Reviewer’s report

Title: Does the inclusion of ‘professional development’ teaching improve medical students’ communication skills?

Version: 2 Date: 15 March 2011

Reviewer: Andreas Möltner

Reviewer’s report:

I think, the manuscript is nearly ready for publication.

As a minor essential revision, a comment to multiple testing should be added (see the reply to the associate editor’s comment):

If you use a three-way ANOVA you are testing seven hypotheses (3 factors, 3 simple interactions, one three-way interaction), so your 3-way interaction with p=0.02 might be non-significant after an appropriate alpha-correction.

Even if you use the global ANOVA as "gatekeeper" test, there remain problems when interpreting *all* single significances of the 12 2-way ANOVAS.

I don’t think, this is a problem for this article, the tests just don’t fulfill the requirements of a strict control of experimentwise/familywise error rates. I think, it is sufficient to mention this problem and interpret the results with caution.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests