Community Telehealth Simulation with Standardized Patients: Enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nursing Care

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INTRODUCTION

With Telehealth gaining prominence, especially in high-resource countries like the United States, to improve healthcare accessibility. During the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth served as a critical method for ongoing patient care and chronic disease management. Integrating telehealth competencies in nursing programs is crucial to meet the growing demand for virtual care skills. However, challenges exist in delivering these competencies realistically and engagingly within limited curriculum time.

BACKGROUND

We have previously reported a successful implementation of simulation to teach cultural competency to nursing students[1] During the COVID-19 pandemic we had to The substantially modify the procedures to create a telehealth model instead. [2] The telehealth model ensured the continued teaching of cultural competence, diversity and inclusion.[3] Several modifications have been introduced in this new model including a dyad student structure, virtual faculty debriefing, peer evaluations and debriefings.[4,5] In this virtual encounter we introduced a dyad structure of interviewer and observer between the Standardized patient and a student. Standardized Patients (SPs) play a crucial role in medical education by enhancing clinical skills and providing valuable feedback. They help students learn and practice clinical skills in a safe environment, reducing stress and improving communication.[6] Additionally, SP simulation in healthcare education emphasizes the importance of preparation and benefits both students and SPs.

Learning objectives

- Explore the meaning of illness for your patient
- Develop an understanding of the patient's expectations regarding their treatment and care
- Examine the role of the nurse in providing culturally sensitive care with respect, equity, accommodation, and objectivity.
- Apply the nursing process to your *Community OSCE patient experience.*
- Develop person-centered interventions that a patient can utilize to address their problems.
- Identify factors commonly included in a transcultural assessment of health-related beliefs and practices.
- Summarize the goals of conducting a culturally sensitive interview.

Method

A telehealth simulation was developed using standardized patients (SPs) and conducted via Zoom to expose nursing students to essential virtual care skills. Simulations were designed where students practiced assessing, communicating, and making care decisions for SPs presenting with common health concerns. Each student was required to prepare, engage in the simulated telehealth encounters, and receive feedback from peers and SPs. A structured debrief with faculty focusing on clinical decision-making, therapeutic communication, and navigating the nuances of remote patient interaction.

