

TEACHING INTERNSHIP IN MASTER'S DEGREE IN DENTAL SCIENCES: AN EXPERIENCE REPORT

ESTÁGIO DOCÊNCIA NA FORMAÇÃO DO MESTRE EM CIÊNCIAS ODONTOLÓGICAS:
RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA
PRÁCTICAS DOCENTES EN LA EDUCACIÓN DEL MÁSTER EN CIENCIAS DENTALES:
INFORME DE EXPERIENCIA

RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA

RESUMO

As universidades são importantes formadoras de opinião e geradoras de conhecimento ancoradas nos pilares de ensino, pesquisa e extensão. Assim, foi estabelecido que o mestrando/doutorando seja inserido nessas atividades sob supervisão. O presente estudo é um relato sobre as atividades desenvolvidas e a experiência vivenciada no Estágio Docência no curso de Odontologia da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte. O estágio teve duração de um ano, tendo início no segundo semestre de 2018 como estágio voluntário, e conclusão no primeiro semestre de 2019 como estágio obrigatório. Desenvolveu-se um plano de docência assistida e um relatório semestral como pré-requisito do estágio. O Estágio Docência proporcionou uma oportunidade de inter-relacionamento que foi além do conteúdo e dos planos, excedendo a expectativa ao lidar com situações complexas.

Palavras-Chave: *Ensino; Odontologia; Relações interpessoais.*

ABSTRACT

Universities are important opinion-makers and knowledge generators anchored in the pillars of teaching, research, and extension. Thus, it was established that the master and doctorate students should be included in these activities under supervision. The present study is a report about the activities developed and the experience lived in the Teaching Internship in the Dentistry course of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. The internship lasted one year starting in the second semester of 2018 as a voluntary internship and concluding in the first semester of 2019 as a compulsory internship. An assisted teaching plan and a semiannual report were developed as a prerequisite for the internship. The teaching internship provided an opportunity for interrelationship that went beyond content and plans, exceeding the expectation of dealing with complex situations.

Keywords: *Teaching; Dentistry; Interpersonal relations.*

RESUMEN

Las universidades son importantes formadores de opinión y generadores de conocimiento anclados en los pilares de la enseñanza, la investigación y la extensión. Por lo tanto, se estableció que el estudiante de maestría / doctorado está incluido en estas actividades bajo supervisión. El presente estudio es un recuento de las actividades desarrolladas y la experiencia vivida en la pasantía de enseñanza en el curso de Odontología en la Universidad Federal de Rio Grande do Norte. La pasantía duró un año, comenzando en el segundo semestre de 2018 como una pasantía voluntaria, y concluyó en el primer semestre de 2019 como una pasantía obligatoria. Se desarrolló un plan de enseñanza asistida y un informe semestral como requisito previo para la pasantía. La pasantía de enseñanza brindó la oportunidad de interrelaciones que iban más allá del contenido y los planes, superando las expectativas cuando se trata de situaciones complejas.

Palabras-Clave: *Enseñanza; Odontología; Relaciones Interpersonales.*

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INTRODUCTION

Universities are important institutions for being opinion-makers and knowledge generators anchored in the pillars of teaching, research, and extension. These pillars indicate that teaching should not be limited to the transmission of information, but rather in the course of a critical-reflective stance of students. Research should be conducted in all areas of knowledge bringing subsidies to science and society. Finally, extension should ensure the return on education investments to the community⁽¹⁻⁸⁾.

In this context, in order to standardize the activity of the Teaching Internship, the Brazilian Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) published Ordinance No. 76 of April 14, 2010, which establishes that the Master's/Doctoral students must be included in educational activities under the supervision of an advisor, with the internship lasting at least one semester for the master's degree, and two semesters for the doctorate degree⁽⁹⁾.

In 2018, the Master Course of the Postgraduate Program in Dental Sciences (PPGCO) was implanted at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN), providing in its curriculum the Teaching Internship or Assisted Teaching. It refers to the performance of postgraduate students (master's and doctorate) in academic activities developed in undergraduate courses under the direct supervision of a teacher of the institution's effective staff, contributing to their training for teaching. This internship is regulated by CONSEPE Resolution No. 063/201010 and is an important step in the future teacher education process because it is an experience whose postgraduate student test his/her knowledge, autonomy, creativity, and involvement in various teaching-learning situations and the constant challenges of pedagogical practice.

Assisted teaching has a workload of 45 h distributed over a semester (minimum of 06 h and a maximum of 12 h per week). It is the responsibility of the Pedagogical Coordination of Post-rectory and its general objective is to trigger a critical reflection on teaching, the teaching-learning process, and teacher education in Brazilian higher education, considering the triad teaching, research, and extension in the integration of postgraduate with undergraduate. Still, it is important for the postgraduate student to demonstrate

their ability to identify and face everyday challenges and understand that being a teacher is not only reproducing knowledge but also encouraging students to build concepts, values, skills, and competences^(2,5-8,11,12).

