

Enhancing Medical Education through a Student-Centric NBME Style Item Writing Course

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Item writing skill is essential for Medical Educators

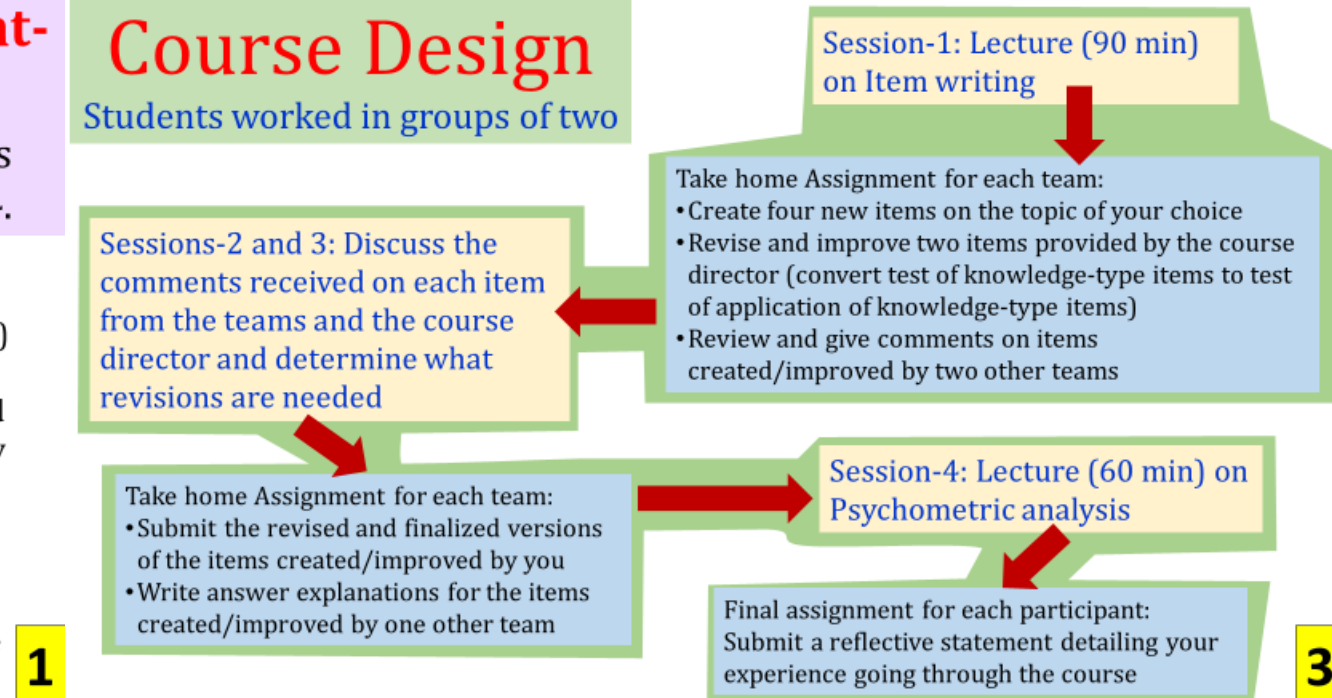
- NBME-style test of application of knowledge-type Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) are used for summative assessments
- They are also used for formative assessments like Team-based Learning and Flipped Classrooms which involve problem solving sessions and have been shown to be very effective modes of education
- They are highly preferred and very effective study materials for students to prepare for exams
- A sizable bank of such MCQs is a very useful resource in every medical school
- Medical schools with unique medical curricula have a greater imperative to produce skilled medical educators in addition to proficient physicians.

A course to instruct 3rd and 4th-year medical students on crafting NBME-style MCQs

- The "Item Writing Activity" was developed to offer third and fourth-year medical students interested in a career in medical education the chance to develop item writing skills.
- Goal of the course was to expand the school's question bank while also training the students for item writing
- Designed to enable students to gain experience in creating, reviewing, and enhancing NBME-style test of application of knowledge-type MCQs
- Course credits could be used towards Capstone Educational Project and a Health Professions Education certificate
- Offered virtually with live sessions since the students were involved in clinical rotations at different parts of the country
- Fourteen students participated in the course last summer when it was launched

Course Design

Students worked in groups of two



1

2

Results:

When the course was launched last summer, students generated 42 new items, all of which were subsequently incorporated into the school's question bank. Students' reflective statements revealed several benefits they gained from the course as follows:

- Students acquired a newfound confidence in item writing and learned its intricacies for the first time
- They learned the importance of peer review in item writing
- They got a sense of fulfilment by contributing to their institution
- Writing questions and answer explanations reinforced their understanding of the material
- Engaging in the item writing activity prompted them to reflect on and identify the key aspects of any given topic deemed critical for physicians, thereby highlighting elements worthy of examination.

Many students believed that engaging in this course would also benefit first and second-year medical students, as it could assist them in better preparing for their step exams.

In Conclusion, the course benefitted students interested in a career in medical education while also enriching the school's question bank

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