

ENHANCING PHARMACY STUDENT SKILLS THROUGH AI-DRIVEN PATIENT COUNSELING SIMULATIONS

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Generative artificial intelligence (AI) models have risen in popularity and increased their capabilities since the introduction of ChatGPT by OpenAI in late 2022. AI chatbots can be trained on a variety of materials provided by the user for specific interactions in any number of settings. The goal of this project is to develop and assess an AI-based chatbot designed to support pharmacy students in building essential patient counseling skills within the three-year Dispensing and Patient Care (DPC) course series. The pilot text-based chatbot will initially be created for third year (P3) students in PHA 489 Dispensing and Patient Care III to simulate a realistic patient interaction and provide objective feedback based on the course patient counseling rubric to help students improve communication skills and patient counseling proficiency. Data collection will include chatbot session transcripts, rubric scores, and self-assessment surveys, and will be compared across all pharmacy pathways (Omaha, Distance, and Phoenix). Results will inform the potential expansion of chatbot-based practice opportunities across all levels of the DPC course series. Expected outcomes include increased student confidence in patient counseling, greater readiness for fourth year experiential rotations, and potentially a broader adoption of AI tools in the pharmacy program.