What Makes a Good Teacher?

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What Makes a Good Teacher?

• More than a “recipe” of skills
• Teaching is the heart of being a doctor
  – Etymology: ME doctour, teacher, learned individual < OFr or < L doctor, teacher < pp. of docere, to teach
• I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description [hard-core pornography]; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so.

• But I know it when I see it...
The same can be said about good teaching

- I know it when I see it…
  - Chet DeGroat, Tom Medsger
  - Gigi Duker
  - John Kreit
  - Cynthia Lance Jones
  - Missy McNeil
  - Harsha Rao
  - Paul Rogers
  - Basil Zitelli

- And many others here at Pitt that share the following qualities
What Makes a Good Teacher?

• Most important characteristics
  – A good teacher
    • wants the student to learn
    • is motivated to excel as a teacher
  – Motivation is
    • Internal desire
    • NOT a departmental requirement
What Makes a Good Teacher?

• To accomplish this
  – A good teacher is
    • Enthusiastic, energetic, excited
    • Highly knowledgeable in their area of expertise
    • Maintains that knowledge base
    • Lifelong learner
What Makes a Good Teacher?

– Good teachers are ‘classroom researchers’
  • Experiment with teaching strategies
– Listen to students
– Flexible
  • keeping what works
  • discarding what doesn’t
  • Constantly re evaluating and being evaluated
– Strongly values personal growth
What Makes a Good Teacher?

- A lesson from Japan
  - Continuous Quality Improvement
  - Objective Evaluation of the Teacher by:
    - Students
    - Peers
    - Educational specialists
  - Evaluation
    - Immediate
    - Later in the student’s education
What Makes a Good Teacher?

• Know the students you are teaching!
  – Class personality
    • Quiet, reserved gunners?
    • Raucous free wheeling party animals?
  – Know them personally

• Remember the three A’s
  – Able, Affable and Available
Goals of Good Teachers

• Setting Expectations
  – Student objectives are clearly defined
  – *Example* - the student will be able to describe the mechanism of changes in glomerular blood flow that occur in states of low blood volume
Goals of a Good Teacher

• Provide experiences
  – With supervision
  – With feedback
Goals of Good Teachers

• Evaluate Student Outcomes
  – Formal testing
  – Observed skill performance
  – Self Evaluation
    • Immediate
    • Future
Methods of Good Teaching

• Analogy
  – I want you to imagine this…

• Story telling
  – One night when I was in the emergency room….

• Encourages questions

• Positive Reinforcement
Methods of Good Teaching

• Involve the student (Active Learning!)
• Keep the message basic
  – 4 - 5 major points in an educational session
• Good teachers build the foundation for learning
• Good teachers show the way for the student to build on this foundation
Methods of Good Teaching

• Involve the senses
  – Hearing information 20% Recall
  – Seeing Information 30% Recall
  – Hearing + Seeing 50% Recall

• Most powerful recall stimulator
  – Association - student learns best when event combined with its context.
  – Patient care, Direct use of knowledge
Purpose of medical education

• Teach the knowledge
• Instruct students in the art of life long learning
• Develop the skills
• Inculcate the values
What are the responsibilities of medical students?
Students

• Take responsibility for their own education
  – Learning is an active process
  – Teachers can guide the way, learners must walk the path

• Strive to understand concepts
  – Avoid straight memorization
Memorization Dilemma

- Medical knowledge is too vast
- Students must be life long learners
- Utilize all resources available
  - Textbooks
  - Journals
  - World Wide Web
  - Teachers
  - Peers
Peer Teaching

• I teach, therefore, I learn
• Parable of learning to play chess
• Peer teachers best able to teach at appropriate level
Biggest Worry

• The passive learner
  – Afraid to comment because they might be wrong
  – Afraid to question because they might appear ignorant
Remember

• Good judgment comes from experience
• And experience comes from bad judgment

• Learning is a continuous quality improvement process
Summary

Academic Medical Schools have a social contract to train the best doctors possible

- Students must learn from patients
- Students must research questions generated by patient care
- Teachers must guide and direct the student’s journey

– Good teaching should be nurtured, encouraged, taught and rewarded
Summary

• Our most important goal, Doctors who
  – Are curious life long learners
  – Are compassionate and professional
  – Are experts in analytical reasoning
  – And will share their knowledge and experiences with their students.
Selected Readings

- Whitman, Neal
  - *Notes of a Medical Educator*
  - *Creative Medical Teaching*
  - Published by Department of Family and Preventive Medicine
  - University of Utah School of Medicine
  - nwhitman@dfpm.utah.edu
Selected Readings

• Kenneth M. Ledmerer, MD
  – *Time to Heal: American Medical Education from the Turn of the Century to the Era of Managed Care.*

• Molly Cooke et al.
  – American Medical Education 100 years after the Flexner Report.
Selected Readings

• Ronald J. Markert, PhD
  – *What Makes a Good Teacher? Lessons from Teaching Medical Students*
Finally...

• Remember
  – You know a good teacher when you see one
  – Remember your own teachers, the ones that left a lasting impression
    • Paul Gaffney
    • Alex Gonzalez
    • Phil Troen
    • Chuck Watson
Questions?