Efficacy of traditional and online methods for teaching of canine vaginal cytology interpretation to veterinary students: Preliminary study

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ABSTRACT

Sixty-nine third-year veterinary students elected completion either of a traditional laboratory, in which collection and interpretation of canine vaginal cytology specimens was demonstrated and students completed an assignment using prepared glass slides, or an online course, in which students read material and viewed videos reviewing collection and interpretation of vaginal cytology specimens and then completed an assignment online using images of vaginal cytology specimens. All students were then asked to complete a final assessment, using glass slides. Sixteen (23.3%) completed the final assessment. There was no significant difference in scores between those students who took the traditional course and those students who took the online course, nor between students who worked alone and those who worked with a group. In answering questions about the students’ perceptions of their computer skills, the laboratory sessions, and their competence in interpretation of canine vaginal cytology specimens in a clinical setting, the only significant difference was in the students’ perception of their computer skills, which was perceived to be better in the group that chose the online version of the laboratory. Student evaluation and these results were used to create a blended course that will be implemented in the next academic year.

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