OSR Group Learning Survey, January 2016

Introduction
This survey was designed to assess the different methods of implementation of group learning at OSR member institutions. Given the nationwide trend in utilizing group learning techniques for more effective medical education, this survey was released to gather best practices and patterns with regards to how group learning is actually incorporated into medical curricula. The survey asked where group learning is utilized in curricula, how group learning sessions are facilitated, what infrastructure is in place for group learning, and how group learning is assessed and reflected in student performance. Below is a summary of the results from the survey. If you have any questions about this survey, contact Anisha Ganguly at Anisha.Ganguly@utsouthwestern.edu.

Respondent Data
There were 43 survey respondents from 39 unique institutions. All respondents reported that their medical school includes some form of group learning. The represented institutions are listed here.

Central Michigan University
Dartmouth College, Geisel
East Carolina University, Brody
East Tennessee State, Quillen
Florida International University
Georgetown University
Johns Hopkins University
Mercer University
Michigan State University
New York University
Saint Louis University School of Medicine
Texas A&M University
Tulane University
University at Buffalo
University of North Dakota
University of Alabama
University of Arizona
University of Arkansas
University of California, San Diego
University of California, San Francisco
University of Central Florida
University of Chicago, Pritzker
University of Colorado
University of Louisville
University of Minnesota
University of Oklahoma
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rochester
University of South Alabama
University of Southern California, Keck
University of Southern Florida, Morsani
University of Texas, San Antonio
University of Texas, Southwestern
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin
Vanderbilt University
Virginia Tech, Carilion
Washington University in St. Louis
Wayne State University
All respondents reported incorporation of group learning in their pre-clerkship curricula, and half reported group learning during the clerkship period. There was significant variation with regards to the method of group learning incorporated. The large “other” percentage consisted of respondents who reported combinations of problem-based learning and team-based learning. The majority of respondents reported weekly group learning sessions. The majority of respondents reported that their institution utilized a specialized facility for group learning.
There were a wide variety of courses that were reported to include a group learning component. The courses that most commonly incorporated group learning were anatomy, clinical skills preparation, and organ systems. Courses that had less group learning reported were genetics and healthcare systems; however this may be attributed to those courses not being offered altogether rather than not being suited for group learning. The “other” responses included group learning incorporated in courses on population health, disaster response, and quality improvement.

The majority of respondents reported that lecture material was the focus of group learning sessions, both with regards to the content of the session itself and the preparation required beforehand. More than half of respondents stated that journal articles were presented in group learning sessions and required as preparation. Nearly all respondents said that group learning sessions contained case studies. Of those responding “other” for preparation required, half stated that no preparation was required before group learning sessions.
The majority of schools reported that group learning sessions embraced aspects of the small group learning model, both in facilitation and structure of the session: the majority of respondents reported using a single facilitator for each group and sessions emphasizing small group discussion and question and answer. Those reporting “other” for questions about facilitation and structure reported that their institutions used a combination of all options. Most respondents reported use of slides, with about half reporting use of videos, literature, and other printed sources.
There was a wide variety of responses with regards to evaluation of student performance in group learning sessions. The majority of respondents reported that group learning made up 5-10% of their total course grade. More than half of respondents denied the use of graded assessments before a group learning session. There was little consensus with regards to how sessions were graded, indicating that grading varied from session to session even within institutions. The highest positive response rates for categories of grading were individual graded pre-assessments, qualitative grades based on participation, and completion.
Qualitative Feedback

Included below are qualitative reflections of respondents with regards to group learning at their institutions.

“Essentially every part of the curriculum involves groups, except for the lectures. We have PBL sessions 3x weekly, we have inter-professional groups with nursing and PA students, we have groups with PhD students for the research portion of the curriculum, and we have medical student groups that we meet with for clinical science.” –Virginia Tech, Carilion

“We have both TBL and PBL sessions as part of the pre-clinical curriculum. TBL sessions are weekly and cover whatever material is relevant to the current block. PBL sessions are more case-based discussions intended to demonstrate management of a patient in a team setting.” –University of Louisville

“[There is] emphasis on variety of learning techniques, whether within small or large group settings. [Our sessions] try to cater to a variety of learning styles.” –University of Southern Florida, Morsani

“Team-based learning has been a valuable asset in our curriculum, as it helps integrate basic science material into clinical scenarios with an emphasis on actual clinical management.” –East Tennessee State, Quillen

“In general, our school makes use of group learning for the non-science courses (although some courses like Micro and Genetics do use group learning). We also have a Grand Rounds conference every semester where we are divided into small groups of M1/M2 (and then M3 and M4) and answer questions about a case, which is then presented in a large group format.” –Georgetown University

“We mainly have group, problem based learning that is student run. Students then generate topics and issues from the cases given and read the appropriate information in the readings list. There are a few lectures given each block as supplementary material (we are systems based), and additional lectures are added if students request them for a specific topic.” –Mercer University

Survey conducted by Anisha Ganguly, UT Southwestern Medical School, Class of 2019

OSR Curriculum Innovation Student Interest Group