Guided by its mission to train 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 of Medicine prepares learners to provide excellent care through programs of innovative education, state-of-the-art research and comprehensive clinical practice. This mission undergirds the SOM medical education curriculum, practices and policies, and the curriculum supports its mission and distills to the program’s six educational program objectives.

These EPOs reflect the essential requirements for physicians to act in an ethical and altruistic fashion while providing competent medical care and fulfilling their obligations to their patients. The Curriculum Committee reviewed and approved updates to these EPOs during the 2017-18 academic year. The EPOs can be found in the UMMC Bulletin.

The Curriculum Committee, empowered by the dean, oversees the design, management and evaluation of the educational program of the SOM. Seven subcommittees engage in the work of the Curriculum Committee.

The subcommittees include:
• Continuous Quality Improvement,
• Curriculum Development and Innovation,
• Population Health,
• Preclinical Curriculum Coordination,
• Clinical Curriculum Coordination,
• Professionalism and Evaluation.

Course design primarily occurs in the Curriculum Development and Innovation Subcommittee while management takes place in the Population, Preclinical Curriculum Coordination and Clinical Curriculum Coordination Subcommittees. Evaluation of individual courses, phases of the curriculum and the entire educational program occurs in the Evaluation and CQI Subcommittees.

Six EPOs address multiple areas in which medical students are trained. EPOs that address interprofessional teamwork and lifelong personal and professional learning were adopted by the Curriculum Committee at its January 2018 meeting. These two areas were added to four preexisting EPOs that address:
• The structure and function of the human body,
• The utilization of diagnostic and interventional skills to accurately evaluate, diagnose and plan treatment,
• Characteristics, attitudes and values needed to provide ethical and beneficent medical care to all patients and
• The employment of systematic approaches for promoting, maintaining and improving the health of individuals and populations.

Together, the UMMC SOM EPOs provide a guiding light or framework for what is taught in the medical education program. Each year, course objectives are mapped onto at least one of the six EPOs in the OME’s curriculum mapping process.

The UMMC curriculum map is submitted to the Association of American Medical Colleges in September. It is available for course directors as they develop courses that align with the school’s EPOs and daily sessions that ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of content.

Medical knowledge is developing at a rapid pace and selecting what to teach ultimately lies with the Curriculum Committee and the content’s connection with the school’s EPOs. While the SOM cannot teach its students everything, the Curriculum Committee offers faculty an avenue to examine content and its appropriateness and to obtain approval for inclusion in the curriculum.

Education tip: Applying andragogical principles to enhance adult learning

Take a moment to recall the best educational course you have ever experienced. What factors made it so great? Was the facilitator’s delivery enthusiastic? Did the facilitator appear passionate about the learning content?

As a student, were you engaged and vested in the subject matter? Were you able to relate to the information being delivered and was it delivered in a way that empowered you to provide input? Was it safe for you to ask questions and drive the conversation forward?

Most individuals would answer “Yes” to two or more of these questions because andragogy shows that adult learners learn best when they:
• Understand why the learning content is important and what’s in it for them,
• Are in an educational environment that allows them to be self-directed and encourages participation,

Malcolm Knowles has done extensive research in adult learning principles. Applying andragogical principles to course delivery methods can enhance student learning.

Take a look at your instructional design. How does it measure up? Does it satisfy any, if not all, of the above factors?

Instructors must do what they can to ensure educational experiences that maximize the opportunity for learning.
The incoming fall 2018 class of 165 students is the largest in the history of the School of Medicine and was also one of the most competitive.

The number of applications was also a record high, so the ratio of applications to acceptance was one of the lowest. This means students had to rise to the occasion. In fact, the average MCAT score of 505 for incoming fall 2018 students was higher than in previous years.

The competition also increased because of the Biomedical Sciences Master’s Program expansion. Students who want to increase their academic credentials and preparation for medical school can do so by obtaining that degree.

The class size increase is something the UMMC Admissions Office has been planning for years. The admissions office has increased its presence on college campuses across the state. Instead of coming in to give a talk, admissions office representatives spend a day meeting one-on-one with prospective students, helping make sure they are building a competitive application.

Many students and others have the perception that the UMMC Admissions Committee only looks at test scores and grades. This is not the case. The school’s holistic admissions process means the Admissions Committee looks at a number of different attributes, experiences and academics.

Other services the admissions office provides includes earlier counseling for re-applicants and giving students feedback on their applications. These help students understand the improvements they must make to be successful applicants in the future.

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Curriculum corner: Adult Emergency Department - Where the action is

By Jonah C. Gunalda

Before graduating, every medical student needs to know how to save a life.

That’s what I’m in the business of doing – teaching students to save lives.

Medicine is about taking action, and the UMMC Emergency Department is where the action is.

As a UMMC alumnus, I completed my residency at Wake Forest University, where I received multiple teaching awards from students during my chief year. I joined the emergency medicine faculty last summer and am now clerkship director and course director for this M3 elective.

My passion is working with students at all levels to teach them emergency care.

During our two-week M3 Emergency Medicine Life-Saving Skills Elective (previously named “Life-Saving Skills”), students have the unrivaled opportunity to see patients with blunt and penetrating trauma, anaphylaxis, ectopic pregnancies, heart attacks, strokes, severe asthma, sepsis, acute glaucoma, appendicitis and heroin overdoses – all in the same place. Sometimes even in the same shift!

Regardless of specialty preference, this elective offers something for every student.

The elective begins with an introduction to some of the fundamentals of emergency medicine, such as image interpretation and ACLS review. Students also go through cases in UMMC’s state-of-the-art, high-fidelity simulation training center, where they learn how to make lifesaving decisions under a controlled stress environment while building teamwork and leadership skills.

Students also work clinical shifts in UMMC’s adult ED alongside EM faculty and residents to help provide lifesaving care to the sickest patients in the state.

Not only do students encounter a variety of illnesses in the ED, they are also able to participate in emergency procedure such as intubations, chest tube placements, central line insertions, laceration repairs and dislocation reductions.

In the state’s only Level 1 trauma center, students also learn emergency ultrasound techniques from experts in the field. The ED is a unique learning environment where students can hone their skills in history taking, physical examination, differential diagnosis and management plan formulation.

The adult ED has a wonderful team, including Dr. Jeff Orledge and Dr. Anna Lerant, that continues to make this course one of the most highly rated and sought-after rotations of the M3 year. Don’t miss out!