

Mixed-mode learning: Adoption of cognitive, social, and teaching presence elements on clinical rotations.

Munashe Chigerwe BVSc, MPH, PhD, DACVIM, MSc (Vet Educ), UC Davis
mchigerwe@ucdavis.edu

The objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of mixed-mode learning on the inquiry process for veterinary students on clinical rotations during the COVID-19 pandemic. An exploratory sequential mixed methods design combining qualitative (focus group) and quantitative (questionnaire) data gathering was performed. Deductive qualitative analysis was performed to evaluate the presence of ideas confirming the community of inquiry process as indicated by teaching, social and cognitive presences. Inductive analysis was performed to evaluate ideas that did not fall under the community of inquiry presences. Likert scores and the proportions of different responses from the questionnaire were summarized. Seven students participated in the focus groups, whereas 60 students completed the questionnaire. Thirty-one and 49 faculty participated in the focus groups and completed the questionnaire, respectively. The components of community inquiry were present in the mixed-mode learning approach for students on clinical rotations. Emergent ideas that did not fit under cognitive, teaching, and social presences but directly or indirectly affected the inquiry process in mixed-mode learning included co-participation by students, flexibility for faculty, faculty wellbeing, and technical, administrative, and peer faculty support. Barriers to effective mixed-mode design of learning activities include lack of training of clinical faculty, design misalignment between learning activities and rotation learning outcomes and assessment of students. Implementation of a well-design institutional, continuous education training program for clinical faculty on approaches to mixed-mode learning activities in clinical rotations, followed by assessment of access, adoption, and quality of the training program, is required.