Creating Conflict:
Developing and using simulation to work through communication and conflict

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Introduction

- A core competency for collaborative practice is interprofessional communication:
  - Sub competency is "the use of respective language appropriate for a given difficult situation, crucial conversation, or conflict."[1]

- There are limited studies addressing the connection between power, hierarchy, and conflict in an interprofessional education setting.[2]

- There are limited educational experiences incorporating power related interactions.[3]

- Although role clarification is a component of interprofessional education, the power and hierarchy of these roles, and associated interactions, are often not addressed.
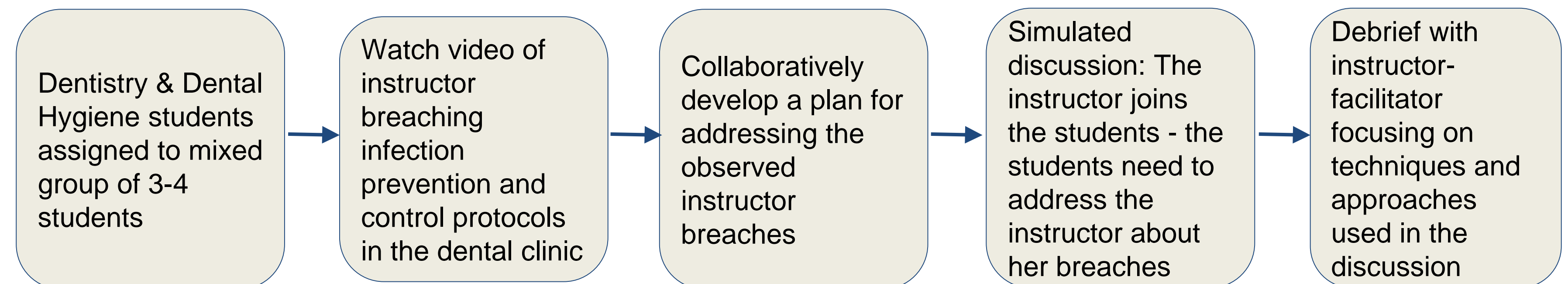
Process

In a lecture preceding the experience, learning materials outlining a set of techniques and interaction guidelines for addressing conflict situations were provided.

Some of the techniques reviewed:

- NOD - Name, Occupation, Duty

- SBAR - Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation

- CORBS - Clear, Owned, Regular, Balanced and Specific feedback[4]

- OBEFA - Open statement, Behavior, Effect, Feelings, Action feedback [5]

Simulated Experience

This simulation has been developed to present the students with a scenario where they observe one of their instructors breach infection prevention and control protocols. A total of eight breaches were included in the video, to ensure that at least one breach would be noticed. The students are then tasked to prepare and engage in a discussion with the instructor (using the tools available) to identify and address the noted breaches.

Dentistry & Dental Hygiene students assigned to mixed group of 3-4 students → Watch video of instructor breaching infection prevention and control protocols in the dental clinic → Collaboratively develop a plan for addressing the observed instructor breaches → Simulated discussion: The instructor joins the students - the students need to address the instructor about her breaches → Debrief with instructor-facilitator focusing on techniques and approaches used in the discussion

In this screen capture, the instructor has entered the operatory with the mask under her chin. The instructor should have disposed of the mask in the previous operatory, and put on a new mask. Also, the instructor's hair should be tied back.

In this screen capture, the instructor has finished with the patient, she uses her gloved hand to touch the back of the operator's chair to move it back out of the way. This contaminates the chair.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Informal feedback from the instructors and students suggest this was a positive learning experience. For students, the experience highlighted the need to collaborate and communicate when presented with a conflict situation. Next steps include a formal study of the simulated conflict situation.

This learning experience explores new horizons in interprofessional collaborative practice. Although interprofessional education often addresses working together, little attention has been given to how one successfully navigates conflict and how to work within a power differential (whether perceived or real) in real world situations.

References

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