



## Accrediting excellence: Doing the right thing on ‘journey of improvement’

By Dr. Mitzi Norris



Norris

We have just completed our Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Fifth Year Interim Report and received a perfect score – one of four or five institutions with such an accomplishment.

The SACSCOC is the campus-wide accreditor that encompasses all of UMMC’s educational programs and is required for Liaison Committee on Medical Education accreditation.

The report represents unnumbered hours of work by faculty and staff from all areas of our educational mission. It is also a scorecard for our academic programs.

Every day we must perform the work to keep our educational mission strong. The accreditation process documents our journey and measures our success.

**Accreditation is about students and faculty.** It is about accountability to our stakeholders, including our students, their parents, alumni, governing board, and the Department of Education (Financial Aid). Accreditation is about doing the right thing.

**Accreditation is a journey of improvement.** At UMMC, we use accreditation as a means to make our academic mission the best it can be.

Most of our faculty are not trained educators. Our faculty are passionate about education and are experts at what they do; however, they do not always have knowledge about the tools and process that are best to structure the educational mission.

**Accreditation is a benchmark for our educational mission.** As UMMC puts policies and procedures into place, accreditation standards are used as guides.

When we include the provisions from accreditation standards, we are using industry standards. We want to be the best so we need these standards or benchmarks to identify ways to improve to reach those goals.

**Accreditation is all about improvement.** Assessment is a part of accreditation and the improvement process. We must measure what we are doing to identify if we need to make changes.

Once we make changes, we follow the scientific process to determine which elements of the change led to improvements. Accreditation makes us look at our process to improve.

Student achievement is a good measure of success for UMMC’s educational mission. We look at (measure) how our students graduate on time, pass licensure/certification exams, publish in graduate programs, and match to residency programs.

UMMC has enviable scores on these measures. Accreditation drives this, and it is good accountability for UMMC and other institutions of higher learning.

My first experience with accreditation occurred when I was seeking initial accreditation for the small infectious diseases laboratory where I worked. I toiled for months to meet the same standards that the larger clinical laboratory had to meet.

A housekeeping gentleman came into my area every day, and we often discussed what I was doing. He was a wise man who had years of observations, and he gave me some advice that I still use today in accreditation.

His profound statement sums up accreditation, “Say what you do, and do what you say.”

Our stellar report reflects that our academic programs are strong. Our continued commitment to improvement will ensure that we maintain that strength.

### Spotlight: Office of Medical Education



Buckley

Dr. Lecretia A. Buckley is the education quality improvement director in the Office of Medical Education. In her role as the education QI director, Buckley manages all aspects of monitoring and reporting the progress and outcomes of the educational program.

Her work is a collaborative effort with faculty and staff aimed at fostering an innovative and supportive educational environment in an organizational culture characterized by continuous quality improvement.

Buckley views assessment as a critical component in the cyclical process of continuous quality improvement. According to her, assessment is not merely for students; rather, it provides faculty and educational programs with the data it needs to determine its successes and to identify curricular components, practices or policies that warrant enhancements to improve educational outcomes and the learning environment.

Buckley believes that along with paradigm shifts in medical education, there is a heightened need for continuous quality improvement and the role it plays in enhancing student learning and ultimately helping to ensure

that the School of Medicine “trains physicians to deliver skilled, equitable health care.”

Buckley received her B.S. in mathematics from Tougaloo College and her M.S. in the teaching of mathematics and her Ph.D. in education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Buckley brings a decade of experience in accreditation and curriculum and instruction to UMMC from her prior positions as an assistant professor in the College of Education at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, and an associate professor in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology at Jackson State University. She was named a Diversity Fellow at Purdue University for curriculum development that integrated equity in the teaching of mathematics and mathematics teacher education.

At JSU, Buckley served as a principal investigator on several professional development programs for mathematics teachers and as the program coordinator for the Bachelor of Science in Mathematics Education and the Master of Science in Teaching for Science and Mathematics. As program coordinator and chair of the Department of Mathematics and Statistical Sciences Assessment Team, she was responsible for the program assessment and accreditation.

# Graduate Medical Education: The importance of a quality learning environment

By Dr. Jimmy Stewart



Stewart

As a clinician, one of the concerns I have for my patients is their environment.