Simulation Experience Flow Diagram
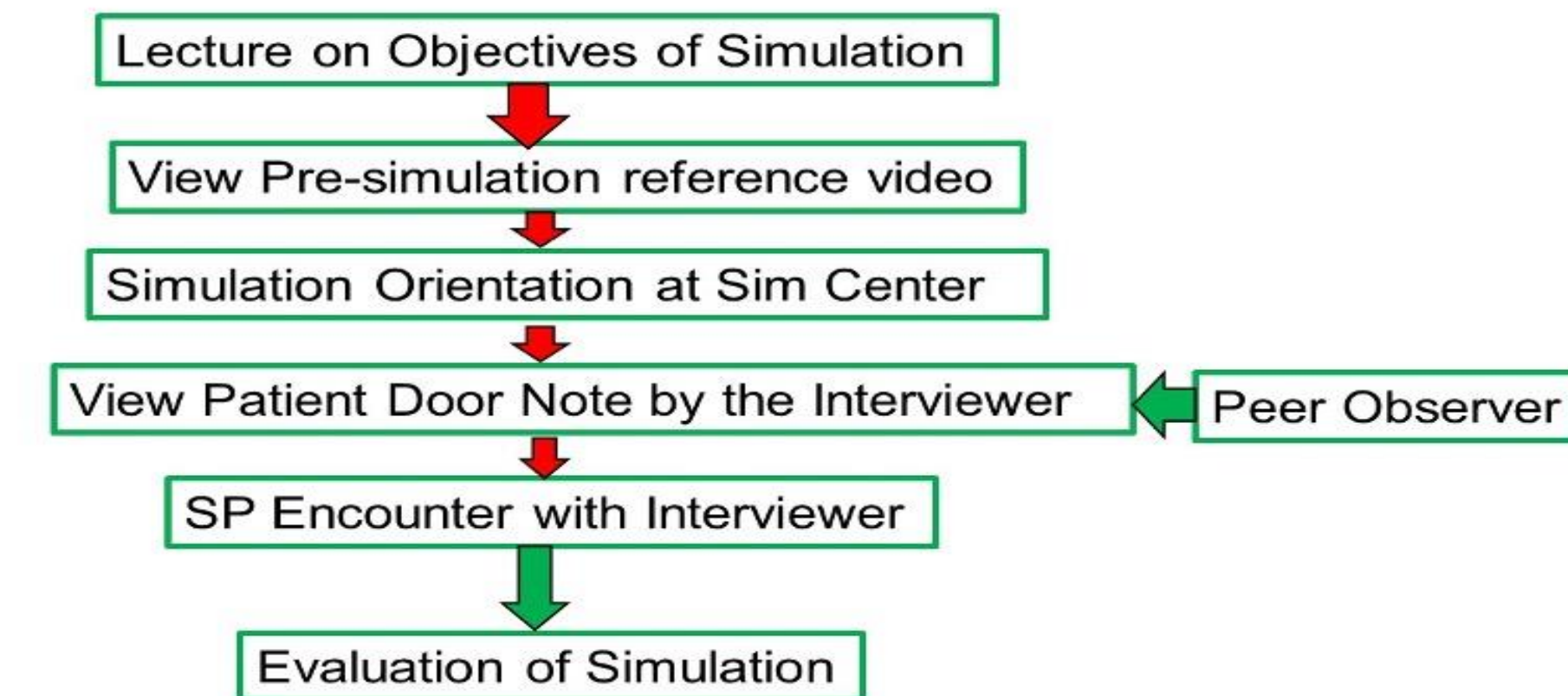
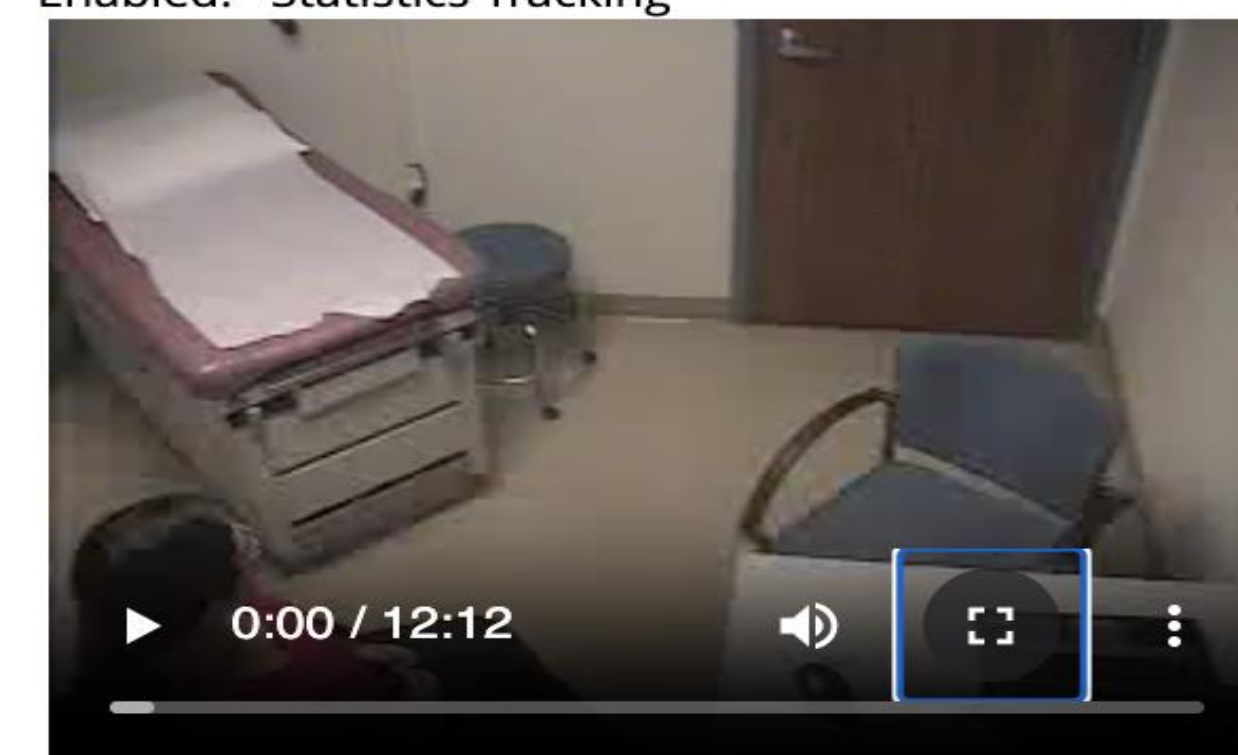### Multilayered Feedback/Reflection
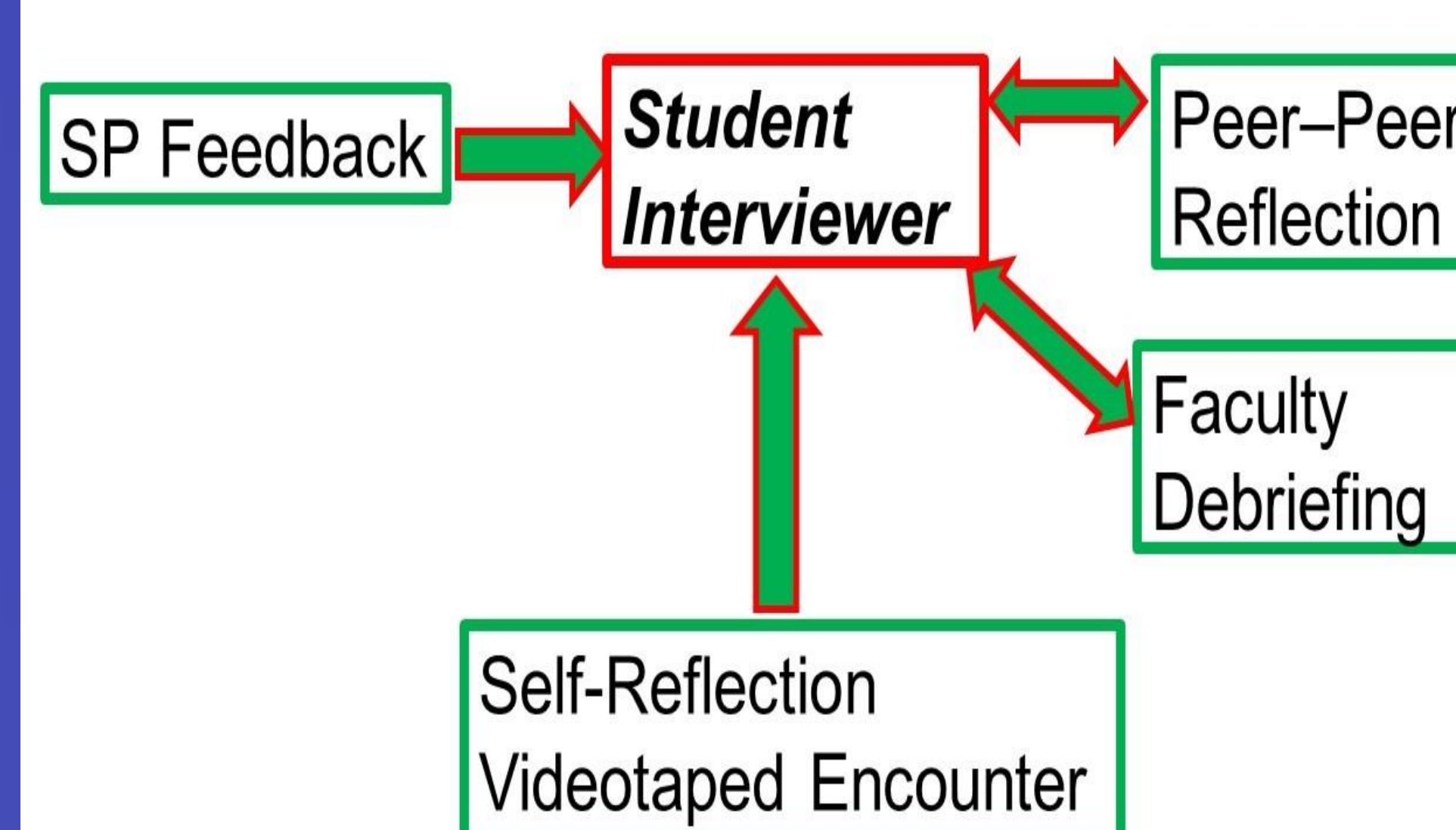
Simulation Prework