As a requirement of the Teaching Internship, the master's/doctorate student must prepare an Action Plan or Assisted Teaching Plan which is a semester planning of the performance of the postgraduate student, prepared in conjunction with the supervising teacher of Assisted Teaching (responsible for the component). The component teacher should guide the student in the elaboration of the plan, and supervise the work developed in the semester and / or internship year. In addition, the student cannot replace the teacher responsible for the curricular component. At the end of the internship, a report should be written to describe the activities performed and the student's perception of the internship including criticism and suggestions.

Given the importance of this experience for the professional education of future teachers, this paper aims to report the activities developed and the experience of teaching in undergraduate dentistry in the curricular component pre-clinic I taught to classes of the 4th period of the undergraduate Dentistry course at UFRN.

METHODS

This study is an experience report with a descriptive and explanatory design of a master's student of the PPGCO at UFRN about the Teaching Internship held in Pre-clinic I of the undergraduate Dentistry course. The internship lasted for one year, starting in the second semester of 2018 as a voluntary internship and concluding in the first semester of 2019 as a compulsory internship, under the supervision of a professor supervising doctor and effective teacher of the said Postgraduate Program, in addition to the teachers who participated in this curriculum component. During the volunteer internship, the meetings took place in one shift per week, and in the obligatory internship, two shifts per week.

Pre-clinic I has a total workload of 150 h, of which 60 h is of theoretical content and 90 h of practical content. The syllabus of the course consists of: knowledge of the characteristics and handling of direct restorative dental materials used to protect the

dentin-pulp complex, in temporary and definitive restorations with amalgam and composite resin, as well as the proper handling of their residues; Understanding of dental bleaching techniques in vitalized teeth; Laboratory study of the direct preparations and filling techniques with amalgam and composite resin; Contextualization of dental materials with technological innovation.

Activities related to higher education teaching were developed, such as the elaboration of an Assisted Teaching Plan and participation in practical classes and evaluation activities. At the end of the internship, a report was built to describe the activities performed and the student's perception of the internship including criticism and suggestions. This experience report is based on experiences assimilated by living with students and teachers of the curriculum component and the challenges faced.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Teaching Internship aims to insert the master's/doctorate student in teaching practice, experiencing the three pillars of the university (teaching, research, and extension) and involves it with activities in the classroom, research and extension projects, as well as with the accompaniment of undergraduate students in laboratories and comprehensive clinics.

Thus, planning is part of teaching and I was able to experience this process through knowledge of the subject's syllabus, the classes with which I would act, the program content, and references used. The course plan of the course was already prepared by the teachers since it must be done weeks or even months before the beginning of the term because it requires the approval of the department. But the postgraduate student, as a requirement of the internship, must elaborate an Assisted Teaching Plan which is a semiannual planning of his work, prepared in conjunction with the teaching supervisor teacher so that he can familiarize himself with the process of pedagogical planning. This plan was prepared according to the objectives of the course, the time available, and the most appropriate methodology (Table 1).

Table 1 – Assisted teaching plan developed for the Teaching Internship of the Dental Sciences Postgraduate Program of Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. Natal/Rio Grande do Norte

BACKGROUND FOR CHOOSING THE CURRICULAR COMPONENT

The course aims to provide students with technical and scientific knowledge, enabling them to perform pre-clinical direct restorative procedures with amalgam and composite resin.

In this way, the curricular component will provide me with experience in the teaching process through a supportive involvement and support to the students in all technical and practical steps throughout the course.

OBJECTIVES

Encourage students to understand the importance of technical-scientific knowledge for application in clinical practice. Approach them to the methods and techniques of procedures and laboratory techniques of various dental materials contextualizing with technological and scientific innovation. Collaborate with the teaching-learning process through the exchange of knowledge and coexistence in dental practice.

ACTIVITIES

Activity: Material planning and theoretical and practical activities;

Activity Frequency: Weekly;

Activity load: 35 h;

Activity Objectives: Plan the activities and materials that will be used during the course.

Methodologies of the activity: Preparation of dialogued lectures together with the responsible teacher and organization of materials that will be used in practical classes.

How to evaluate the activity and methodologies used: The responsible teacher will evaluate if the material planning and theoretical/practical activities elaborated by me are in accordance with the subject's syllabus and will advise on possible modifications in the chosen methodology.

Activity: Acting in theoretical-practical class;

Activity Frequency: Weekly;

The workload of the activity: 60 h;

Activity Objectives: To teach theoretical classes and laboratory practices.

