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OC-112 - (23833) - ANATOCROSS: A SCREEN-FREE GAMIFIED APPROACH TO BOOST ANATOMY LEARNING

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Human Anatomy contains around 75% of health science terminology, making theoretical classes challenging due to the volume of vocabulary students must learn. While digital gamification is common, printed crosswords offer a screen-free, focused learning approach.
Here we introduce *AnatoCross*, a teaching innovation designed to enhance retention and engagement in a General Human Anatomy course for first-year Podiatry students at the University Complutense of Madrid. At the end of each topic, students completed a custom-designed crossword with definitions acting as clues for key anatomical terms. After the final exam, a post-course survey assessed student perceptions of the crossword activity, covering comprehension, retention, participation, and satisfaction, while final grades were also analyzed.
Results showed a positive impact on student recollection, with most of them finding *AnatoCross* beneficial for comprehension and retention, as well as for identifying knowledge gaps. The activity also fostered active participation, with many valuing peer and teacher discussions. Nearly all students preferred the printed format, appreciating its screen-free focus. Moreover, a correlation was found between higher participation in crossword activities and better final exam performance, suggesting *AnatoCross* contributed to improved academic outcomes.

Overall, this teaching innovation proved to be an effective and engaging learning tool. Its simplicity and adaptability make it a good strategy for reinforcing retention in anatomy education and other fields. Future research could further evaluate its effectiveness through comparative analysis, such as omitting the activity in future years to measure its impact on academic performance.

Palavras-chave : screen-free learning, gamification, anatomy education