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Design and implementation of an elective career planning course for pharmacy students

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Design and implementation of an elective career planning course for pharmacy students



Kelly Shields, PharmD, Jennie Grundey, PharmD

Objective

The objective of this poster is to describe important elements of this course to aid faculty at other intuitions.

Background

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education Standards 2016 encourage student pharmacists to examine and reflect on attributes necessary for professional and personal growth. Data from an AACP survey of recent graduates also indicated perceived deficiencies in career planning. In 2013 20.5% of Ohio Northern University Pharmacy graduates disagreed or strongly disagreed that "Career planning and guidance met my need". Therefore, an elective course was created for 5th year students (0-6 program) to encourage self-assessment and preparation for post-graduate employment and personal development.

Method

The course was designed after review of publications regarding career advancement and life-skills. Additionally, business faculty from Ohio Northern University who had taught similar courses in other disciplines were consulted. The course has been team-taught for five years by two pharmacy faculty with speakers including business faculty, advanced pharmacy practice experience students, alumni and a financial planner. Topics and assignments have been revised based upon course feedback and past student suggestions.

Results

Students enrolled in Career Planning are asked to evaluate topics and assignments for usefulness. In Spring 2016 100% of students enrolled indicated the CV discussion and assignment were "Very Useful". Because of this finding, required coursework was modified in Spring of 2017 so that all students participated in the CV discussion, peer reviews and faculty reviews.

At the conclusion of the course in Spring 2017, students were asked to evaluate the following topics and assignments (Tables 1 and 2). Response options were: Very Useful, Somewhat Useful, Not Very Useful, Not at All Useful. These perceptions may change during/after the completion of APPEs.

Table 1: Student Perceptions of Selected Topics (2017)

Topic/Discussion	% Who Viewed as Very Useful	% Who Viewed as Somewhat Useful
Options after Graduation and Career Searching	85%	15%
Etiquette and Professional Expectations	70%	23%
Career Planning Timeline	69%	31%
Negotiating and Evaluating Position Offers	69%	20%
Transitioning from Student Pharmacist to Pharmacist in Charge Scenarios	62%	31%
Financial Planning	62%	31%
Digital Image and Goal Setting	54%	46%
Networking	46%	38%
Professionalism in the Workplace	42%	38%

Table 2: Student Perceptions of Selected Assignments (2017)

Assignments	% Who Viewed as Very Useful or Useful	% Who Viewed as Somewhat Useful
Mock Interviews (phone and in person)	92%	8%
Cover Letter	85%	15%
Job Offer Comparison	54%	46%
Goal Development	77%	23%
Linked-In Profile	38%	38%
Reflective Paper on Networking Experience	23%	54%

Results

Students are surveyed pre and post select individual topics to determine confidence gained.

