

Chapter 12

Transforming Education in Health Care Administration and Opticianry

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ABSTRACT

Health care administration and opticianry are both health care professions, but moving in different directions and both in need of transformation. Opticianry, once a time-honored endeavor, is now floundering to find a direction for the future, while health administration has flourished and has a very bright future in the changing face of health care delivery. This chapter provides background and insights into the history of both fields and some of the recent changes in technology that have affected them that necessitates transforming the way future students are educated and trained. A review of the current literature of both fields provides ample evidence of the need for transforming curricula as technology and health professions continue to rapidly evolve. This technological evolution demands transformation of the educational process.

INTRODUCTION

Health care has changed rapidly in recent years, clinically and administratively, so educators must also evolve to meet the needs of the field. The overarching theme of this book is the transformation of higher education in the health sciences, especially as it relates to evolving technology. Based upon the way technology is changing

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the face of the delivery of care, there is a need to transform the methods currently utilized to educate and train future health providers of all types. The providers of tomorrow must be well prepared to assume leadership roles. New pedagogical and andragogical approaches must be implemented that will assure students meet these demands.

This chapter will address those significant changes in the education and training in two specific fields: health administration and opticianry. Technology has advanced allowing consistently high level eye care but has not effectively evolved to meet those demands. Those preparing for roles as Health Administrators also have a plethora of technological advances that place demands on the field.

THE OVERARCHING EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Transformative learning is “a deep, structural shift in basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions” (Transformative Learning Centre, 2004, para 1) or a complex, multi-faceted approach to learning (Kitchenham, 2008). Health care in the United States is also transforming as the largest health reform in history is implemented. This reform includes the use of additional technology, such as electronic medical records, like never before. This is resulting in a transformation in the way health science education should be delivered.

The days of the professor standing at the front of the classroom with a chalk board (now whiteboard) and podium still exist, but alternate educational modalities are quickly becoming the norm at many institutions of higher education today. Do educators who continue to use this tried and true “sage on the stage” philosophy relate well to more technology-savvy students, or do others who use a more modern approach that utilizes technology to at least enhance their classrooms have better outcomes? This is an important discussion across academia, and one those in the health sciences must be engaged in.

There is still much to be said for an excellent professor providing scintillating instruction in the classroom to eager students. However, contemporary students may be more attuned to technology, such as cell phones, tablets, and other applications and devices and may not prefer the required 50 minute class every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Many prefer the freedom of online learning via their college or university’s Learning Management System (LMS) that delivers content to them where and when they need it. There are several studies that note online learning can provide students with an equitable educational experience (Black, Beck, Dawson, Jinks & DiPietro, 2007; Catherall, 2008; Adult Education, 2014). These systems are now evolving, and can be utilized on mobile devices most university students carry

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