

# Motivation Monday: Evaluating the effectiveness of routine alumni interview videos in motivating current physician assistant students.



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## Background

Physician Assistant (PA) education is renowned for its demanding curriculum, which often leads students to experience burnout and lose sight of their initial motivations. Recognizing this challenge, our research sought to address it by introducing Motivation Monday alumni interviews as part of the Special Topics course at UTRGV. These interviews aimed to showcase alumni experiences, career paths, and diverse specialties, offering a source of inspiration and motivation for current PA students navigating their educational journey.

## Purpose

The primary objective of our research was to investigate the impact of Motivation Monday alumni interviews on the motivation and academic engagement of clinical-year PA students at UTRGV. We hypothesized that exposure to alumni narratives would positively influence student motivation, reignite their passion for learning medicine, and provide valuable insights into various career possibilities within the field.

## Methodology

Alumni who graduated from the UTRGV PA program between 2018-2021 were invited to participate by providing video responses to a standardized set of six interview questions. These questions aimed to gather insights into their PA journeys, specialties, and advice for current students. The interview questions included:

1. Tell us a little about yourself and your PA journey.
2. What field of medicine are you in and what does your typical day consist of?
3. Tell us about one interesting case you have seen.
4. What is the first thing you purchased with your PA income?
5. What is the most gratifying thing about your job?
6. What is one bit of advice you would give current PA Students?

These videos were compiled into a 10-week series and released weekly on YouTube, reaching students via the Blackboard learning management system. To evaluate the impact, a comprehensive survey was distributed to clinical-year PA students through Qualtrics. The survey gathered demographic information and feedback on video content, quality, and impact.

### Likert Scale Statements:

Participants were asked to rate their agreement with each of the following Likert scale statements on a scale of 0 to 5, where 0 represented "Not Applicable", 1 represented "Strongly Disagree", and 5 represented "Strongly Agree":

1. Motivation Monday videos motivate me to put more effort into my studies.
2. There would have to be more Motivation Monday videos before I could find them useful.
3. There was adequate diversity in the specialties covered in the Motivation Monday videos.
4. Watching Motivation Monday videos was a waste of my time.
5. It was interesting to examine future career possibilities by watching Motivation Monday videos.
6. Motivation Monday videos remind me why I want to be a PA.
7. Motivation Monday videos reignite my passion for learning medicine.
8. Motivation Monday videos gave me insight into the day in the life of a practicing PA.
9. The advice given by the alumni was helpful to me as a PA student.
10. I would like to continue watching more Motivation Monday videos in the future.

These statements were designed to gauge various aspects of student perception and engagement with the Motivation Monday videos, providing valuable insights into their effectiveness and areas for improvement. Open-ended questions were also included to gather qualitative insights and suggestions for enhancement.

