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Experiential Learning at Hospice: The Case of First-Year Radiation Therapy Students

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Abstract

This study investigates a longitudinal qualitative re-search project implemented during three consecutive years and describes a case study examining the experiential learning that took place when radiation therapy students volunteered at hospice. Study participants were 36 students enrolled in the Introduction to Radiation Oncology course during the fall semesters of 2011, 2012, and 2013. The research question guiding this study is: What are the learning outcomes for first-year radiation therapy students participating in a hospice-based research project that utilizes experiential learning theory as the framework? Data sources include the student-written reflections, individual in-terviews with study participants, and field notes. Narrative inquiry serves as the main technique for data analysis, and study findings are presented through three themes: empathy, communication issues, and reflection. In addition, this article describes the specific connections between the experiential learning cycle as explained by Kolb and student learning and growth volunteering at hospice.

Successful Retention Strategies: A Survey of Four-Year Radiologic Science Programs

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Abstract

Considerable research has been conducted to determine the reasons why students either stay or leave an institution of higher learning. Retention of students is of utmost concern to any campus, and finding ways to increase retention is paramount. An overview of literature cites several causes of attrition and many methods used to increase retention. This study focuses on retention practices in 4-year radiologic science programs that are programmatically accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology. Barriers to student retention identified are lack of academic preparation, financial hardship, and the increased rigor of the program. Strategies that improve retention are increased tutoring and mentoring programs, mandatory advising sessions, and higher admission standards.