**Pre-simulation reference video:**

One week before the telehealth date, students were provided with a reference simulation video of a practicing nurse interviewing an SP. The simulation was intended to inform the students about communication skills needed to acquire information from a patient. The students were required to view the video at least once before the date of simulation and critique it.
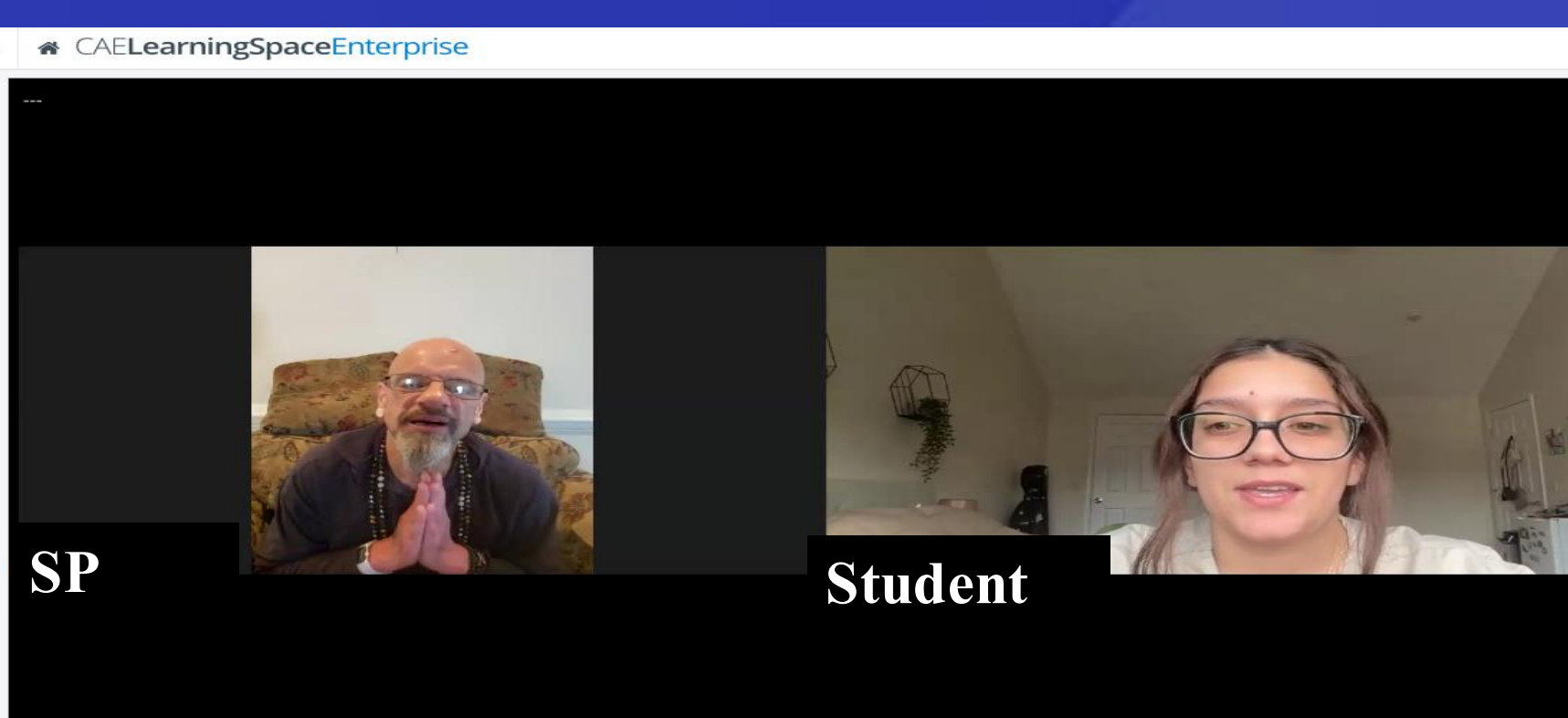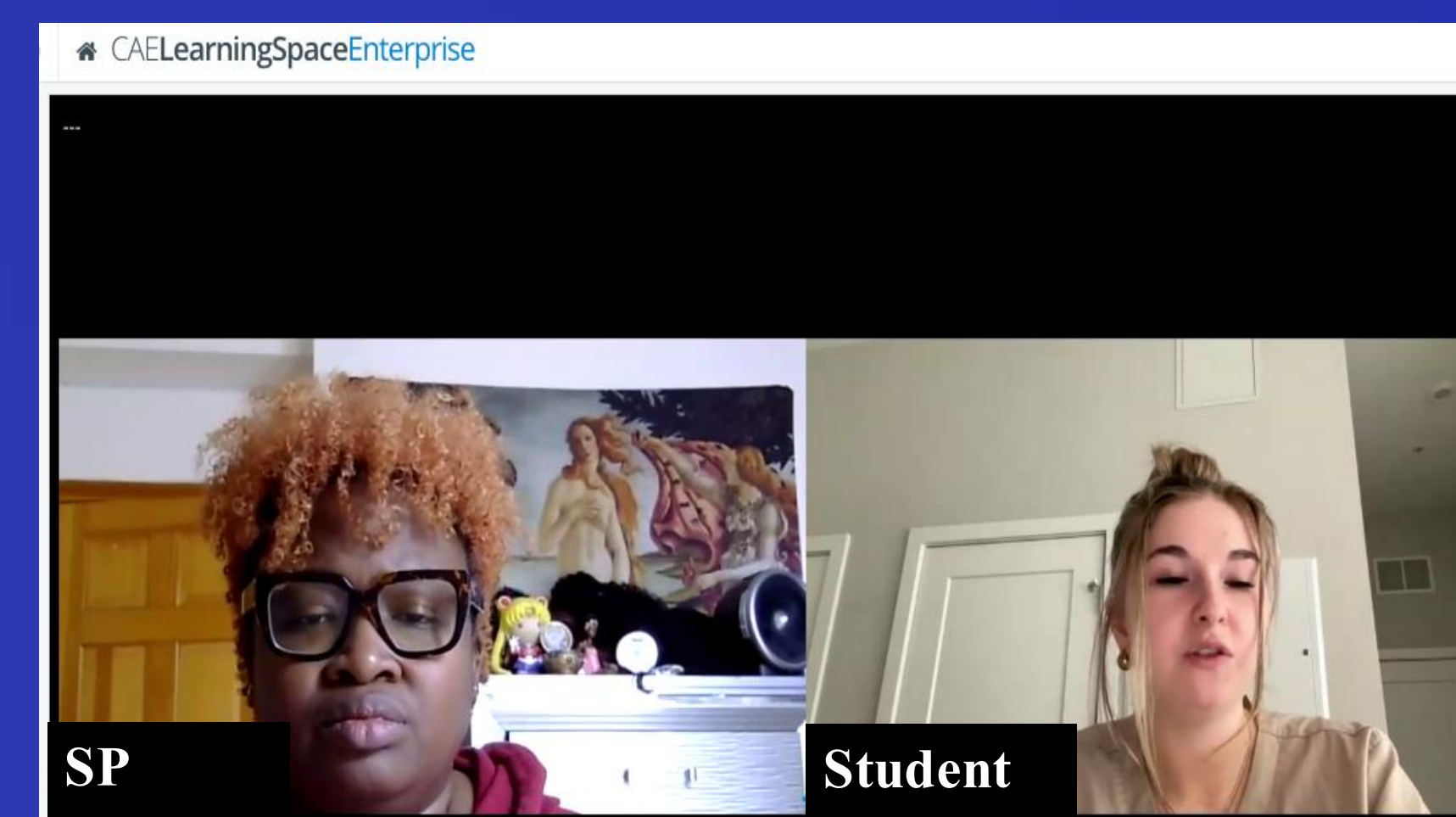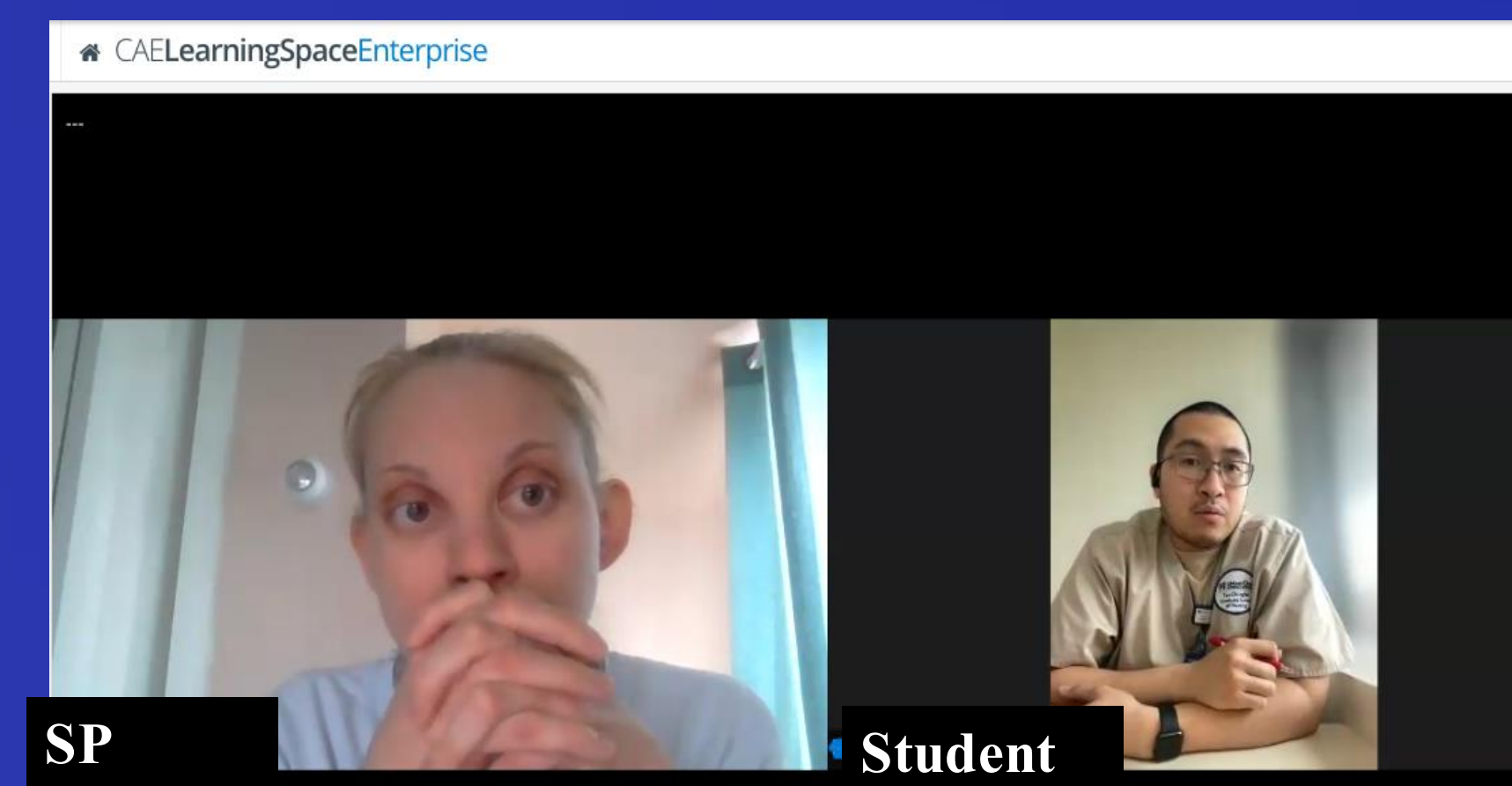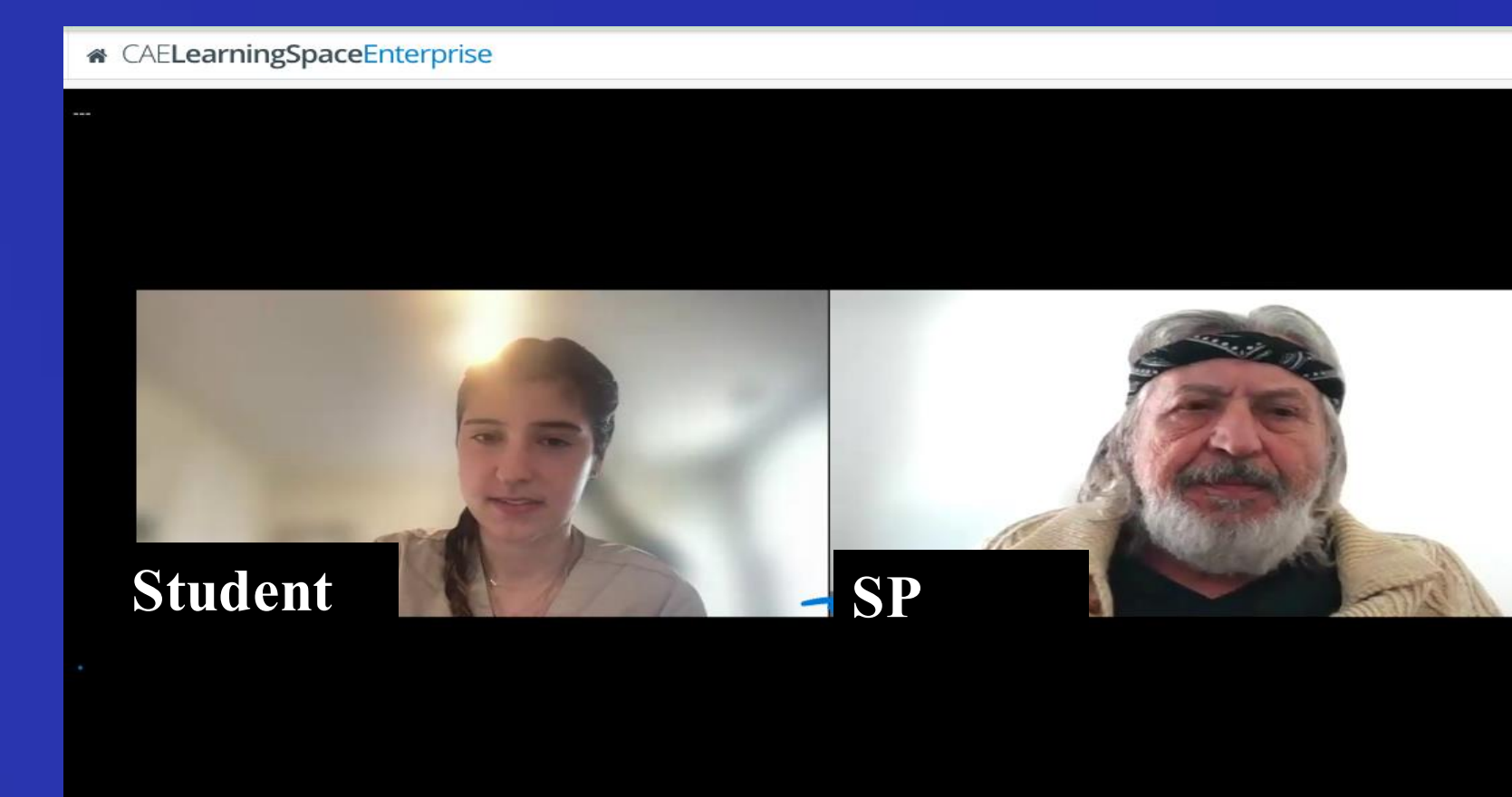
Pre-simulation video