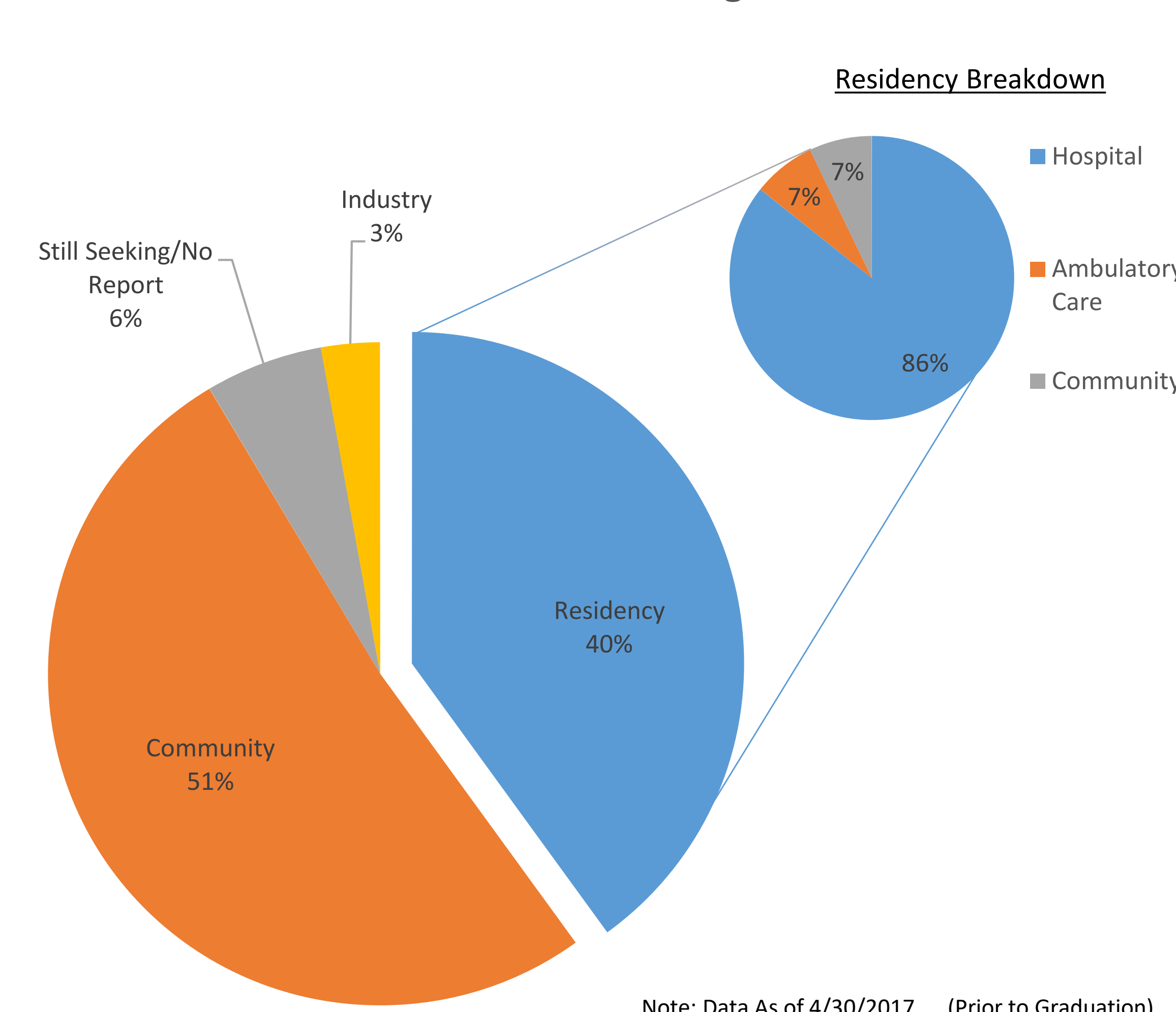
Table 3: Student Perceptions of Cover Letter Discussion and Assignment

	Pre-Class: % of Students who Strongly Agree or Agree	Post-Class and Assignment: % of Students who Strongly Agree or Agree
I am confident in my ability to develop a cover letter.	29%	93%
I am confident in my ability to critique a cover letter.	16%	47%
I am confident in my ability to submit a cover letter to a future employer.	26%	87%

From 2014-2017 100% of course evaluation respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "(course) provided me with an important skill set needed for further studies in this field."

