



The School of Medicine welcomes new assistant dean

By Kristen J. Alston, Ph.D.



Alston

Dr. Kristen J. Alston, clinical health psychologist and associate professor in the UMMC Department of Family Medicine, works collaboratively with residents, physicians and other health care providers. The integrated care team provides behavioral health clinical services to patients with comorbid behavioral concerns and acute/chronic health conditions. She earned the BS in psychology from Howard University and her MA and PhD in clinical health psychology from East Carolina University.

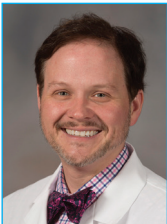
She completed internship training at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI and fellowship training at UMMC. Alston's interest in diversity, equity and inclusion

is interwoven throughout her clinical work, teaching, research and advocacy. She uses a biopsychosocial framework to help identify and understand the role of diversity as it relates to patient care and patient outcomes. She is also actively involved in medical education, teaching topics related to DEI and helping to lead and support DEI initiatives.

Alston also has interest in mental health advocacy, particularly as it relates to eradicating mental health stigma in the African American community. In 2020, Alston served as the first African American president of the Mississippi Psychological Association.

Revised preclinical curriculum focusing on application of knowledge to patient care

By Dr. David Norris



Norris

Implementation of the renewed M1 and M2 curriculum is accelerating as we head into the 2023-2024 academic year. The Class of 2028 will matriculate in August and will be the first to experience this approach with its increased focus on application of knowledge to patient care.

Students' experience will begin with a three-month Fundamentals Biomedical Science course that will introduce them to the normal structure and functioning of the human body, general pathological mechanisms, and strategies the body — and physicians — utilize to restore health and cure disease. Following fundamentals, the students will then move into a series of systems-scaffolded courses that will deepen their knowledge of the organ system and address its diseases and their treatments.

The revised curriculum will make greater use of problem-based learning (PBL) sessions, which will require students to apply knowledge they have already gained, seek and integrate new knowledge and apply that knowledge to patient scenarios. It will also offer new and improved ways to track student mastery of foundational sciences content.

There will be many opportunities for both foundational science and clinical science faculty members to become engaged in the educational programs, particularly in facilitating PBL sessions, facilitating Introduction to the Medical Professions (IMP) small groups, serving as student preceptors and observing and assessing student clinical skills in simulated sessions. Faculty who may be interested should watch their emails for these opportunities to be broadcast in the coming days.

SOM results from the 2022 UMMC Student Satisfaction Survey

By Lecretia A. Buckley, PhD



Buckley

Every other year the Office of Academic Effectiveness in the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs administers the University of Mississippi Medical Center Student Satisfaction Survey (UMMC SSS). The survey is administered to students in the schools of Dentistry, Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences, Health Related Professions, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Population Health. The 130-item survey was administered from October 15 – November 15, 2022.

Items are related to academics, clinical learning environment, student life, emotional well-being, and service units including advising, enrollment management, financial aid, the Student Counseling and Wellness Center and technology.

The response rate for all UMMC students was 63%; it was 68% for the School of Medicine. SOM students made up 28% of the survey respondents; and the response rate for medical students has increased each time the survey was administered.

The UMMC SSS was first administered in 2016. At the institutional level, 94% of students are generally satisfied with their studies, and 90% are generally satisfied with their student experience at UMMC. For the SOM, 93% of students were generally satisfied with their studies, and 91% were generally satisfied with their student experience at UMMC. This article will focus on the top 10 satisfaction areas as well as areas that are opportunities for improvement.

The Office of Academic Effectiveness provided a list of the top 10 satisfaction areas for the SOM and for UMMC. For the SOM, six of those areas fall

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School of Medicine Mission Statement

The University of Mississippi School of Medicine is committed to training skilled and compassionate physicians to provide high quality and equitable health care particularly to the state's residents, including diverse and underserved populations. The school prepares learners to provide excellent care through programs of innovative education, state-of-the-art research and comprehensive clinical practice.

