



## Pillars support professionalism among SOM students, faculty, employees

By Jillian Merica



Merica

Professionalism can be a hard concept to define. When asked, the most common response from School of Medicine faculty is, "I can't define it, but I know it when I see it!" So it comes as no surprise that professionalism is a difficult concept to teach students.

Last year, the Professionalism Subcommittee focused on setting clear goals and expectations for students through a system called the "Pillars of Professionalism." Each pillar represents an aspect of professionalism the SOM faculty strive to develop in their students and nurture in SOM and hospital employees.

These pillars, which will be displayed on posters throughout the SOM and University Hospital, keep standards of professionalism at the forefront. The pillars include respect, empathy, honesty, decorum, punctuality, collaboration, accountability and confidentiality.

UMMC graphic designers cleverly modelled the posters after the University of Mississippi's emblem of the Lyceum, a historical campus building that served as a hospital for Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, nicely integrating institutional history, health care and professionalism values.

The idea for these pillars was spurred by an activity involving middle school-aged girls. The girls learned four components of a healthy friendship, then listed the names of friends under each respective characteristic. The exercise helped the girls think critically about the friendships they were developing during some of their most socially difficult years.

Similarly, the medical school years can be among the most professionally challenging of students' lives. Despite their awareness of the proper professional behaviors, students often stray from these ideals due to prolonged stress, fatigue, school pressures and, in some cases, poor role modeling.

The Pillars of Professionalism combat these issues by continually reminding students and employees of the SOM's expectations for professionalism and providing a platform for discussion when certain behaviors begin to stray. These pillars will be integrated into the professionalism talk given during M1 orientation and will be woven into the professionalism curriculum of the pre-clinical years. In the future, the Professionalism Committee will incorporate these pillars into students' formative evaluations.

The Professionalism Committee has been able to cover many of the stages of the learning process, including objectives, explanation of concepts and evaluation. However, it has fallen short on the step between concept and evaluation: student application.

SOM faculty and staff can help integrate these pillars into their daily interaction with students by praising positive professional behaviors and labeling them (for example, "That was a great use of collaboration.") and pointing out negative behaviors with a reference to institutional expectations ("Being late to class breaks our pillar of punctuality.").

This helps to develop a culture of professional behaviors by replacing an arbitrary set of unwritten rules with a standard of expected behavior that begins during the M1 year and extends throughout the students' time at UMMC.

## Faculty Affairs Scholarships improve education, patient care, research, retention

By Vickie Skinner



Skinner

The Office of Faculty Affairs supports continuous lifelong learning in the form of faculty development. The OFA considers perpetual knowledge acquisition a key pillar of professionalism and a fundamental vehicle for retention.

Data collected during the 2016 Faculty Forward Engagement Survey indicated faculty desire more development and growth opportunities. Professional growth, development and opportunities for career progression are all dimensions that contribute to faculty satisfaction and engagement. Evidence in literature supports the concept that satisfied and engaged faculty are more likely to be retained, and UMMC is focusing on these dimensions.

The OFA is seeking ways to expand local development offerings through partnerships and collaborations across campus. The OFA sponsors multiple faculty development scholarships that allow present and aspiring faculty leaders to participate in various national workshops, seminars and development conferences.

Nominations typically are sought from school and departmental leaders and interested faculty are encouraged to share their interest with these individuals. Scholarship offerings throughout the year include the AAMC Organizational Leadership in Academic Medicine, the AAMC Being a Resilient Leader Workshop, the AAMC Leadership and Management Foundations for Academic Medicine and Science, the AAMC Mid-Career Women Professional Development Conference, the AAMC Minority Faculty Professional Development Seminar, the ADEA Allied Dental Faculty Leadership Development Program, and the Millsaps Business Advantage Program for Professionals.

The OFA invests in these scholarships with the expectation that those chosen to attend will return to UMMC and work with the OFA to create learning experiences so scholarship awardees can share the knowledge they gained with all faculty on campus. UMMC faculty who collaborate and share best practices, new innovations or knowledge help to ensure students, patients and community members have access to the best trained medical professionals engaging in education, health care and research.

# Curriculum Corner: Teaching environmental medicine to medical students

By Dr. Fazlay Faruque



Faruque

During the time of Hippocrates, environmental factors were recognized as essential in disease investigation. But today, most medical students don't receive adequate training in taking account of environmental exposures in clinical practice. Is environmental exposures becoming less relevant? Not at all.

The Lancet Commission on Pollution and Health published a report in October that refers to a World Health Organization study that found diseases caused by pollution were responsible for an estimated 9 million premature deaths in 2015 - 16 percent of all deaths

worldwide, three times more deaths than those caused by AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined and 15 times more than those caused by wars and other forms of violence.

Given the huge impact of the environment on health, since the 1990s, the Institute of Medicine has studied how medical graduates in the U.S. have been prepared to take environmental factors into account in their clinical practices. The IOM found the students lacking and recommended the integration of environmental health concepts into all levels of medical education.

The Association of American Medical Colleges strongly advocates including environmental medicine in medical education. From 2009-13, the AAMC reports between 34-40 percent of each year's graduating medical students believe their instruction in environmental health was inadequate. The AAMC arranged several webinars with specific facts, figures and guidelines to encourage medical colleges to teach environmental medicine.

UMMC has taken an efficient approach to training its students in environmental medicine. The Office of Medical Education organized reviews of the existing curricula by faculty members to identify what environmental medicine-related materials are being taught in different courses and where the gaps are.

The School of Medicine fills the gaps in two different ways. Where appropriate, essential materials will be added to the existing courses, and a new fourth-year elective course, "Environmental Medicine," will provide comprehensive training in environmental medicine.

## Call to action

A series of events in IMP1 requires SOM faculty and staff assistance.

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

Small group facilitators also are needed for sessions on differential diagnosis and independent study presentations given by students. These events were well-received by students and faculty last year and were described as being "a lot of fun!".

To participate or for more information, email David Norris at [drnorris@umc.edu](mailto: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

Tuesday, Feb. 6

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

Friday, March 23

Friday, March 30

Friday, April 6

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

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

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

### **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.

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

## Online course helps maintain excellent faculty

The Office of Academic Support provides and manages Excellent Teacher: Faculty Edition, an online, self-paced course for Medical Center faculty offered through Canvas, UMMC's learning management system.

Excellent Teacher: Faculty Edition is the faculty version of the Excellent Teacher course designed for medical residents, fellows, and other appropriate trainees. The course educates faculty about effective teaching and presents the Excellent Teacher curriculum designed for residents/fellows to model appropriate behavior and encourage professional development in students, residents, fellows and other trainees. The course includes information on teaching and communication, curriculum design, feedback and evaluation, and ethics and professionalism.

Continuing education credit may be earned for some disciplines. Currently, 5.5 hours of AMA, Nursing, ADA and APA continuing education credits are available.

To register for the course, follow the instructions at

[www.umc.edu/excellentteacher/](http://www.umc.edu/excellentteacher/)

For more information, email the Office of Academic Support at [academic-support@umc.edu](mailto:academic-support@umc.edu).



# Happy Holidays!

from the  
Office of Medical Education