

While a student of physical therapy at Regis University, I have learned skills throughout my education in various areas including; individual and group evidenced based practice, business, and professional skills. To develop these skills our classes pushed us to perform research, write evidenced-based papers, perform a narrative review, develop a business plan, and perform our hands-on skills in person. Throughout this process, my physical therapy skills have gone from knowing that I want to be a physical therapist to actually understanding what my role is, how to perform it, and how much more there is for me to learn.

During my first year in school I developed a poster for our biomechanics class on muscle contractions. The creation of this poster was technically difficult as I had never done something like it before. I had also never performed research like the kind we had to do. I remember feeling very stressed as the work from my other classes piled on and my desire to be perfect was high. While the poster was not my best work, the development of it prepared me for the final poster I created to present my narrative review. All of our evidence-based classes helped prepare me for my final narrative review project. While at one time learning the best routes to research physical therapy was hard to remember by the time I was researching my narrative review topic, I could much more easily navigate the research field.

A few of our evidence-based projects were individual and group. The individual projects such as my case report from clinical rotation II and my clinical inservices pushed me to utilize the research and writing skills I gathered in class. When I was preparing for my first inservice

with one other classmate in my rotation, the presentation seemed daunting. I felt that no matter what we presented it would not be good enough for people who were already working in the field. I knew that they would all know everything we had to share. Yet even though I was incredibly nervous, all of the physical therapists that we presented to were interested in what we had to share. They even asked us questions. By the time I had to present my final inservice I was still nervous. This time though, my rotation was longer and therefore I had worked with the staff for a longer amount of time. This provided me the opportunity to learn what kinds of things they were interested in and what they found helpful. I presented on a topic that they could use for future treatment groups: Tai Chi in post-stroke inpatient rehabilitation. The physical therapists loved it and started to plan when they could host the group.

Group projects like the narrative review and CME helped me learn in a way I never expected. When we work on things individually, there is a tendency to work linearly, in the way we know. When I was able to work in groups, all of a sudden it seemed there were different ways to examine the same topic and a better, more thorough end-result presented itself. This was eye opening and very important to learn as physical therapy is not a profession that is performed in isolation. I saw this more clearly in school. In labs, and outside of them, we practiced hands-on skills with each other. In doing this we were able to also learn from each other. We learned what where we could push a little more or where we should back off. This helped me to become a better practitioner.

Going forward I will continue to utilize the expertise of my peers when I feel as though I need clarification on a skill, new creative ideas for treatment, or problem-solving ideas. I have

found that working with others may often bring me to a better solution than I may have found on my own.