Reviewer's report

Title: The perceived effects of faculty presence vs. absence on small-group learning and group dynamics: a quasi-experimental study.

Version: 2
Date: 3 September 2014

Reviewer: Frank Domino

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions.

I think the conclusion of the abstract might fully reflect the findings of the study. Authors state: "Students reported that they feel somewhat dependent on faculty, especially when the faculty is present, though they report similar case success after both “in” and “out” cases."

This does not reflect the comment: "students were less likely to say that they arrived at a reasonable management plan after a case when the faculty was absent."

I did not see any data that supported the statement: "There was no difference in reported success of the educational experience after “in” vs. “out” cases (p=0.67)." I am assuming this was part of the survey, but is very subjective. I would be curious if they similar success on a standardized exam.

Otherwise, very well done, and would recommend the authors consider expanding this trial to other sites and curriculum to see if it holds true.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests'