

Co-Curricular Activities Documented by Student Pharmacists: The Iowa Experience

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Background

Affective domain elements of CAPE 2013 and ACPE standards 2016 have become increasingly important in pharmacy education. Co-curricular activities have been defined as activities, programs, and experiences that complement what students learn in the classroom. Involving students in co-curricular activities may enhance their ability to gain values and attitudes of a professional while practicing their knowledge and skills.

Objectives

1. Illustrate a method for integrating co-curricular activities into an experiential course
2. Describe the evolution of the course and data collection tool over the past nine years
3. Highlight trends in co-curricular activities

Methods

Co-curricular activities were categorized into three groups: leadership, service, and community engagement (Figure 1). Students coordinated all activities. Service and leadership activities were required to have a pharmacist preceptor at the event.

Minimum requirements for students were established (Figure 2) to ensure participation in self-selected, co-curricular activities. Students recorded participation in co-curricular activities using a computer database accompanied with written verification by an on-site supervisor. Students reflected on their experiences using different formats over the years (Figure 2).

Quantitative data regarding category and number of hours documented from August 2010 to May 2016 are summarized.

Figure 1: Current Categories of Co-Curricular Activities

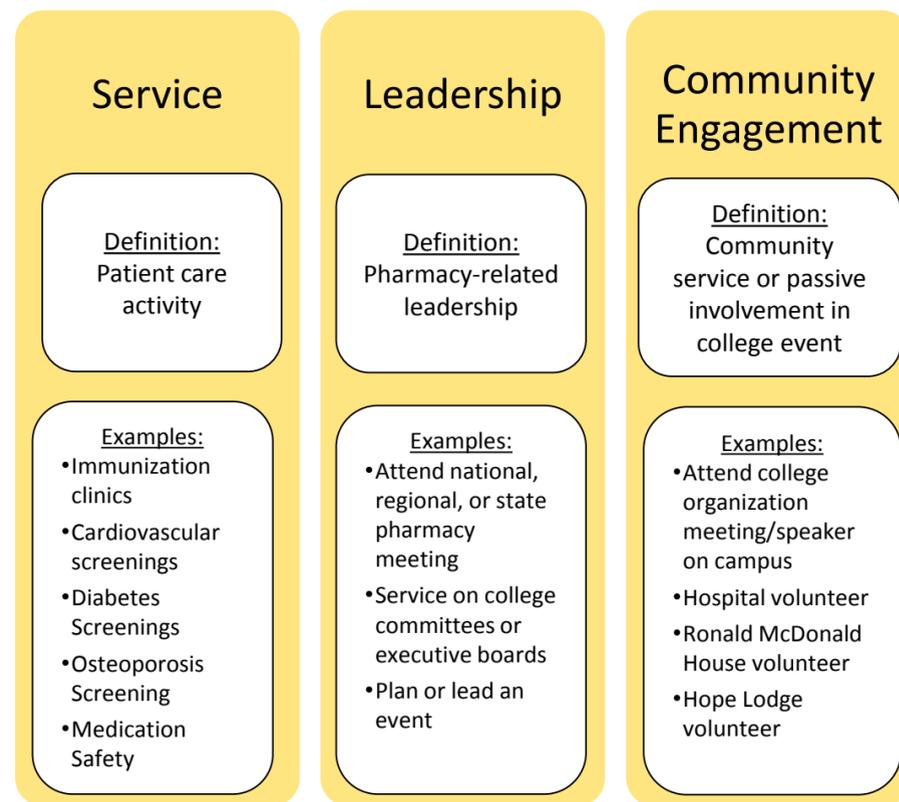


Figure 3: Co-Curricular Hours Documented by Academic Year

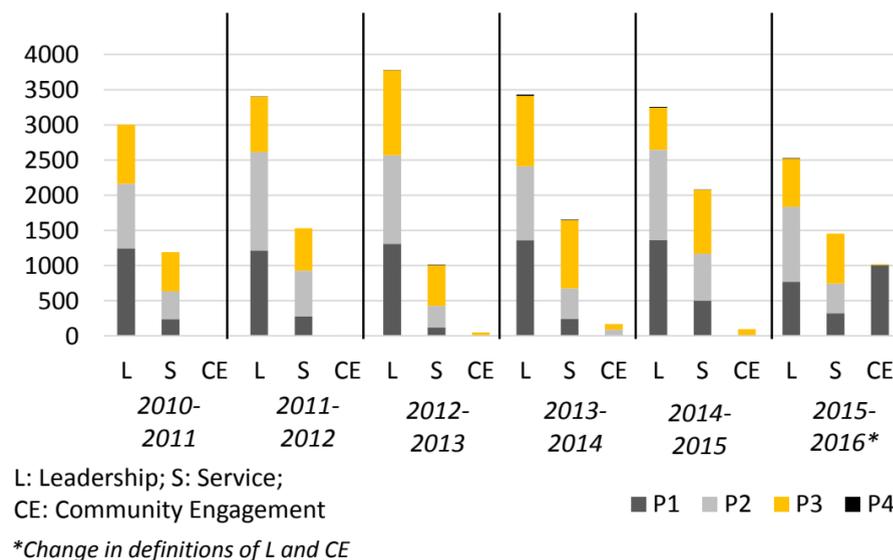
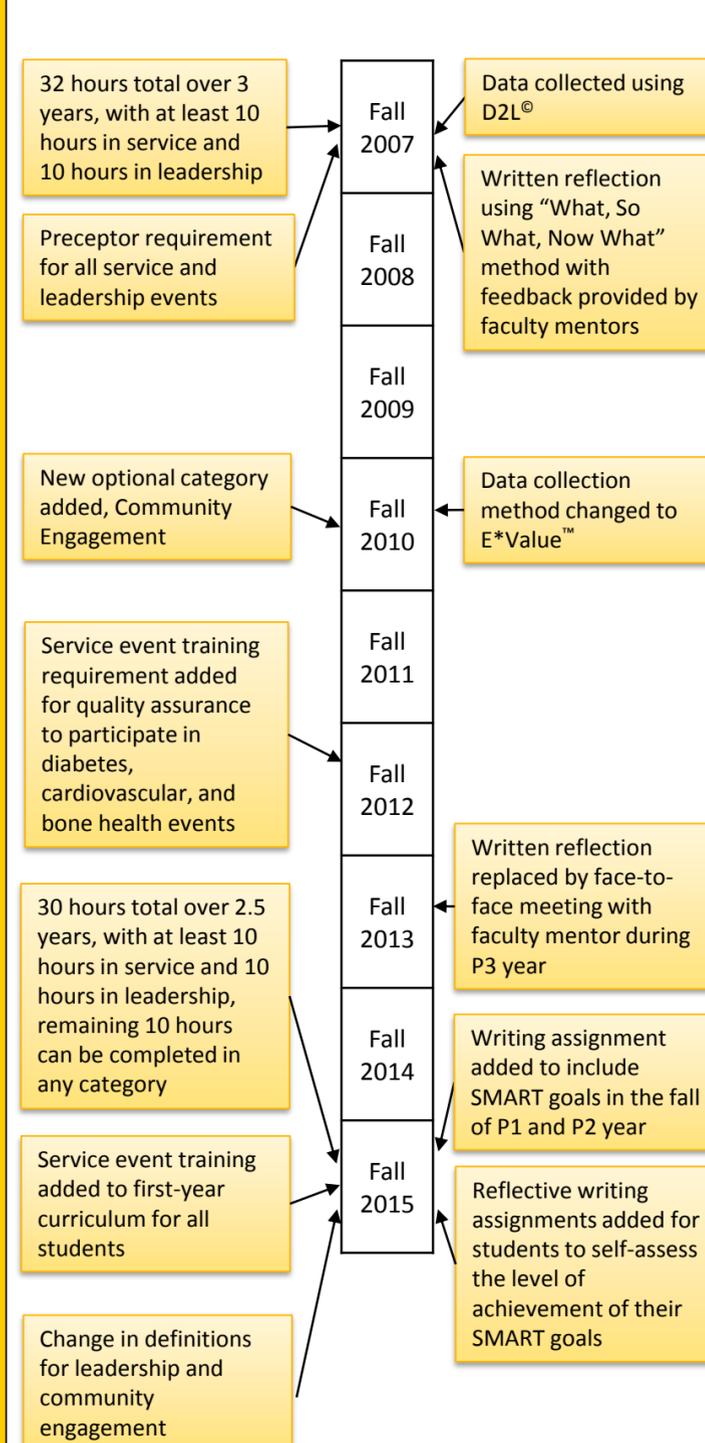


Figure 2: Course Evolution Timeline



Results

Since 2010, a total of 29,341 hours have been documented, including 8,920 hours of service, 19,414 hours of leadership, and 1,007 hours of community engagement (Figure 3). The most common activities were immunization clinics; cardiovascular, diabetes, and osteoporosis screenings; and student attendance at local, regional, state, or national pharmacy association meetings.

Course trends demonstrated students logged more hours in leadership than service activities; fewer P1 students participated in service activities; and the number of service hours temporarily decreased when new requirements were added (Figure 3).

In 2015, changes to the leadership and community engagement definitions and requirements were implemented. This led to the decrease in leadership hours and the increase in community engagement hours for that year (Figure 3).

Limitations

- Students may incorrectly categorize activities.
- Students may stop documenting hours after they have met requirements which may underrepresent the total engagement of students.
- Increasingly stringent requirements may have limited both the number of service events and student participation.

Conclusions/Implications

Based on student, preceptor, and faculty mentor feedback, the course has evolved to meet diverse learning needs of the student. Reflective assignments were modified to utilize the continuing professional development model to develop lifelong learners. The College has introduced a recognition program for students who have greatly exceeded the hour requirements.