

Lecture attendance among undergraduate paramedic students: A sequential mixed methods study

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Introduction

- Lecture absenteeism is a widespread issue in tertiary education¹
- Aim: to describe face-to-face lecture attendance within an Australian undergraduate paramedicine cohort and explore associated factors.

Methods

- Lecture attendance counts, a cross-sectional questionnaire -The Lecture Attendance Scale² and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data

Results

- n=310 (response rate 77.3%)
- Attendance ranged 30%-76% (M=49.2%)
- Most subject units experienced decreases in attendance over the semester
- Eight factors identified from psychometric analysis of the questionnaire were: Lectures facilitate understanding, Lectures are unnecessary for success, Other priorities, Negative external factors, Competing commitments, Transport issues, Boring content/delivery, Lecture room environment
- Questionnaire factors were largely supported by interview data

High levels of lecture attendance were not observed. The decision to attend a lecture can be complex and is influenced by both student and organisation-related factors. Understanding and utilising this information to modify and improve healthcare curricula delivery is vital, especially where there may be an association between attendance and the development of clinical skills, and professional attitudes and qualities. This is especially important in the post-COVID-19 era where the value of in-person education may continue to be examined.

Discussion

- Reasons for non-attendance related to both student and organisational issues
- Absenteeism may be especially problematic in clinical healthcare programs such as paramedicine where knowledge and professional clinical practice are required to support public health and safety.

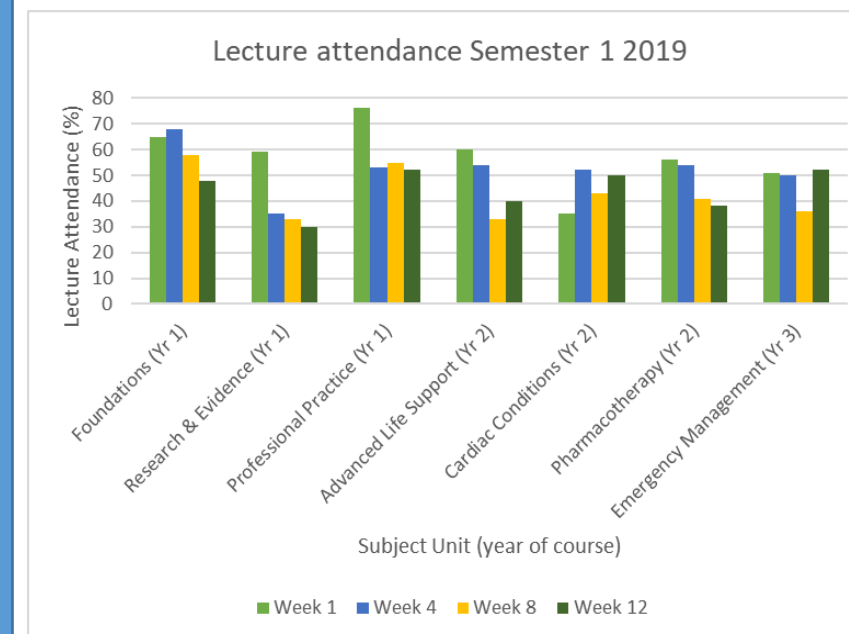


Figure 1: Lecture attendance counts

References

1. Barlow & Fleischer. *Innov Educ Teach Internat* 2011;48:227-37.
2. Bati et al. *Nurse Educ Today* 2013;33:596- 601.



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