



Community Service Learning

Perspectives from Canadian Medical Students

What is CSL?



Why did we look into it?



LCME and CACMS

LCME and CACMS suggest “the faculty of a medical school ensure that the medical education program provides sufficient opportunities for, encourages, and supports medical student **participation in service-learning and community service activities.**” (Standard 6.6)

Student Perspectives

Student experiences and opinions vary considerably with regards to CSL, as evidenced by discussion surrounding a position paper titled “**Improving Service Learning Curricula in Canadian Medical Education**” that was presented at SGM 2018 in Halifax.

Our Work

The current project aimed to explore, describe and present the diverse student perspectives that exist about CSL across the country in order to **form a representative foundation for national discussions on CSL within the CFMS and beyond.**

What did we explore?



Programming at Different Schools

Summary of Current Status of CSL Programs

Is it mandatory?

When do you do it?

How much do you do?

What opportunities are available to you?

Student Experiences

Summarize Student Experiences with CSL

Mentorship & Training

Structured Learning

Reflection & Evaluation

Collaboration & Sustainability

Student Goals & Future Directions

Capture perspectives on future goals for CSL

Would you participate again? Recommend it?

Should it be mandatory?

Future goals & suggestions for improvement

Our Results: Current Programming

- Our network of LOGHEs includes 14 Medical Schools; **14** Responded
 - Overview summary from a LOGHE + student perspectives (n = 70)
- **8** schools indicated that CSL is now a mandatory part of their curriculum
 - All **14** schools had CSL opportunities available
- **12** schools offered these opportunities in preclerkship (Years 1 & 2)
- For mandatory programs, required hours ranged from **9 - 46 hrs.**
 - All but one allowed students to be involved in choosing their placement
- **Common opportunities** include harm reduction projects, working with homeless and refugee populations, youth initiatives, palliative and long-term care placements, or working with individuals with disabilities

Our Results: Student Perspectives on CSL

Should it be mandatory?

- 90% of respondents were pre-clerkship students
- 88% were aware of CSL opportunities at their schools; 80% had participated
 - For those who didn't, the primary barriers were not knowing what opportunities existed and not knowing how to set them up, despite interest
- **63%** of students feel that CSL should be mandatory
 - **Why?** "gives the students a clearer and more tangible appreciation for the many **walks of life** that a patient could come from, and keeps us mindful of the **personal, financial and environmental challenges** that would have to be addressed in addition to medical care in order to treat our patients as whole persons."

Our Results: Student Perspectives on CSL

Why Not?

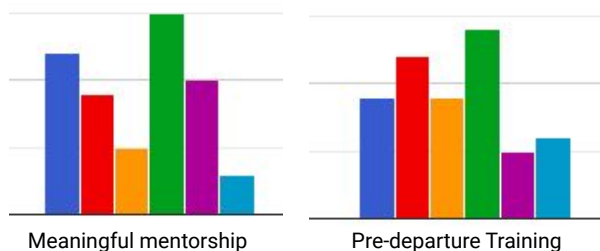
- “The medical school **curriculum is already jam-packed**, and we cannot continue to add more mandatory components to it unless we are taking other things out. The majority of students are already working with community organizations on their own.”
- “Enforced volunteering **doesn't seem genuine**. As well, it takes away time I had to pursue other **previous volunteering relationships** with the community and instead sticks me in one that I may not be as well equipped for.”
- “I am not of the belief that it should be mandated; only because I think there are **immense logistical challenges** to that in ensuring these communities are equipped to host students for a period of time worthy of learning valuable takeaways.”

Our Results: Student Perspectives on CSL

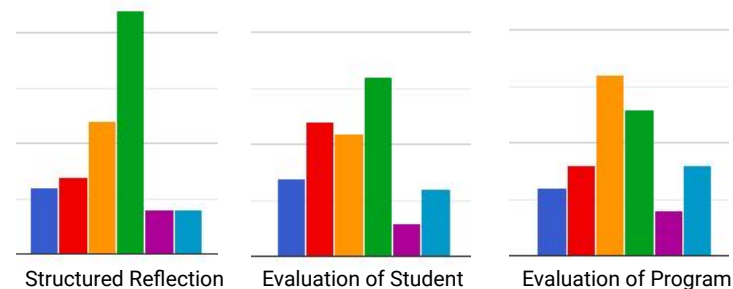
Emerging Themes from Participating Students

