Background

- The six-week summer Pre-matriculation Program is designed to create a strong foundation for academic success for incoming GRU medical and dental students.
- The program is comprised of classes and activities that aid students in their transition into medical or dental school, including initiatives based on interprofessional teamwork and collaboration.
- The GRU Pre-matriculation Program has been infused with content and interactive activities designed to encourage students from different health professions to learn and work together.
- The purpose of our pilot study was to assess the pre-matriculation program's effectiveness in enhancing students' perceptions of interprofessionalism.

Methods

Curricular Development and Initial Testing

Interprofessional education integrated throughout program

- Joint attendance and participation in academic classes (e.g., Histology/Development, Biochemistry, and Anatomy)
- Professional development and training activities (e.g., Educating the Whole Provider course, Faculty Grand Rounds series, and social events)
- Mini mentoring groups that incorporated both medical and dental students within each group
- For participants living on campus, roommates were from different mentoring groups and different health professions

Pilot evaluation of the interprofessional component of the Pre-matriculation Program for 2014 cohort

- Surveys administered at beginning and end of program
- Students completed survey packets that included the Interdisciplinary Education Perception Scale (IEPS), which measures attitudes of health professions students toward interprofessional learning with subscales in:
  - Competency and Autonomy
  - Perceived Need for Cooperation
  - Perception of Actual Cooperation

Results

Participants: 24 students in the 2014 cohort

- 20 medical and 4 dental students
- 66.7% female and 33.3% male
- Most were African American (37.5%) or Caucasian (37.5%)
- Mean age 24

Conducted paired sample t-tests to compare changes in students’ perceptions in 1) Competency and Autonomy, 2) Perceived Need for Cooperation, and 3) Perception of Actual Cooperation from pre-test to post-test

- 12-item version of the Interdisciplinary Education Perception Scale (IEPS)
- Items on 5-point scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree) with higher scores indicating more positive perceptions of interprofessionalism

Although there was an increase from pre- to post-test on all IEPS scales, the results showed a significant increase only in Perception of Actual Cooperation (p=.006) particularly in:

- Item 9: “Individuals in my profession are willing to share resources with other professionals”
- Item 11: “Individuals in my profession think highly of other health professionals”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IEPS9</td>
<td>3.8696</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-2.598</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Time 2)</td>
<td>4.2609</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEPS11</td>
<td>3.5652</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>-3.725</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Time 2)</td>
<td>4.1304</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

- Initial findings from our study suggest that the program’s opportunities for working with students in other health professions may have contributed to more positive perceptions of cooperation in interprofessional education
- Students in the program lived, attended class, studied, and participated in social events together, as well as received specific curricula that stressed the interprofessional nature of health care
- A control group and larger sample size would allow us to make a more definitive assessment
- Findings provide initial validity evidence for the program, which will be refined and repeated in upcoming pre-matriculation cohorts
- Directions for future research may include follow-up at additional time points, and comparison to the students’ peers who did not participate in the Pre-matriculation program

References