An Application of Supplemental Instruction (SI) in Medical Education: Past, Present, and Future
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Introduction
Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a peer-facilitated model of academic support that has been modified for use in medical education. Application of the SI model in a discipline-based curriculum was successfully adapted at the University of Nevada School of Medicine in 2009. Currently, UNSOM administrators are working to modify SI sessions to accommodate transition from a discipline-based curriculum to an integrated block-based structure.

Objectives
Past: To provide viewers with data from the UNSOM SI program implemented in 2009 for targeted courses in Years 1 and 2 of a traditional, discipline-based curriculum.

Present: To demonstrate how this program has been adapted as UNSOM transitions from a discipline-based curriculum to an integrated systems-based curriculum. Additionally, how we have piloted an expansion of SI into select Year 3 clerkships.

Future: To demonstrate that SI can be adapted in undergraduate medical education in discipline-based courses/clerkships and in integrated curricular formats.

Methods

Supplemental Instruction Process Map

Results
Academically successful students who understand and appreciate the value of cooperative learning methodologies. Students who need early intervention can use SI as a resource. Students who utilize resources effectively can better achieve their academic goals.

Discussion
PAST
In a traditional discipline based system we observed that students who regularly attended SI sessions had higher overall grades in courses. Attending sessions allowed students to spend more time engaged with content and allowed for group participation where they could interact with the content and their peers and upper classmen. SI sessions reinforce the team learning approach to medical education that is highly valued.

PRESENT
It has been challenging applying SI to an integrated curriculum for two reasons:
1. SI leaders are students who went through the non-integrated system;
2. SI sessions are presented by discipline, not by block. For the next academic year this will not be as much of a problem for SI sessions in the Year 1 blocks, but will remain an issue for new Year 2 integrated curriculum.

The challenges faced this year with introducing SI sessions into clerkship rotations as review for NBME subject exams have been minimal, primarily finding 4th year students to serve as group facilitators.

FUTURE
Challenges and opportunities involved in the transition of an academic support program created for a discipline-defined, course based curriculum to an integrated systems-based curriculum will be discussed. The expansion of the SI model of academic support to the clinical clerkships setting will also be included with preliminary data on student outcomes from programs.

References