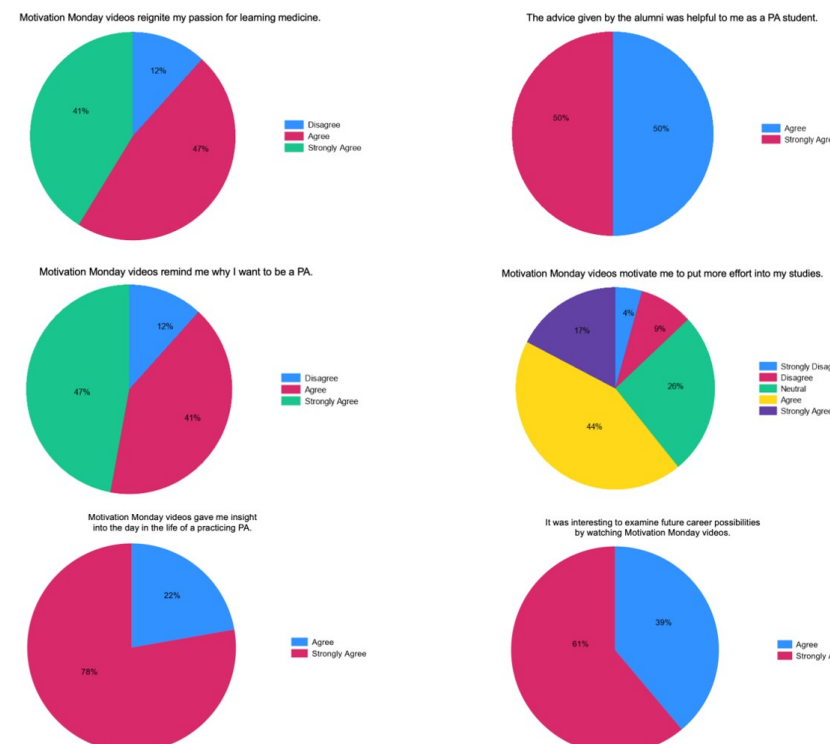
## Results

Among the 27 respondents who completed the online consent, one subject was removed due to failure to answer any question. Respondents were all clinical year students, mostly females (65.4%) with a mean age of 27 ± 6.3 years. The racial distribution of respondents predominantly identified as Hispanic (58%), with 26% as White, 12% as Asian, and 4% as African American, reflecting the diversity within the program's student population. Approximately half of the respondents reported having some clinical experience prior to starting PA school. Over 70% expressed interest in primary care in the future, aligning with the program's mission.

In terms of engagement with the Motivation Monday video series, only 12.5% of respondents reported watching the full series, while the majority watched between two and six videos out of the ten-video series. Five respondents (21%) reported not watching any of the videos, citing time constraints or lack of interest due to self-motivation. However, among those who did watch the videos, 96% reported that the videos were of adequate length and were rated as average or above average in terms of quality.

The Likert scale statements revealed significant insights into the perceived impact of the Motivation Monday videos. Notably, 61% of respondents indicated that the videos motivated them to put more effort into their daily studies, while 88% stated that the videos reminded them of why they chose to pursue a career as a PA and reignited their passion for learning medicine. All respondents agreed that the videos provided insight into the day-to-day life of a practicing PA and helped them explore various career possibilities in different fields of medicine.

Despite the modest response rate and varying levels of engagement with the video series, the study demonstrated a substantial impact on academic motivation and burnout among clinical-year PA students. These findings underscore the potential of alumni-driven initiatives, such as the Motivation Monday videos, to inspire and rejuvenate students, reaffirming their commitment to their professional aspirations in healthcare.



## Discussion/ Conclusion

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the impact of the Motivation Monday video series on the motivation and academic engagement of clinical-year Physician Assistant (PA) students at UTRGV. Overall, the findings suggest a significant positive effect of the videos on student motivation, reaffirmation of career aspirations, and exploration of various medical specialties. Despite the modest response rate and varying levels of engagement with the series, the majority of respondents reported benefits from watching the videos, including increased motivation to study and a deeper understanding of the PA profession.

Interestingly, while only a fraction of respondents watched the entire series, the majority found the videos to be of adequate length and quality, indicating that even partial engagement with the series yielded positive outcomes. These findings support our initial hypothesis that the Motivation Monday videos would positively impact student motivation and academic engagement.

Moving forward, future research and project development will focus on expanding the range of specialties covered in the Motivation Monday series, such as family practice and women's health, to enhance its relevance and appeal to a broader audience of students. Additionally, involving didactic-year students in the project will provide insights into the effectiveness of the videos at different stages of the PA program, allowing for a comparative analysis of perception and engagement compared to clinical-year students and contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the series' impact across various stages of the PA curriculum.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the enduring impact of alumni-driven initiatives, such as the Motivation Monday video series, in inspiring and rejuvenating PA students. By continuing to expand and refine the project, we aim to foster a culture of motivation, exploration, and professional growth among future generations of healthcare practitioners.

## References

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