External factors can either support or degrade a person's health. It really is amazing how important small changes to that environment can impact multiple aspects of our lives.

In medical education, our learning environment is equally important. Part of our responsibility to learners at every level is to ensure that the following environmental quality areas are optimized:

- **Patient safety:** The first tenet of good medicine is to do no harm. In keeping with that principle, we should strive to make each patient's safety a priority in everything we do.

- **Healthcare quality:** Excellence in everything we do should inform our processes, time and efforts as they relate to patient care.

## Call to Action: IMP1 events require faculty assistance

The M1 class needs assistance! A series of events coming up in IMP1 will be all hands on deck.

In the spring semester, students will participate in their second of two clinical skills experiences and faculty are needed to help evaluate interpersonal communication and history-taking skills. No prior experience with standardized patient encounters is needed.

The class also needs small group facilitators for small group sessions on the differential diagnosis and independent study presentations given by students. These events were well-received by both students and faculty last year and were described as being "a lot of fun!"

Please take a look at the schedule below. If you would like to sign up or need more information before making a decision, email David Norris at drnorris@umc.edu.

### OSCE2: Observe and provide feedback for students collecting a history from a patient having chest pain

Friday, Jan. 12, Friday, Feb. 2 and Tuesday, Feb. 6

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### OSCE3: Observe and provide feedback for students collecting a history and vital signs from a patient having headaches

Friday, March 23, Friday, March 30 and Friday, April 6

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### Differential Diagnosis: Help students work through a differential diagnosis

Wednesday, Jan. 31 from 8-10 a.m. and

Thursday, Feb. 1 from 8-10 a.m. and from 3-5 p.m.

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### SMART Goal Independent Study Presentations: Facilitate a series of short student presentations on their independent study projects as a first step on the road to lifelong learning

Monday, May 14 from 8-10 a.m., Wednesday, May 16 from 3-5 p.m.

and Friday, May 18 from 8-10 a.m.

- **Care transitions:** Designing systemic methods to allow physicians to minimize errors around transition times is crucial to providing seamless continuity of care.

- **Supervision:** Recognizing an appropriate level of direct and indirect supervision of our medical residents and fellows is a crucial part of their education and should facilitate a supportive environment for them to request assistance at all times.

- **Well-being:** Our care of patients is at its best when every team member is at his or her best. As such, we prioritize how to support each other fully as learners, educators, physicians and individuals.

- **Professionalism:** Patient care (and learning) is not just a job, it is a profession. Because of this, we aspire to high ideals and expectation for ourselves.

In the upcoming months we are anticipating our Clinical Learning Environment Review site visit, which will focus on the above areas. We are excelling in many of these areas, while in others we still need to improve.

Our goal in the GME Office is to serve and support all of our graduate medical programs so that our "learning experience" is truly the best we can provide.

## Curriculum Corner: What is LearnTrax?

By Dr. Wendell Douglass



Douglass

The Office of Medical Education provides an instructional design resource website – LearnTrax – to support instructional best practices, including teaching and learning goals and objectives, curriculum mapping, active engagement strategies, formative and summative assessments, and the utilization of feedback skills, among other topics.

To access LearnTrax, visit the UMMC Intranet homepage, click the Education tab, navigate to the "School of" links and select Medicine-LearnTrax.

We welcome feedback and ideas for resource inclusion. For more information or to make a comment, call 4-1212 or email wdouglas@umc.edu.

### Education Links

- **School of**
  - Dentistry - Internet
  - Dentistry - Intranet
  - Graduate Studies - Internet
  - Health Related Professions - Internet
  - Medicine - Family Medicine
  - Medicine - Graduate Medical Education
  - Medicine - Internal Medicine
  - Medicine - Internet
  - Medicine - Intranet
  - **Medicine - LearnTrax**
  - Medicine - Office of Medical Education



Welcome to **LearnTrax**, an instructional design resource site for the School of Medicine's Office of Medical Education. We are here to partner with teaching faculty to support best practice teaching and learning experiences of our medical students as they develop into self-directed, lifelong learners. This partnership provides for individual or departmental faculty development support for very important elements of the curriculum, such as:

- Development of course, session, and learner objectives that best articulate the desired outcomes of the courses;