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A

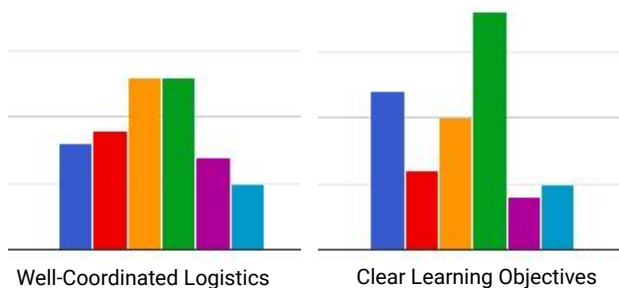
Mentorship & Training



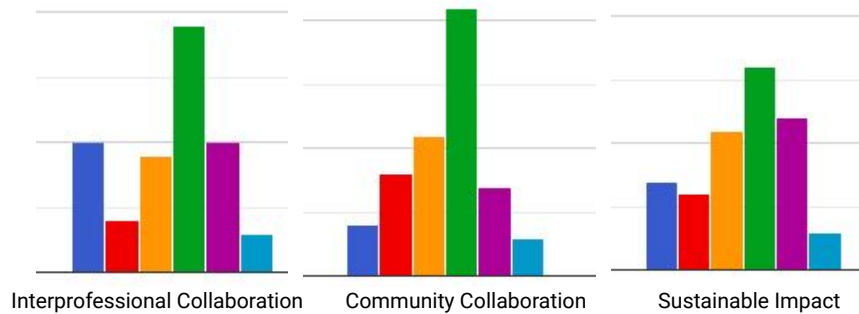
Reflection & Evaluation



Structured Learning



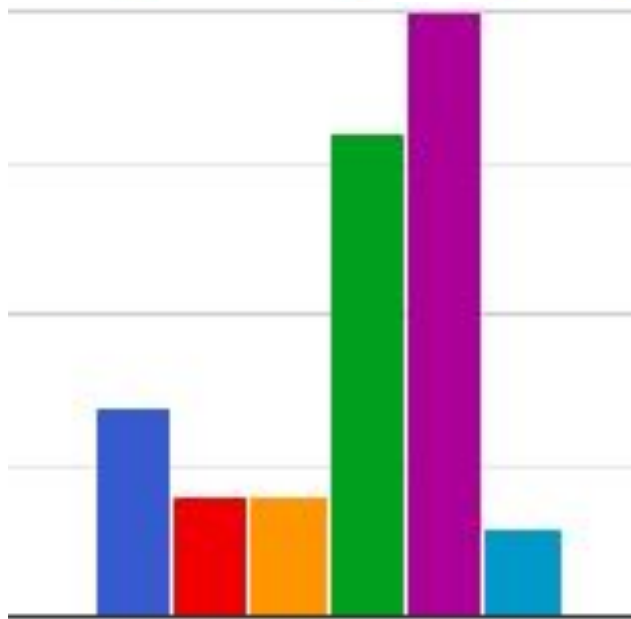
Collaboration & Sustainability



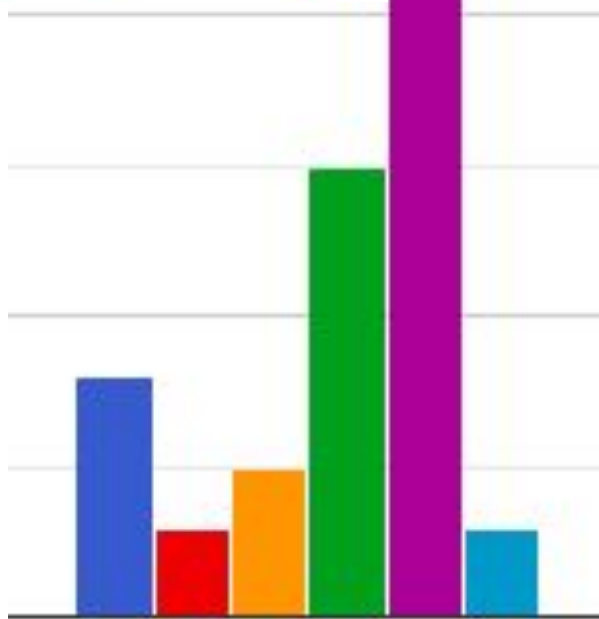
Impact on Learning

Emerging Themes from Participating Students

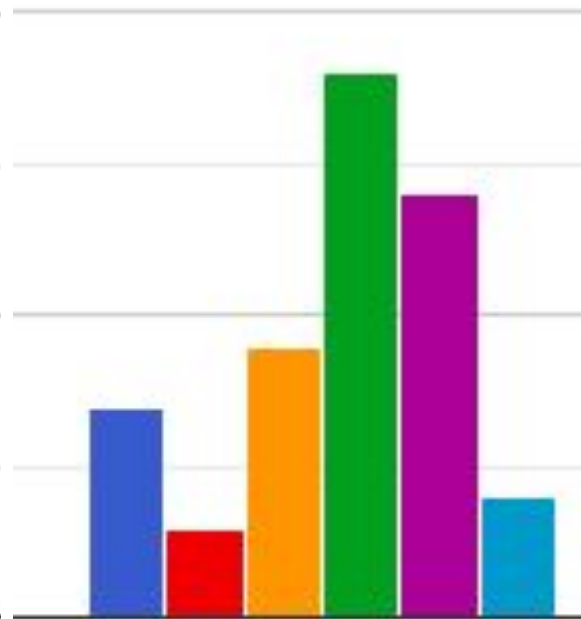
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree N/A



My CSL experience helped me understand the unique needs of an underserved population



My CSL experience enhanced my understanding of the social determinants of health



My CSL experience will shape my future interactions with patients/work as a physician

Student Goals & Future Directions



- 50% of our respondents would do CSL again and recommend it to other students
- Significant Challenges
 - Communication & organization
 - Role clarification
 - Training and addressing limitations
 - Transportation & Safety
- Areas for Improvement
 - Ability to continue existing volunteering commitments
 - Clarifying the role of the learner
 - Protecting time in the schedule
- Important Elements
 - Face-to-face active participation
 - Long-term & meaningful benefit to the community

What components of a CSL program would be/are most important to you?