

OUTCOMES OF A PROFESSIONALISM CURRICULUM: THE PROFESSIONALISM INITIATIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Robert M. Klein, **Giulia A. Bonaminio***, Anthony Paolo, Martha Montello, and Mark C. Meyer. Departments of Anatomy and Cell Biology, Family Medicine, History and Philosophy of Medicine, and Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, The University of Kansas, School of Medicine (KUSOM), Mailstop #1049, Kansas City, KS 66160

PURPOSE

At KUSOM, our goal is for each student to graduate as a multi-tooled physician leader. Those tools, which must supplement the fundamental requirement of medical knowledge, are the core tenets of professionalism: altruism, accountability, excellence, duty, honor and integrity, respect and commitment. Each student should enter residency training well prepared to engage and grow from the challenges and opportunities a career in medicine offers.

METHODS

The KUSOM curriculum is systems-based with elements of professionalism as a component of each module and clerkship. The intent of the professionalism initiative is to develop a seamless professionalism curriculum that gives learners the tools to grow personally and professionally as they advance from medical school applicants to residents and eventually to become outstanding leaders of the health care team. Currently, the KUSOM conducts a number of activities to assist students in their personal and professional development: 1) First-year Orientation Events culminating in the White Coat Ceremony, 2) Dean’s Hours, 3) Academic Societies programs, 4) Professionalism Small Group Discussions, 5) the Third Year Transition Ceremony, and 6) Introduction to Clinical Medicine. Professionalism is recognized through the Gold Humanism Society and the “Pride in the Profession Award” which recognizes a senior student who most appropriately characterizes the qualities of professionalism in medicine. Additional elements of our professionalism initiative can be found at: <http://www.kumc.edu/som/professionalism.html>

RESULTS

In the Graduation Questionnaire our students rank professionalism as a very strong component of their training. Some graduates even indicate that there is too much emphasis placed on professionalism. Our graduates also score very highly in the professionalism categories on their residency director surveys completed after the first year of residency. **CONCLUSION:** A cohesive professionalism program has a positive impact on student attitudes and behaviors toward medical practice.

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FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AMONG BIOCHEMISTRY COURSE DIRECTORS

Michael A. Lea*, Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, UM.D.NJ - New Jersey Medical School, Newark, NJ 07103, U.S.A.

PURPOSE

While medical schools have had departments of physiological chemistry or biochemistry since the time of the Flexner report, prior to 2008 North American medical biochemistry course directors had not formally organized. The current period of curricular change raises questions on the relationship of biochemistry to other disciplines basic to medical education. Meetings sponsored by the Association of Medical and Graduate Departments of Biochemistry (AMGDB) were held in 2008 and 2009 to address those issues. The nature of those meetings and the future of the Association of Biochemistry Course Directors (ABCD) formed at the first meeting are the subject of this report.

METHODS

An organizing committee solicited attendees through departments affiliated with the AMGDB, web searching and personal contacts. Meetings were held in Myrtle Beach, SC, using formats similar to those used at meetings of microbiologists teaching in medical schools.

RESULTS

In 2008 there were 77 attendees and 72 in 2009. Topics discussed included the role of biochemistry in integrated curricula, teaching modalities such as TBL, defining course content, resource exchanges and teaching basic science in years 3 and 4 of medical school. Topics for discussion at future meetings were identified. It was agreed that future meetings would be biennial.

CONCLUSIONS

Attendees were positive about the value of communication among biochemistry course directors. It was recognized that in integrated curricula there will be directors of courses in which biochemistry forms only a part of the material, but the importance of the discipline is such that there is a need for continuing dialogue, and this can be facilitated by meetings of a national and international nature.

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IATROGENIC ATROPHY OF THE CREATIVE TALENTS OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

Tomlin, J. Paul* and Jacqueline Goulbourne. University of the West Indies, Mona, JAMAICA

PURPOSE

When we meet our students face to face in medical school we quickly recognize that they are whole persons with not only great admission scores but also sound creative abilities and diverse talents. They are reflecting multiple intelligences! The kind of person perhaps that Hippocrates would have been happy to have as an apprentice!

METHODS

Over the past three years at the University of the West Indies we have conducted orientation for new students using a variety of workshops aimed at building team spirit and focusing vision on the next few years. Students come up with their own designs in portraying what they see as important in learning and practicing medicine. They exhibit substantial talent in the arts and humanities. Students are able to identify the important non-technical issues and illustrate them on a humanistic template and at the same time have fun. Many of the skits, songs and poetry produced tackle moral and ethical issues without such prompting by tutors. These young energetic, creatively talented, morally conscious individuals represent our annual intake of medical students! As medical educators, how do we ensure the continued development of these students?

RESULTS

Our annual orientation for new medical students has begun to showcase their many creative talents. This creative energy can undeniably support the learning of medicine if we see the curriculum as a humanistic one about people with concerns and context similar to ours. If we see the curriculum as being largely about people with organ systems, then we will follow a certain approach in teaching. When pedagogy dominates and the learning environment is flat and unstimulating, then we are stifling the creative talents of our students. We suppress the vision and thoughts of humanity in our new students and quickly take them to anatomy, biochemistry and physiology lecture rooms to learn about the systems of the body in a less creative and stimulating manner. We do not call into action their multiple intelligences. We run the risk of seeing their creative talents atrophy!

CONCLUSIONS

We need to find ways to nurture the many creative talents of our incoming students and seek the incorporation of those talents to fuel learning in medical school.

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CIRC: A COMPUTER LAB WHERE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT, STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING, AND TECHNOLOGY UNITE

Jeanne B. Schlesinger, M.Ed.*, Director of Instructional Development; Kimberly A. Fisher, M.P.A., Director of CIRC; Katherine J. Tucker, Resource Coordinator. Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine; Richmond, VA, U.S.A.

PURPOSE

Busy medical school faculty often think they don't have time to improve their teaching. As faculty developers in CIRC (Curriculum Innovation Resource Center) one of our jobs is to help faculty teach better, especially with learner-centered strategies and technology. Our task is to persuade them we have something valuable to offer and then do so efficiently and effectively.

METHODS

Because of the complex infrastructure of the pre-clinical courses, we meet with course directors and faculty to assist with development of printed and online course material. We provide a much-welcomed information clearinghouse and guidance in the form of coaching so they don't have to navigate the system alone. We are in a unique position to brainstorm and gather information on successful teaching strategies and share this information with others. In addition, both formal and informal course evaluations by students offer valuable suggestions for course improvement. We work with faculty to implement these changes by utilizing relationships we have developed with the many people, departments, systems, and technology support staff required for change. In other words, faculty come to us with their challenges and we help determine what resources are needed to address them.

RESULTS

We have conducted multiple coaching sessions with more than 100 faculty this school year. They appreciate the individualized guidance and focused attention we provide in these one-on-one sessions. Student feedback on formal course evaluations has also been positive about these teaching enhancements.

CONCLUSIONS

We plan to build on this successful coaching initiative by reaching additional faculty through a focused marketing campaign. As more people participate, the program will continue to improve.

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