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- Download video file: Multicultural Encoun-s1-full.mp4

REFERENCES
SCAN ME
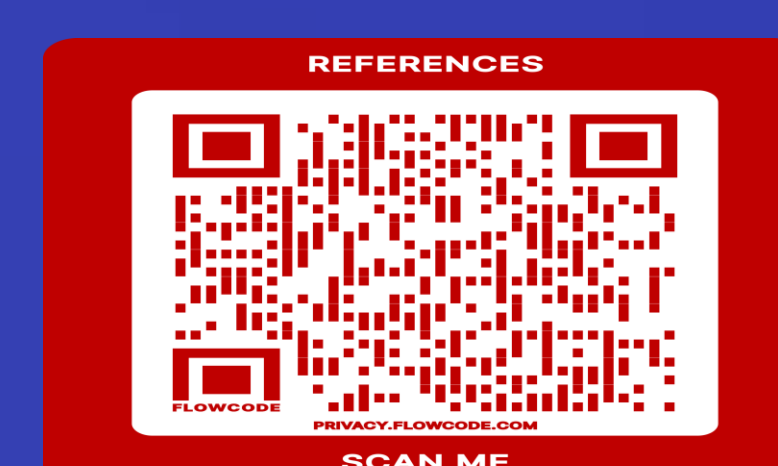
Telehealth in Action Pictures

Student — SP

SP — Student

SP — Student

SP — Student

Faculty Debrief

Student — Student — Faculty

RESULTS

Preliminary data indicated high student satisfaction, with students reporting increased confidence in delivering telehealth care, recognizing nonverbal cues through video, and adapting communication to the limitations of the virtual format. Post-simulation evaluations showed improved competency scores in communication, assessment, and patient education skills compared to pre-simulation assessments. Students also reported greater understanding of telehealth's potential and limitations within person-centered care.

