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## Conference abstract

# Online Basic Science Elective Course: From Theory to Implementation

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Elective courses can contribute to both the professional and personal development of medical students in specific areas of interest outside of the standard curriculum. Alexandria Faculty of Medicine offered different elective courses since the start of the integrated medical program in 2009. The offered electives were mainly designed and implemented by clinical department as specialty specific electives. It becomes a mandate since implementation of the new medical program 5+ 2 in 2018. With the start of the new curriculum, humanities and miscellaneous electives were added to the list. Basic science departments were encouraged by the administration to offer new elective courses. Hybrid and pure online courses were also preferred specially after Covid -19 pandemic.

**Aim of the work:** The current research aimed to express our experience about using six step approach of curriculum design to develop a basic science hybrid elective course.

**Methods:** A basic science elective course was created, on the basis of the six-step approach [problem identification, needs assessment, writing measurable objectives, choosing proper teaching methods, implementation and evaluation]. As a hybrid course, the community of inquiry framework was adopted to ensure adequate learning opportunities as face-to-face curricula. The course was a hybrid elective course titled “**Cell activity translation in electron microscopic interpretation**” which was created by Histology and Cell Biology Department, Alexandria Faculty of Medicine. The course had been implemented in the first semester of the academic year 2020-2021. Its objectives were designed to serve graduate as a scholar and scientist, and as a lifelong learner. Also, it was intended to serve the researcher competency area. The course included two face-to-face sessions, three synchronous and three asynchronous online sessions. The assessment based on individual and group assignment submission. Cognitive, social and teacher presence were ensured throughout the course design.

**Results:** Five rotations were completed, which included 108 students, 305 individual assignments and 46 group assignments. All assignments were uploaded and evaluated. Eight faculty members and 10 assistant staff shared in the process of course delivery and assessment. Evaluation included, pre- and post-test results, student results, questionnaires and focus group discussions by students and sharing staff members.

**Conclusion:** *Using the six-step approach of curriculum design* ensures perfect coverage of all needed curricular aspects. For hybrid courses, adopting the community of inquiry framework satisfies the student's needs. In addition, the interactive learning in online sessions maximizes the gain of skills. Continuous supervision and receiving feedback from both students and trainers are the key of success.

**Keywords:** Elective course; Online Learning; Histology; Program.

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\* Main subject and any subcategories have been classified according to the research topic.

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