

Incorporating Spiritual Considerations into Patient Care through Diverse Instructional Techniques

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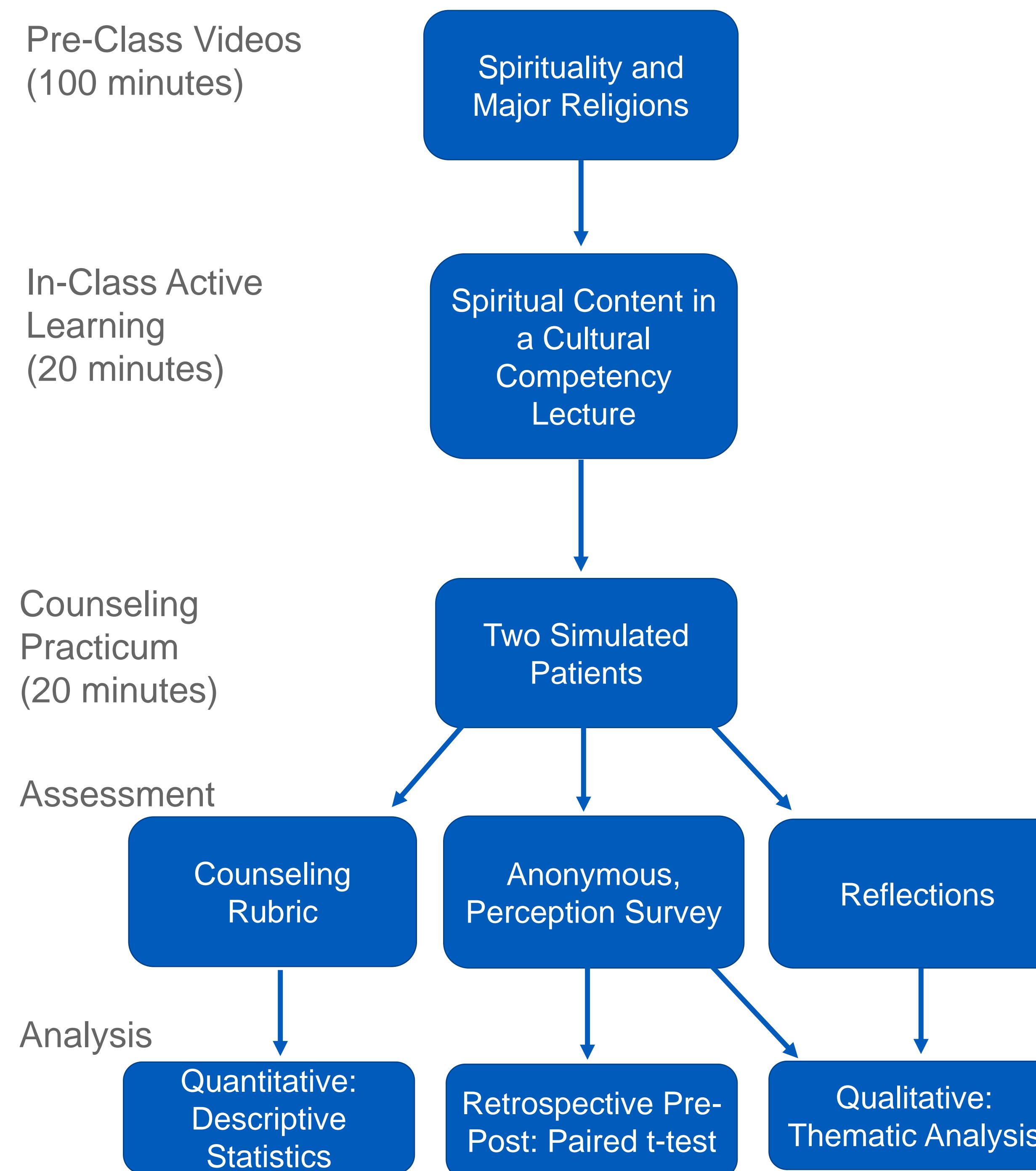
Introduction

- Spiritual considerations in patient care include medication use during fasting, prohibited excipients, refusal of care, and adherence.
- While sometimes discussed within cultural competency, spirituality is often excluded from the required didactic curriculum, and instead taught only through electives, APPE experiences, or a single required lecture on spiritual care at a faith-based school of pharmacy.¹⁻³
- Spirituality in patient care should be taught in the curriculum to prepare future pharmacists to provide individualized patient-centered care.

Objective

- Assess first-year pharmacy students' grades and perceptions on role of spirituality in pharmacy practice.