Student Satisfaction scores with two simulation cases (%) Scenario 1 and Scenario 2
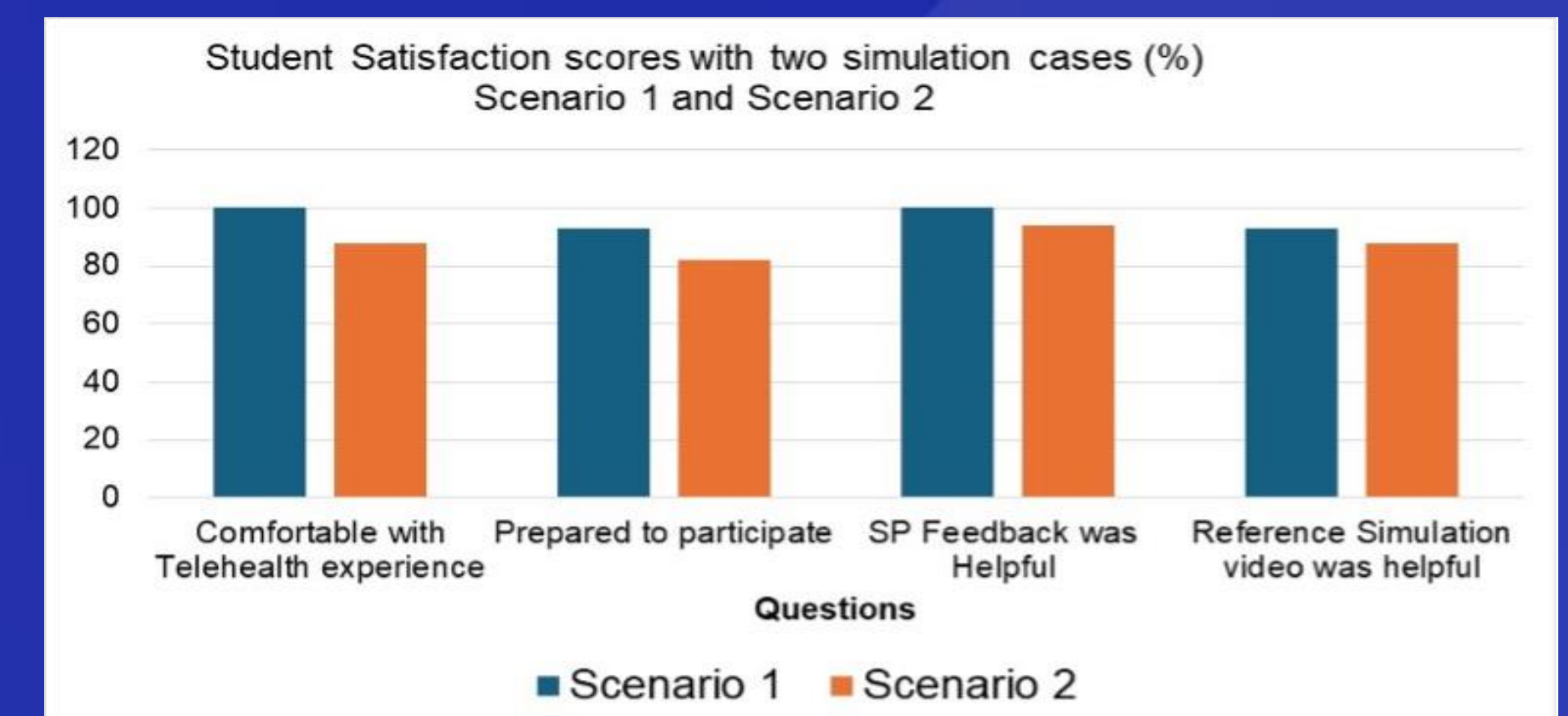
I worked as a medical scribe and learned the basics of telehealth. Now that I am studying to be a nurse and a provider, I feel more comfortable using telehealth as a tool for interacting with patients.

My SP did a great job at highlighting my strengths and weaknesses following the simulation. We had a great conversation about handling digital conversation, and she put me at ease with my results. Excellent.

The reference video allowed me to have a structure of how to go about asking intake questions and how to come back to certain points that stood out from the patients' response. I liked it 100%.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of standardized patient simulation in teaching telehealth delivery and diversity and inclusion to prelicensure nursing students has demonstrated significant benefits. The outcomes of this educational approach include increased learner confidence in patient education, enhanced ability to care for patients from diverse backgrounds through deliberate practice, and improved skills in assimilating patients' verbal and non-verbal cues. These findings underscore the value of simulation-based learning in preparing nursing students to deliver high-quality, inclusive healthcare in a rapidly evolving telehealth landscape.