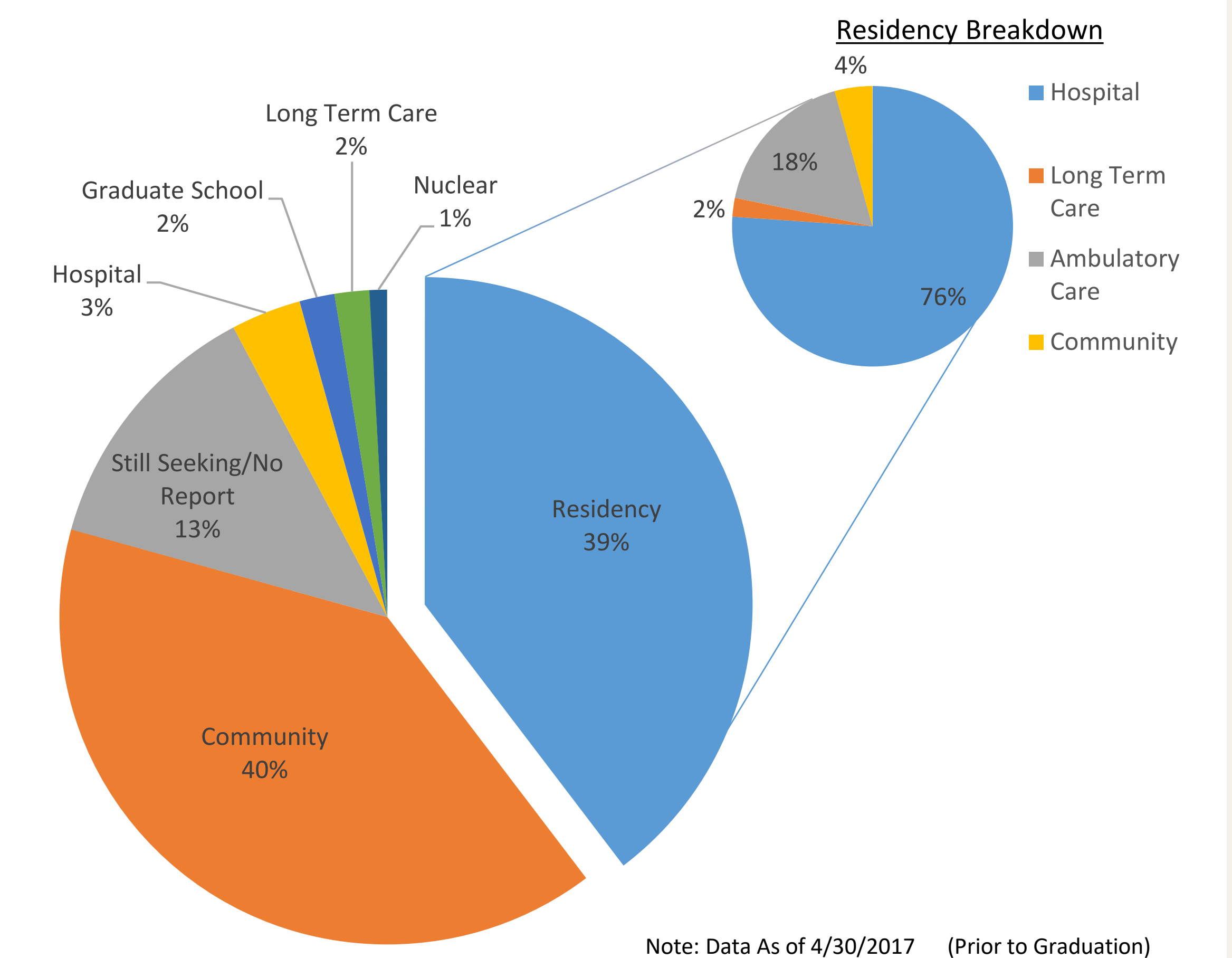
This course was designed to aid students in career development regardless of their planned career path. Data from the 2017 graduating class was collected several weeks prior to graduation and sorted by prior Career Planning course completion. The results show students entering a variety of career paths.

2017 Placement for Career Planning Course Graduates



Results

2017 Placement for non-Career Planning Course Graduates



Conclusion & Implication

This course is easily implemented, well-received by students, and encourages student learning and development while also improving confidence in the area of personal and professional planning.

Future Directions

This course will continue to adapt with changing career trends and student needs. One specific area of intended change is the interview topic. Moving forward the course will include not only one-on-one and phone interviews, but also practice in group and distance interviews.

References

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