

‘Turning Goals into Objectives: A Podiatry Externship Experience’

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Works in Progress

Background: Completing an externship for a fourth-year medical student is much more than an intensive, month-long interview. Ultimately, an externship should provide a significant educational experience to enhance a student’s knowledge base. At Wake Forest, we strive to give our podiatry externs exposure to all aspects of podiatric medicine and surgery. Although focused on meeting the educational needs of the students, the goals of the Wake Forest Podiatric Externship Program set by podiatry’s educational governing body, the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine (AACPM), are lofty at best. Unfortunately, there are no objective measures put in place to ensure goals are met. By implementing objectives, both the students and the program will be able to evaluate their success and become invested in future growth.

Objectives: After spending a four-week rotation at our institution, the podiatric extern will be able to objectively meet the goals outlined by AACPM.

Methods: Develop student-focused sessions that will transform the AACPM goals into objectives. The students will meet for four one-hour sessions during the students’ externship. The sessions will be comprised of 1) skill-based learning 2) game-based learning, 3) problem-based learning and 4) a mock interview that will consist of clearly outlined objectives. The students and the sessions will be evaluated using three methods: 1) Objective Structured Teaching Examinations (OSTEs), 2) pre-post questionnaires to assess students’ self-efficacy on each of the targeted objectives and 3) pre-made objective checklists.

Evaluation Plan: The outcomes will be analyzed by obtaining the mean changes in pre-post questionnaires and OSTEs using paired t tests. In addition, the percentage of the student’s ability to complete the objective checklist will be determined. This data will demonstrate if the implementation of the student-focused sessions significantly impacted externs.

Conclusions: By setting clear, attainable objectives students will leave our externship program having built on their fundamental knowledge to be successful with upcoming boards, residency interviews and ultimately becoming interns. By setting these objectives, the institution will also benefit from knowing that it is meeting not only the goals of AACPM but the needs of the students.