Methodologies of the activity: Dialogued lecture through the projection of slides following the content contained in the course syllabus. Guide students during practical classes on the development of techniques to be performed, on the posture in the clinic, and the organization of materials.

How to evaluate the activity and methodologies used: The student will be evaluated for their participation, commitment, contribution, appropriation of content, behavior, and posture both in the classroom and in the laboratory. In addition, the workbench organization, materials, and use of personal protective equipment will be reviewed.

Activity: Application of tests and evaluation activities;

Activity Frequency: Monthly;

Activity load: 15 h;

Activity Objectives: Assist the teaching staff in the application of tests and evaluative activities of the curricular component.

Methodologies of the activity: Assist the teacher in the delivery, collection of exams/activities, and advise on some questions presented by students.

How to evaluate the activity and methodologies employed: The student will be evaluated for their seriousness, responsibility, and honesty during the activity.

Activity: Correction of evaluations;
Activity Frequency: Monthly;
The workload of the activity: 20 h;
Activity Objectives: Correct the activities and exams performed by the students.
Activity Methodologies: Correction of theoretical and practical activities individually and feedback will be discussed collectively.
How to evaluate the activity and methodologies used: From the evaluations performed, will be evaluated the performance of students throughout the semester and, depending on the result, the teaching methodology can be changed for better assimilation of content by the student.

Activity: Concerns/Group Attendance
Activity Frequency: Weekly;
The workload of the activity: 20 h;
Activity Objectives: Provide a fixed time to attend the students and answer their doubts about the course content.
Methodologies of the activity: The schedules will be available before or after the theoretical and practical classes.
How to evaluate the activity and methodologies employed: Observe the frequency and participation of the student.

Source: Elaborated by the author, 2018.

Initially, the Teaching Internship generated anxiety, doubts, and insecurity since I did not know how to behave as an intern teacher, nor what I should talk to the students. Fortunately, it all happened in a pleasurable and enriching way since a student-teacher relationship was created, sharing knowledge and practices. In this context, it was observed that it is up to the teacher to enable methods to stimulate, motivate, guide, and instigate the students' commitment to their education.

During the internship, the preclinic teachers shared the roles between them and the interns. The classes were separated by lab benches and each teacher and intern was responsible for a bench with approximately ten students to divide and optimize the orientations. It is important to point out the consumables used in public universities that are often missing or not enough for a large class. In addition, many equipments end up breaking due to high student turnover in clinics and laboratories and difficulty getting maintenance. The discussion about this issue is relevant to the teaching experience since it is multifactorial and promotes a reflection on the logistics of public higher education institutions and their financial and infrastructure difficulties caused by the lack of resources^(4,6,12).

This shows that even with these difficulties, teachers can look for alternatives in times of scarcity of resources in order to minimize damage to students.

Ideally, the institution should be able to provide the necessary amount to meet that number of students and a favorable environment for the execution of the activities, but this is not always possible and, therefore, we must think of alternatives to deal with this situation and preserve teaching of quality.

The evaluation process was significant for my teaching experience. In it, I was able to organize evaluative activities such as circuit and participate in the process of correcting practical tests. At first, this process was seen as a major challenge as some students asked me for a personal grade for a particular procedure they were performing and so, it was possible to understand how complex it is to evaluate, and the evaluation is beyond a role with questions, it also evaluates the relationships built in the classroom, the dialogues, and the students' behavior^(5,11,13). Still, it is necessary to bring the importance of the active methodologies strategy to the teacher training, since, with it, there is an improvement of the teaching-learning process in the perspective of linking theory and practice, developing the reflexive capacity, and facilitating the absorption of knowledge⁽⁷⁾.

When talking about a student's assessment and its complexity, it is relevant to address the context that embraces that individual. In my experience at this stage, I will always take with me some students who stood out in my career due to the difficulties they presented. As an observant person, I found that students were committed and hardworking to learn, many were also frustrated because they had not yet developed their manual dexterity. Most were able to complete their assignments on time except for three dedicated and hardworking students who mastered the theory but had difficulty in practice. I also noticed that some were more introverted, didn't talk much, and hardly called a tutor to evaluate their development.

Evaluating these students made me uneasy: What could I, as an intern teacher, do for them? What is available to me at this time and in this condition? I took my remarks to the supervising teacher and the course coordinator and both agreed with my scores and confirmed that those students really needed a differentiated approach by the teaching staff in order to continue their development effectively. In fact, the barrier between student and teacher was gradually breaking down and those students were gaining greater confidence and freedom to resolve their doubts

with colleagues and faculty.