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under library resources and included interlibrary loan services/ease in requesting books or journal articles, helpfulness of library staff with printing or copying issues, helpfulness of Rowland Medical Library faculty/staff with locating resources, accessibility of electronic databases (e.g. PubMed, CINAHL, Upto-Date), wait time for face-to-face service or chat/email responses from library faculty/staff and ability to locate printed books and journals in the library. Two of the top 10 satisfaction areas were related to the Student Counseling and Wellness Center and included helpfulness of the center’s faculty and staff and information about available counseling services (e.g., dealing with unfamiliar or stressful situations). The remaining two are in the areas of academics (I feel academically challenged) and environment/facilities (helpfulness of staff). Areas that highlight opportunities for improvement were also provided and include six areas: (1) technology, (2) academics, (3) financial aid, (4) security and safety, (5) clinical learning environment, and (6) student accounting services. For each area, the specific items are provided.

Technology

- Reliability of wireless connection to UMMC WiFi

Academics

- I am acquiring research skills and techniques that are necessary for success in my discipline.
- I have sufficient opportunities to learn with, from, and about students in other UMMC schools.
- I am learning to critically evaluate data and literature which is relevant for professionals in my area of study.

Financial Aid

- Information and guidance given to help student borrowers understand how to manage debt and repay loans
- Efficiency of the financial aid process
- Information about financial aid options

Security and Safety

- I have received adequate training on workplace violence in a health care setting.

JUNE and JULY SESSIONS – SOM Faculty Development Series

Fundamentals of Statistics and Data Science in Medicine

Thursday, June 1 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. Thomas Dobbs

Integrated Curriculum: Tenets and Models

Thursday, June 8 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. David Norris

Curriculum Development: From EPOs to Session Objectives

Thursday, June 15 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. Maryam Syed

Education Scholarship: One Year in the Medical Education Grant Academy

Thursday, June 22 | 11 a.m. – noon | Presented by Dr. Savannah Duckworth

Professional Identity Formation

Thursday, June 29 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. Molly Clark

Change Management

Thursday, July 6 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. Loretta Jackson-Williams

Diversity and Inclusion

Thursday, July 13 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. Juanyce Taylor, Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Diverse Presentation Modalities to Enhance Student Learning

Thursday, July 20 | noon – 1 p.m. | Presented by Dr. Edgar Meyer, et al.

Clinical Learning Environment

- I am satisfied with the quality of feedback after assignments in the clinical learning environment.

Student Accounting Services

- Information presented on student insurance

Student feedback matters, and it contributes to the SOM continuous quality improvement. These findings are among the data the SOM administration routinely reviews and uses to maintain areas of strength and identify areas for improvement.

QEP: Professionalism in Practice

By Cynthia Senior, DHA



Senior

The Southern Association for Colleges and Schools

Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires accredited institutions to conduct a five-year, research-based project that is based on an institutional need and enhances overall institutional quality and effectiveness by improving student learning outcomes and/or student success.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Professionalism in Practice, is designed to enhance student learning by

promoting the development of professionalism in our experiential practitioner curriculum by focusing on the clinical and scientific learning/research environments. Our QEP aims to expand on the professionalism components that have been included within the didactic curriculum.

Students within their first year of experiential learning are randomly assigned into one of the instructional groups in which a different instructional intervention is utilized. To assess the effects of the instructional interventions, students will be assessed using a panel of established instruments that include direct, indirect, quantitative, qualitative, self-reported, pre-test and post-test measures. The various instruction groups are depicted in the table below.

QEP Instructional Group	Instructional Strategy Utilized within Group
DID: standard didactic training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre/Post Test
MOD: online learning module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DID components • Online learning module • Students complete self and supervisor evaluations
WREF: written reflection exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOD components • Written reflections on experiences
GREF: guided group reflection exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WREF components • Group reflections on experiences

The goal is for students to internalize professional behavior, virtues, and identity as they begin their experiential learning within the clinical and laboratory settings. Students are strongly encouraged to participate as student participation is essential for analysts to evaluate which instructional strategy is most effective. The QEP committee asks faculty to encourage student participation. For additional information see [Quality Enhancement Plan: Professionalism in Practice - University of Mississippi Medical Center \(umc.edu\)](#) or contact Dr. Cynthia Senior accreditation@umc.edu.

Non-involvement of providers of student health services in student assessment

UMMC health professionals who provide health services to a medical student should have no involvement in the academic assessment, evaluation or promotion of that medical student. If you find yourself in a situation where this may potentially occur, please contact the Office of Student Affairs for an alternate academic plan.