.nyu.edu/bruner