

students in business were taught by using models or regular psychology teaching. Comparison of test results at the end of the course showed the superiority of teaching medicine students by case studies and business students by models, as compared with regular teaching. The importance of applying in each discipline the teaching and cognitive styles characteristic for the discipline is emphasised.

### Structuring the capstone experience in psychology

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In academia, a capstone usually refers to a course or project that synthesises the knowledge learned during a student's academic career. The goals of nearly all capstone experiences are to have students develop the skills that go beyond the ability to simply summarise and evaluate the information they have learned. In this talk, I briefly outline the learning objectives that are generally associated with the capstone experience including (a) critical thinking, (b) scientific writing, (c) information literacy, (d) research methods and data analysis skills, (e) interpersonal skills and an appreciation of diversity, (f) frameworks for knowledge, (g) history as a context, and (h) ethics and values (Dunn & McCarthy, 2010). Next, I describe a number of different approaches to the capstone experience in psychology including (a) history and systems courses, (b) honors or independent studies/thesis requirements, (c) service learning: internships / practicum / field-work, (d) senior seminars or integrative experiences, (e) courses that extend the core, (f) issues-oriented capstone courses, (g) psychology as portrayed in the media, (h) advanced laboratory/research Options, and (i) serving as a teaching assistant/tutor. Finally, I will relate the capstone experience to assessment and address the important learning outcomes to be addressed for assessment purposes including the ability to (a) write in a clear, organized and effective manner, (b) speak effectively and intelligently, (c) work well in groups or teams, (d) make well-reasoned decisions, (e) use information resources effectively, (f) critically evaluate information, (g) understand the theories and perspectives of the discipline, and (h) use research skills (Murphy, 2008).

### Promoting success in psychology and beyond: The first year learning initiative

**Michelle Miller** *Northern Arizona University, United States of America; Blase Scarnati*

In the United States, introductory psychology is one of the most popular course selections for first-year college students. Yet like other foundational college courses, this course often suffers from high rates of poor grades and withdrawal. Patterns of student performance in introductory psychology at Northern Arizona University (NAU), Arizona, USA suggest that student non-participation and lack of productive effort are major factors underlying low student success. This may be part of a larger problem with student engagement such as that noted by authors Arum and Roksa in their recent book *Academically Adrift*. To address this issue, we created the First Year Learning Initiative (FYLI), a unique program for designing and delivering foundational courses primarily serving first-year students. FYLI

emphasises student effort and accountability, multi-section coordination and best pedagogical practices, with three specific groups of objectives that all FYLI courses must meet: Socialising students for excellence, course design, and alignment. To earn FYLI certification, course coordinators participate in a series of development meetings aimed at redesigning the course to meet FYLI objectives. FYLI has a remarkable degree of appeal to faculty, as evidenced by voluntary participation by over thirty-five teams in less than one year's time. We believe that the FYLI program could be adapted to the needs of other institutions seeking ways to promote pedagogical best practices and student success in introductory courses.

### Perceptions of psychologists regarding the use of religion and spirituality in therapy

**Samantha Naicker** *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa; Ottilia Brown* *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa; Diane Elkonin*

In the past the use of religion and spirituality were seen as taboo in therapy. Now there is evidence of an integration between psychology and religion and spirituality. Recently, studies have proved the success of using religion and spirituality to cope with psychological disorders, prevent unhealthy behaviours and promote resilience. Despite this, little research has tapped psychologists' perceptions of this matter. This study aimed to explore the perceptions of psychologists in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality regarding the use of religion and spirituality in therapy. Purposive sampling was employed to obtain a sample, and focus groups were used to collect data. The sample consisted of 15 registered psychologists. The data was analysed using Tesch's model of qualitative content analysis. Thirty two themes and forty four subthemes emerged from this process. The participants emphasised that religion and spirituality are coping mechanisms for both clients and psychologists. Most of the participants indicated that they were willing to discuss religion and spirituality with their clients if they brought it up. The participants highlighted factors that made it possible for them to engage with their clients on religious and spiritual levels, and factors that made it difficult for them to do so. An important factor was the lack of training for psychologists on religious and spiritual issues in psychology. Based on the results, this study may influence professional training in psychology.

### Do we need clinical psychology in medicine? Considerations for a Singapore

**Nenna Ndukwe** *James Cook University, Singapore*

It is well recognized that chronic medical conditions can have a significant impact on an individual's emotional wellbeing. In particular, medical conditions can generate psychological issues such as anxiety and depression, which in turn could precipitate poor coping, poor adjustment and non adherence to treatment. In addition, concerns around prognosis and diagnosis are often central to the psychological problems associated with chronic illness. Thus, there has been considerable interest in the services of clinical psychologists within medical settings globally. However, few studies have explored the value of clinical psychology in Asian

medical settings. This presentation reviews the existing literature and discusses the value of clinical psychology in medical settings in Singapore, where the profession is still being established. The objective was to illustrate how psychological input can improve symptom management, quality of life, and adherence to treatment in medical settings in Singapore. It was concluded that there is a valuable role for clinical psychologists in Singaporean medical settings. Psychological management can improve symptom management, quality of life, adherence to treatment and self efficacy.

### Psychology students' satisfaction by the level of education worldwide

**Anna Sagana** *Maastricht University, Greece*

Over the more recent years, we witness a trend on revising the standards for performing the profession of psychologist (ex EuroPsy). Those revisions have sub-sequentially led to changes on the curriculum of psychology students. But how do students perceive those changes? Do they feel that they get all that is required to enter the professional world? If yes, what is the price to be paid? The aim of the symposium is to summarise the latest advances over psychologists' education worldwide and assess their impact on students. The discussion will be facilitated by a follow-up study, to the one presented during the 27th International Congress of Applied Psychology (Potocnik, 2010), on students' satisfaction. The goal is to extract and combine the positive aspects, while taking into consideration the wants of students and with it the need for a high standard of professional practice.

### A comparison between the indicators for evaluating teachers in China and Japan

**Hechuan Sun** *Shenyang Normal University, China*

This research was a part of a large national project on teacher effectiveness and quality in mainland China. The whole project started in 2007 and lasted until 2011. To assess teacher's effectiveness and quality, evaluation systems with scientific indicators were needed. It was necessary to have a close look at the teacher evaluation indicators in other countries so as to improve the indicators for teacher evaluation and quality in China. To this end, this study tried to find useful and scientific indicators for evaluating teacher effectiveness and quality from seven advanced countries. Japan was one of them. This paper is based on the final report of the project. It introduced the aim and the background of this study. In the literature review part, the key conceptions were defined and the theories of educational assessment, teacher evaluation, teacher effectiveness and efficacy were reviewed. The third part introduced the research methodology of this study. Both qualitative (to build up the research framework and to form the questionnaires for empirical part) and quantitative (to investigate whether the Japanese teacher evaluation indicators can be used in China or not) research methods were used, including thematic interviews, distributing questionnaires to over 1220 school administrators and teachers all over Liaoning Province, in addition, SPSS 11.5, EXCEL and factor analysis were used to analyse the collected data and the feedback. Finally, what China and Japan can learn from each other in