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Peer Assessments May Predict Objective Long-Term Academic Performance

Noah Christian
Thomas Jefferson University, noah.christian@jefferson.edu

Yousif Hanna
Thomas Jefferson University, yxh017@jefferson.edu

John Spandorfer, MD
Thomas Jefferson University, John.Spandorfer@jefferson.edu

Noah Christian
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Introduction: A common challenge in medical education is to create a curriculum that both teaches the required material but still delivers a personable physician. In this data study, 673 Sidney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) students were given a required survey to judge their group members on personal attributes ranging from preparedness to affability. These scores were used to aid students and hopefully prevent unfortunate habits from settling. We hypothesize that peer assessments will predict academic performance.

Methods: A five-question, Likert scale, peer assessment was given to each first-year medical student at SKMC. The electronic survey was given twice during the dissection portion of the curriculum, when students are assigned to groups with 2-3 other students. As the students finished their time at Jefferson, they were assigned a class ranking based on test and clerkship scores, and took national board exams (Step 1 and 2). These metrics were then compared via multi-variable linear regression to determine any correlation.

Results: The study found that the peer assessment of another's preparation (question 1 of the assessment) showed a strong, positive correlation to class rank, Step 1, and Step 2 scores.

Conclusion: This study shows the efficacy of a subjective peer assessment of preparation predicting objective academic performance. Further research will determine other predictive value of peer assessments in empathy and mental health.