LETTERS

Student and Faculty Member Perspectives on Lecture Capture in Pharmacy Education

To the Editor. The article by Marchand and colleagues examined student and faculty member perspectives on lecture capture in pharmacy education. The authors determined students appropriately used recordings to support their learning. Students and faculty members agreed that recordings enhanced student learning. However, faculty members perceived that access to recordings reduced class attendance and participation. Ten percent of students acknowledged using recordings very rarely as a substitute to lecture attendance, while half of the faculty members perceived that attendance had declined by 20% or more.¹ It is our intent to provide new perspectives for consideration regarding the correlation between lecture recordings and attendance in future research.

Events beyond those cited in the article (ie, illness and midterm examinations) that compete with lecture attendance among students with access to recordings are worth acknowledging.¹ Rising costs of tuition, increasing student employment, and lifestyle pressures may make it more difficult for students to participate in the university experience. The US Census Bureau determined that of the 4.1 million graduate students in the country, 82% worked in 2011. Almost half (45.9%) of graduate students were full-time, year-round workers.²

The evolving landscape of pharmacy practice may also impact a student's decision to attend lectures. In the years preparing for postgraduate opportunities, including residency and fellowships, students are expected to seek opportunities for research experience and community service.³ Cardell and colleagues surveyed lecture recording viewing habits of all first-year and second-year students at Harvard Medical School. The authors concluded 29.4% of medical students relied only on lecture recordings. Instead of attending lectures, 65.4% of these students reinvested the time saved with accelerated lecture recordings in service, leadership, and research.⁴ While determining a correlation between lecture attendance rates and access to lecture recordings, confounding factors are present, and changing.

When asked about recordings, faculty members in Marchand and colleagues' study felt it was not possible to yield better learning results than lecture attendance. Despite this notion, faculty members reported no change in course grades relative to previous years.¹ As lecture attendance and recordings consist of the same exact information, class averages should not change. Little research associates lower attendance rates and increased use of recordings with poor academic outcomes.^{5,6}

Student attendance itself is not a learning outcome; in other words, the independent act of attendance does not guarantee learning will occur.⁷ Too much faculty member focus on negative impact of lecture recordings may deflect future opportunities to leverage technology in an effort to create better teaching and learning practices, including lecture capture. Although displeased with the decline in attendance, it is encouraging that 100% of the surveyed faculty population indicated their lectures would continue to be recorded.¹

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