

2023年 November月 9日

Katsotushi Yayama, Dean, and Shoichi Shirakawa, Professor
Kobe Gakuin University
Chuo Ward, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan

Dear Dean Yayama and Dr. Shirakawa,

First, I want to thank both of you for the great opportunity to serve as a Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at Kobe Gakuin University. It was an excellent experience for me to meet and interact with the faculty, students, and staff at the University. I also had the honor of experiencing life in Japan and seeing many of your national treasures.

Thank you to Dr. Shirakawa-sensei for being so very kind, accommodating, unselfish, and helpful throughout this entire experience. You taught me so much about Japan and pharmacy education in Japan. I greatly enjoyed our time together. You are amazing!

This letter serves as my report as a Visiting Professor at Kobe Gakuin University.

I was very privileged and honored to provide 8 Special Lectures in addition to 1 lecture on Vital Signs in Dr. Shirakawa-sensei's required course and 1 lecture on counseling patients in English in Dr. Tsujimoto-sensei's elective course. Dr. Shirakawa, Dr. Tsujimoto, and Dr. Kume were all very helpful in providing guidance and feedback on my lectures.

The Special Lectures included 2 lectures in each of the following topics.

1. Pharmaceutical Care in Patients with Osteoarthritis and Gout
2. Clinical Pharmacology of Immunotherapies
3. Pharmacotherapy of Select Immune Disorders
4. Pharmacotherapeutic Considerations in Select Women's Health Topics

The first set of Special Lectures were on Pharmaceutical Care in Patients with Osteoarthritis and Gout. These lectures were initially designed to target students at the 3rd through 6th grade level in your pharmacy program. However, we discovered during the first lecture that the vast majority of students were in the 1st and 2nd grade. During lecture, I used the original slides developed and tried to go at a slow pace and fully describe the material. Many students seemed to understand the material based on the quiz results. However, it was probably a bit too complex and advanced for many students. Plus, my pace may have still been a bit fast, at least at times. Fortunately, we learned from this experience. I was able to revise the subsequent slide sets considerably to target mostly 1st and 2nd grade students. I also learned to speak more slowly and use more simple terms.

The second set of 2 Special Lectures were on the Clinical Pharmacology of Immunotherapies. Those slides were modified to provide a general overview of the immune system and immune response and then cover the major pharmacology and other characteristics of each major category of immunotherapy drugs. The overview of the immune system focused on the basic components of the immune response

and was designed to provide a foundation to discuss the major pathophysiology of autoimmunity and the pharmacology of the drugs. The categories of both small molecule immunotherapy drugs and biological immunotherapy drugs were discussed in a general manner with a focus on the most important characteristics as well as the similarities and differences among the different drug categories. The revised approach seemed very well received by students and they performed much better on the quiz.

The third set of 2 Special Lectures were on the Pharmacotherapy of Select Immune Disorders – covering rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, and inflammatory bowel disease. These lectures were also modified to meet the level of the student's knowledge. The major goals of these lectures were to provide students with a basic understanding of the signs and symptoms of each disease and the general types of therapies used based on the severity and course of each disease. Students also responded well in class and on the quiz.

The final and fourth set of 2 Special Lectures covered Pharmacotherapeutic Considerations in Select Women's Health Topics. The goals of these lectures were to provide students with a general understanding of the menstrual cycle, use of contraceptives, pregnancy and fetal development, assuring wellness during pregnancy, and managing common problems seen during pregnancy. Students were given a brief overview of the menstrual cycle to assist them in understanding the different types of contraceptives (efficacy, benefits, risks) – focusing on current practices in Japan as well as other contraceptives used in other countries. A brief introduction to fetal development helped to provide the perspective on the use and potential harm of drugs and other substances during pregnancy. Three common gastrointestinal problems (nausea/vomiting, constipation, gastroesophageal reflux) seen during pregnancy were presented with respect to general symptoms, complications, and therapy. Once again, students seemed to enjoy the lectures and performed well on the quiz.

The Vital Signs lecture in Dr. Shirakawa-sensei's course was developed working closely with Dr. Shirakawa-sensei. The lecture went very well (in my opinion and based on feedback from students) with respect to the level of the material provided, the use of pictures to reinforce the verbal presentation, the use of active learning activities where students measured their own pulse and respiratory rate, and (most importantly) having Dr. Shirakawa-sensei provide explanations immediately after each of my explanations. We were working off the slides developed with Dr. Shirakawa's input – but he was able to put it into perspective for the students in Japanese. I think the lecture was fun for students and Dr. Shirakawa. It was definitely a very enjoyable and effective experience from my perspective.

Finally, I provided a lecture on Counseling Patients on Over-the-Counter Medications in English to enhance students' abilities to use English to counsel patients on over-the-counter therapeutics in Dr. Tsujimoto-sensei's elective course. This was a highly interactive session that centered on 1 major case (allergies) and 2 minor cases (constipation and pain). Students were provided the cases and then asked to use English to interview and/or counsel the simulated English-speaking patient (played by me) on the problem and its therapy. This reinforced using Pharmaceutical Care and communicating in English in a community pharmacy or drug-store pharmacy. These activities also provided students with practice on collecting and assessing information and on making over-the-counter therapeutic decisions for the problems discussed. This was challenging for the students, but they became more comfortable as the class went on and they seemed to enjoy and learn from the experience.

Overall, I feel that I was able to provide learning experiences that enhanced students' understanding and abilities in each of these topics. It is challenging giving these lectures in English to students who are not fluent in English. However, the students seemed to be very engaged in the process and willing to learn. The delivery of the content was effective in each lecture – in large part due to the guidance provided by your faculty and by the students' abilities in understanding some English and their willingness to learn.

Once again, thank you for this great opportunity.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments about my teaching or other activities at Kobe Gakuin University.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Boyce". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E'.

Eric Boyce, Pharm.D.

CC: Dean Berit Gundersen, Dr. Jessica Song