INTRODUCTION

- Students pursuing professional careers in allied health will work with populations that are culturally and linguistically diverse (Horvat et al., 2014).
- Education and cultural competency is critically important to providing health services to those of diverse populations (Horvat et al., 2014).
- Students in health science professions lack confidence when working among culturally diverse populations (Ah & Cassara, 2013).
- Multicultural education is often a topic left out in university curriculum (Smith et al., 2007), especially in foundational science courses.

Purpose

- Evaluate scientific knowledge and cultural competency in a group of undergraduate students taking a speech science course focused on culturally-related clinical applications.
- We hypothesized that participating in the speech science modules would increase confidence in scientific and diversity topics, improve topic knowledge accuracy, and increase cultural-related empathy.
- Module pre/post assessments were completed, including 5-point Likert ratings on their confidence in their own knowledge.
- At the beginning and end of the semester, students completed a 20-question empathy-assessment to assess changes in any beliefs, biases, or attitudes over the course of the semester (Gonzalez et al., 2021) (The Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire, 2006) (Wang et al., 2003).

RESULTS

- Mixed-effect model showed a significant improvement in content knowledge in the post-assessment ($p < .001$), with scores increasing from 77% to 87%, on average.
- Mixed-effect model revealed significantly increased confidence in module content ($p < .001$) with an average Likert increase of 1.6 points (Pre = 2.99/5, Post = 4.63/5).
- One sample t-test showed a significant improvement in empathy between the pre-semester and post-semester assessment ($p = .012$), increasing from 5.22/6 to 5.36/6.

METHODS

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Table 1. Learning objectives that guided module development.

Table 2. Five content areas for the educational modules.

DISCUSSION

- Overall, students were able to increase confidence and knowledge across scientific and culturally-relevant topic areas.
- Although the empathetic assessment only showed a 0.14/6 increase, this reflected a small-to-medium effect size improvement ($d = 0.38$). Questions that showed the largest change were related to Empathetic Perspective Taking, indicating students had a greater ability to put themselves into the place of someone else after viewing the modules.

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REFERENCES


