

## The Role of Art in Teaching Virtual Anatomy During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to determine whether drawing anatomical structures and teaching it virtually to others improves student confidence in remembering anatomy and improves student perceptions of OB/GYN anatomy in the obstetrics and gynecology core clerkship. Active recall is a superior method of learning and memory retention because it practices information retrieval. If one draws an anatomic region of the human body after visualization and then teaches it, the learner would be exercising retrieval thus promoting retention of the material. The specific act of writing things down on paper promotes memory retention. This study sets a precedence of online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as students across the United States were required to move their education on a virtual platform. Students were given a 15-minute lecture on improved visualization and attention to detail. Students were then randomly assigned one of eight areas of OB/GYN anatomy. Students were given 20 minutes to draw their assigned diagram on paper. At the end of the 20-minute exercise, students described and explained their drawing to the rest of the groups on the virtual WebEx platform. At the end of class, a survey instrument was distributed to all students. The majority of students agreed or strongly agreed that the act of drawing the anatomy and then teaching it improved their confidence in remembering the anatomy. Student perspectives on this method of learning were also favorable, with over 50% being in the agree to strongly agree range and 0-13% being in the disagree to strongly disagree range. This preliminary research study indicates that practicing active recall through drawing not only solidifies one's remembrance of the anatomy, but also has favorable student perspectives in virtual learning.

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