

USING FOCUS GROUPS TO GATHER STUDENT OPINIONS ON MEDICAL LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SPACE

OBJECTIVE

Medical education evolves with advancing technologies, and medical students are utilizing new learning methodologies in their curriculum. Medical educators can use student feedback to assess student study habits for modifications to current resources and spaces provided by the school. We obtained student opinions to identify student utilization issues of existing library space and learning resources at Mercer University School of Medicine.

METHODS

We performed a literature review on focus group studies at other medical schools to guide the formulation of our groups. A script to be read during the sessions, was created which included all questions and topics to be covered. We invited all current medical students at MUSM to participate in focus groups moderated by one author(GG) and recorded via Zoom teleconferencing. An anonymous post-transcriptional analysis was performed to collate participant opinions with significant statements into general feedback themes from group discussions.

CONCLUSIONS

Focus groups to gather medical student opinions proved to be an effective strategy to obtain feedback on current resource and space issues. In addition, the group dynamic permitted an open discussion among students with opportunities to interact with one another in creating and refining suggestions. The results from this study have helped MUSM faculty to make modifications enhancing student education.

RESULTS

A total of 21 students participated in one of three separate focus groups of 6 to 9 students each. Feedback obtained was categorized into two major themes. These included modifying curriculum learning guide objectives to include referenced page numbers and section/chapter titles for easier use of online textbooks, more efficient checkout of books, more concise learning resource materials developed by MUSM faculty, and acquiring new and/or changing third party question bank resources. Library physical facility issues included adding electrical outlets at study tables, getting better chairs for seating, getting a new printer, and adding study rooms and/or cubicles for more private studying.

IMPLEMENTATIONS



- Outlets added at the tables in Savannah
- Chairs purchased in Macon
- New printer acquired in Macon
- Anatomy App purchased for all campuses
- More study rooms and cubicles added
- Board review resource purchased for years 1-3
- Contactless check-out system provided
- Library resource information provided in student newsletter

