



## The influence of histology and embryology courses on student achievement in gross human anatomy courses

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Like Ker *et al.* (2005) we are committed to sharing experiences in order to develop simulated patient programmes that provide learners with the best opportunities in which to develop a whole range of professional skills. We believe the success of our simulated patient programme is based on adherence to principles of adult learning (Knowles, 1990), thinking creatively about ways to support health care professional training and a team approach that whenever possible includes students, actors, clinicians, psychologists and educationalists at all stages of programme development, implementation and evaluation.

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## The influence of histology and embryology courses on student achievement in gross human anatomy courses

Dear Sir

The methodology for teaching anatomy classes has changed in many universities around the world and is in the process of change in others. The present tendency is oriented towards a complete curriculum, in which subjects are related to each other and not taught in an isolated manner. The “classical”

division of the medical curriculum into the subjects taught during the first years, called pre-clinical subjects (basic sciences) and those taught during the final years, called clinical subjects, is now inadequate.

In the School of Medicine of the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, there is a clear division between pre-clinical and clinical subjects. Gross human anatomy is taught for one semester and the subjects of histology and embryology are taught during another semester. If we know how studying related courses (histology and embryology) before studying anatomy influences achievement in anatomy during the first year of studies in the School of Medicine, it can be used to make a change to improve the integration of the courses within the curriculum.

Students in the traditional anatomy course answered a survey, and pre-test and post-test. The survey consisted of nine questions to obtain demographical data and both tests were made up of 30 multiple-choice questions. The survey was used to divide the student population into two groups: one group was in the second semester and had already taken the histology and embryology course during the first semester and the other group was in the first semester taking the anatomy course (without having taken the histology and embryology course). The pre-test was taken on the first day of class in the anatomy course and the post-test was taken during the last week of the course. The difference in the points obtained on the post-test and pre-test were used to measure achievement in the course.

A survey was filled out and two tests were taken by 100 first semester students and 59 second semester students. Histology and embryology courses were passed by 39 out of 59 students; 13 out of 59 students credited at least one of the courses while only 6 out of 59 students failed both courses.

There is no relationship between the pass-fail rate in histology and embryology and the achievement in anatomy. There was no significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in achievement in the anatomy course when comparing students who had taken histology and embryology courses and those who were in their first semester of study.

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## The evaluation of dermatologic education in the postgraduate period

Dear Sir

In Turkey, dermatology training in medical schools consists of a 1-month compulsory clinical training period in the fifth class. According to our national health system, graduates of medical schools are employed as general practitioners (GP) in primary health care centers. To determine the usefulness and efficacy of dermatological education given in medical faculties and to obtain the opinions of the GPs on the issue, we conducted a study on 98 GPs from primary health