



MEDICAL EDUCATION
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Ranking the CanMEDS roles: Comparing perceptions of undergraduate health sciences students

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Purpose: Investigate how undergraduate students in the faculties of Medicine and Nursing perceive the relative importance of each of the CanMEDS roles. **Methods:** A five-item questionnaire was distributed either in-person or electronically to each year, or class, of enrolment in Medicine and Nursing at Memorial University. The questionnaire consisted of four questions requesting descriptive information including program, year of study, gender, and age. The main question provided a brief history of the CanMEDS roles, offered a concise description of each CanMEDS role, and then asked the responder to rank the roles from 1 to 7 in order of importance ('1' = least important and '7' = most important). Upon data collection, points were awarded inversely proportional to the rank, where the top-ranked role scored 7 points and the lowest-ranked role received 1 point. Mean scores were compared between and within faculties through Mann-Whitney U test. **Results:** Questionnaires were completed by 171 medical students and 108 nursing students. Both faculties ranked Medical Expert as most important, although a higher score was given by medical students (6.41 v. 5.74, $p < 0.001$). The Professional role was ranked 3rd overall by medical students compared to 5th overall by nursing students (scores 4.53 v. 4.12, $p = 0.008$). The Collaborator role was scored significantly higher by nursing students than by medical students (4.58 v. 3.62, $p < 0.001$) and was ranked 3rd overall compared to 5th overall. **Conclusion:** The results indicate areas or specific roles to address in interprofessional education sessions or in the larger-scale curriculum.