## A novel curriculum to train physician assistant students to become healthcare leaders

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## Abstract

Physician Assistants (PAs) are playing increasingly impactful roles in healthcare and are stepping into leadership positions in all healthcare settings.  However, PA schools, unlike medical or nursing schools, currently do not consistently include formal or informal leadership training, and the pathway to leadership for PAs is not always clearly delineated (1). We developed a leadership curriculum with overarching aims of fostering a leadership mindset in PA students and providing them with the tools to begin their leadership trajectory (2,3). These tools, rooted in transformational leadership philosophy, provide students with a framework that will serve them in their immediate clinical settings as well as plant the seeds for future leadership endeavors, and enable successful collaboration in both leadership and team settings.  Students will also have an opportunity to hear firsthand experiences from community PA leaders during a leadership panel.

The curriculum is divided into three sessions:

- Session 1: Introduction to Leadership and Framework for Collaboration Part 1 (90 mins): brief didactics and paired exercises for students to practice the skills taught.
- Session 2: Framework for Collaboration Part 2 and Navigating Difficult Conversations (90 mins): brief didactics and facilitated group activities using â€œdifficult communicationâ€ cases submitted by students ahead of time. Facilitators will include OHSU PA faculty and community PA leaders.
- Session 3: Leadership Panel (60 mins): Panel of community PA leaders will share their experiences and answer student submitted questions.

Outcomes for this initial leadership curriculum will focus on feasibility, acceptability, perceived benefit to the students, and self-reported changes in leadership mindset.

1. Feasibility: Course instructors will log time spent organizing the course, recruiting community PA faculty, teaching time, student follow up, and evaluation time. This will guide future iterations of the curriculum and assist in dissemination to other PA programs.
2. Acceptability: Students will be asked to rate the value of this curriculum compared to other components of their education, and whether they think the curriculum should be continued
3. Perceived benefit: Students will be asked to rate their comfort with specific tools taught during the leadership training
4. Self-reported changes in leadership mindset: Students will be asked their thoughts on potential leadership roles.

Post- Pre/Post survey (students will be given a survey prior to, and immediately following the workshop). Survey details available upon request.

This course will be taught on January 23rd, 2023. Data will be analyzed for presentation at the 2023 SEE.

## Learning Objectives

1.  Identify ways to be involved in positive healthcare change with or without a dedicated leadership position
2. Enhance skills in providing professionally useful feedback
3. Identify potential barriers to becoming a leader and learn ways community leaders have overcome these barriers
4. Identify unique strengths that PAs have as leaders

## References:

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