In this perspective, it is worth mentioning the study by Gerez et al (2018)⁽⁴⁾, which reports on students of the undergraduate degree course in History, which shows that not even these future teachers who are directed to teaching feel prepared regarding the various situations inherent to their professional activity such as teacher vs student conflicts, student disinterest, lack of public investment and professional disability⁴. Ribeiro et al (2015)⁽²⁾ reinforces that pedagogical relations are challenging since each actor involved in this process brings with them a background of knowledge and experiences and, therefore, it is important to develop strategies for sharing, planning, and periodic evaluations of the work process⁽²⁾.

However, it is disturbing to see a growing consensus and concern about the training of dentistry professors in universities. Postgraduate programs direct the training of researchers with limited technical expertise, focusing on research and scientific production activity⁸. Still, the training received by the postgraduate students is highly specialized and lacks the social foundations, the humanities, and the epidemiological aspects. Therefore, there is a need for change in postgraduate education that will positively reflect directly on undergraduate⁽¹⁴⁾.

Teaching, besides being enriching in all aspects (educational, biopsychosocial, economic, and political), involves the teaching-learning process, as something intrinsic, continuous and changeable, which occurs throughout life and in all environments. It enables the construction and deconstruction of concepts, breaking barriers, and overcoming difficulties. Still, it is not a simple and easy process as there can be positive and negative influences along the way such as complexity in dealing with people, didactic resource issues, changing methodologies, and infrastructure issues^(2,4,6,11-13,15).

At the end of the internship, a report was prepared to describe the activities performed and the student's perception of the internship including criticism and suggestions as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Final report developed for the Teaching Internship of the Dental Sciences Postgraduate Program of Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. Natal/Rio Grande do Norte.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES
Evaluation Correction
Results Obtained: I participated in the sum of the points of the first practical test of some students and the evaluation of the instruments arranged on the bench.
Difficulties Found: None
Performance in theoretical and/or practical class
Results Obtained: In practical classes, students constantly called me to ask questions and check if the procedures were being done properly. It was very gratifying and enriching to help these students in their formation and to have created an affective bond with more than half of the class. Recognition as a good tutor by these students was of paramount importance to my development as a teacher.
Difficulties Found: Difficulty in giving a personal grade to the student's procedure.
Evaluation Application
Results Obtained: Two practical tests were applied and occurred quietly. The first was to make restoration and the second was a circuit composed of 7 evaluations. My posture was more serious and the process occurred naturally.
Difficulties Found: None
Group Service
Results Obtained: In all labs, I tried to attend everyone in the class, but I always tried to cover only 2 workbenches. Overall, I was always busy directly following 10 students regarding their questions and progress of the procedure. It was a rewarding time to help them when they could not accomplish something or give any tips to improve their performance.
Difficulties Found: None
Contribution Analysis for Teacher Education: The process of assisted teaching is very enriching in both professional and personal ways. In it, I could realize how important a dedicated, caring, interested teacher, among other qualities, is important for student development. It is a time of learning for both parties and one that will be kept in memory to always remember the pleasures of being a knowledge sharer.
Suggestions: Trainees should be more knowledgeable about the activities to be performed in the labs as students often ask us what the activity will be like and we do not know the answer. There was a problem with the university online system that removed the internships from the class view and so we were blinded. The schedule of the discipline could also be modified. As an example, it could be added or change labs to insert only teachers' demonstration of restorative techniques. This kind of didactics helps considerably in fixing the content prior to the practice.

Source: Elaborated by the author, 2018.

This experience report shows the importance of always being aware of the students, trying to understand their signs and their difficulties, and taking them to the faculty so that strategies for improving the methodology and performance of these students are discussed.

CONCLUSIONS

The teaching internship provided an opportunity for interrelationship that went beyond content and plans, exceeding my own expectation as I dealt with complex situations such as some students requesting a personal grade of a laboratory procedure and the dilemma of how to help a student with social and manual difficulties.

Recognition as a good tutor by these students was of paramount importance to me and all this experience enabled a great growth as a professional and exchange of knowledge and experiences, in view of the relationship with teachers, undergraduate research fellow, technicians, assistants, and cleaning staff which favored my maturation as an internship teacher and future master at PPGCO at UFRN with concentration in dental clinics. I could see how important a dedicated, thoughtful, interested teacher, among other qualities, is for student development. It is a time of learning for both parties that will be recorded in memory.

Even with many positive points for enrichment as a future master, it is worth pointing out some negative factors as a suggestion to improve this learning process: the absence of meetings with other internship master's/doctorate students in order to share the experiences in the classroom mediated by a teacher supervisor; the need for studies that evaluate the perception of undergraduates regarding the influence of the teaching internship on their education; The internships could suggest changes in the schedules of the subjects to try to improve the follow-up of the classes since we once were undergraduate students and we were able to identify some methodological problems during the practices inserted in the curricular components.

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