Methods



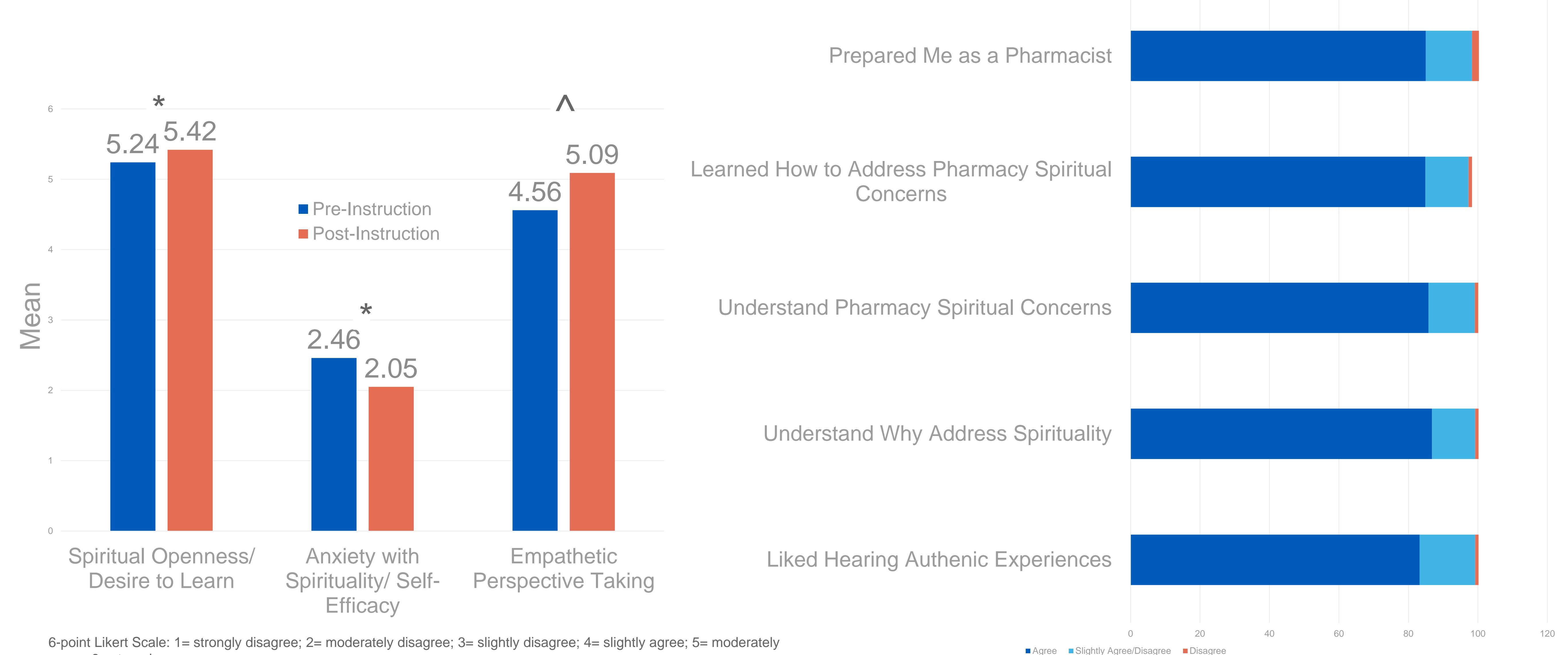
Results

Counseling Rubric

- All students (N=125) completed the counseling session, and 113 (90.4%) completed the survey.
- Mean score on counseling session rubric was 94.8% (range: 71.4-100%).

Student Perceptions

Student Perceptions on Spirituality Post-Instruction (n=113)



Thematic Analysis

Individualizing Care by Inquiring About Background

- ... [A] person's religious or spiritual background may impact how and when they take their medication and we as healthcare providers must find a way to best meet their needs."

Respect for Other Beliefs

- "Having an open mind and understanding people are from different backgrounds is important."

Learning about Diverse Backgrounds

- "It was nice learning about different backgrounds[.]"

Prohibited Medications and Excipients

- "Look up for the inactive ingredients present in a dosage form which may be restricted for some patients based on their religious/spiritual/cultural concerns and trying to find alternatives for those."

Reflections

Recognizing cultural related changes needed with medications

"After a bit of conversation, I learned that my patient was looking for a gummy instead but could not have any pork or gelatin-containing products. I then informed the patient that the soft gel and gummies would conflict with their dietary restrictions."

Self-awareness is important to identify how to interact with others different from you

"... I never really took time to understand their beliefs and practices. The primary reason was because I mainly interacted with people of my own culture. The lecture and practicum made me understand that there are different people outside. As a pharmacist, I will definitely encounter people of different religious backgrounds and understanding their culture and beliefs will allow me to provide better care to my patients."

Need further cultural sensitivity training

"This activity was also eye-opening in terms of how pharmacists without proper cultural sensitivity and recognition of the social determinants of health would lead to downstream negative effects on a patient's access to quality care that everyone rightfully deserves[.] which was a great motivator to continue to educate myself on the topic of cultural competence beyond the scopes of the lectures."

Classroom connections in the professional environment

"... [T]here are many patients that come to the pharmacy that have a different cultural background than myself. I would not be able to recommend or implement a change like the capsule to tablet situation that I had above but this experience has allowed me to be way more aware of the different sensitivities that patients may have when they enter the pharmacy."

Discussion

- As a part of diverse patient-centered care, inclusion of spirituality in pharmacy is important.
- Previous studies suggest pharmacists/pharmacy students' desire to learn about and *how* to account for spirituality in patient care (i.e., be comfortable).
- Students were able to gain knowledge and skills attainment of spirituality through authentic videos and a counseling exercise focused on pharmacy concerns.
- With largest improvement in empathetic perspective-taking, this may allow future pharmacists to improve in being comfortable addressing spiritual needs.
- Students had positive perceptions regarding the role of spirituality in pharmacy practice and considered it helpful in their preparation for professional practice.

Limitations

- Pre-post retrospective design was used
- Cannot determine if the videos alone, active learning, or counseling sessions provided best response.

Conclusion

- Students performed well on the counseling session and demonstrated application of the instruction.
- Perceptions suggest an increase in empathy surrounding spiritual considerations in patient care.
- Further reinforcement may be needed in later years of the pharmacy curriculum.

References

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