

FOCUSING ON LEADERSHIP

Preparing tomorrow's leaders in medical education is the goal — and achievement — of Michigan's Medical Education Scholars Program

Continuing medical education has been a priority at the U-M ever since the Department of Postgraduate Medicine was established in 1927. Michigan has organized myriad conferences and symposia centered on advancements in medical treatment and significant issues in medical education. These programs have provided valuable professional updates for physicians and faculty. But what about those pursuing or interested in career paths within the field of medical education?

In 1997, Interim Medical School Dean A. Lorris Betz, M.D., and Associate Dean for Medical Education Wayne K. Davis, Ph.D., answered this question by deciding to fund a formal program that would focus on the enrichment and promotion of Medical School faculty devoted to medical education. The result was the Medical Education Scholars Program, now in its fifth year.

"It wasn't that there was a lack of leadership in medical education at the time," explains Larry Gruppen (Ph.D. 1987), who has directed the program since its inception, "but rather a concern about the 'pipeline' for the future — where the next set of directors and leaders was going to come from."

The tenets of the program revolve around leadership, says Gruppen, a professor in the Department of Medical Education, director of the Department's Office of Educational Resources and Research, and the Department's new chair. "In our definition of leadership we include scholarship as a key component, emphasizing that education itself becomes an area of scholarship — something that you think about in the same critical, scientific ways that you think about your clinical or research activities."

The MESP is a competitive program that accepts six to eight faculty applicants per year. Originally designed for Medical School faculty, the program is relevant and applicable to faculty in all the health professions, including medicine, public health, nursing, dentistry and pharmacy, enabling them to pursue scholarship in health professions education, to take on

greater educational leadership, and to become more effective teachers.

Scholars devote a half-day each week to the year-long program. The MESP financially covers this release time, allowing scholars to dedicate time to the program — a novel feature compared to similar programs and one that relieves participants of the complications of compensating for time away from the clinic, classroom or lab.

In addition to lectures by leading medical educators from across the country, MESP scholars conduct their own educational research and development projects, which they conceptualize themselves. Gruppen describes the projects as "pragmatic" endeavors based on topics or problems the scholars are dealing with in their current responsibilities. Some are forms of curriculum development, while others are research projects concentrating on specific areas of medical education. "It's a kind of lab for each of them to practice what we're preaching," explains Gruppen.

A key and often lively component of the MESP is the Scholar's Hour, a group discussion devised and led by an individual scholar. Each participant conducts several Scholar's Hours through the year. Many scholars use

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this as an opportunity to present and get feedback on parts of their project, but others use it as a creative session to cultivate discussion about medical education issues. Some even use it to get comments on their current educational prowess. "For one of my Scholar's Hours I played a videotape of one of my own lectures and let everyone critique it, which was just as humiliating as it could be," laughs Robert Lash, M.D., clinical associate professor of internal medicine and a member of the MESP's first cohort.



Larry Gruppen

The MESP staff accepts educators from different specialties, different departments and at different points in their careers. Diversity, especially the combination of senior and junior faculty involved, plays a major role in shaping the MESP's eclectic topics.

"Having established faculty members provides a sense of perspective, particularly for new faculty," says Gruppen. "The wisdom they've accumulated, and their hard-won experience, have really been beneficial to pragmatic problem-solving. And the junior faculty members contribute enormously with their enthusiasm. They bring a different perspective to the more established faculty — they're not tied to history or bound to standard ways of doing things. The mix works well."



John Frohna



Robert Lash

And so does the MESP itself, we now know. In a paper published in the February 2003 issue of *Academic Medicine*, Gruppen and colleagues reported on pre- and post-program outcomes that speak to a significant impact on faculty members, their careers, and the Medical School. Looking at 35 graduates of the program, Gruppen's team noted a 67 percent increase in the number of promotions (reflective not only of the program, he qualifies, but also the early career stage of some of the scholars); a 167 percent increase in new educational responsibilities among participants, often at regional and national levels; and large increases in professional recognition such as educational awards, publications, presentations and posters, and educational grants.

Gruppen and his staff are already expanding the program's boundaries. Resources from other schools such as Public Health, the School of Business Administration, and the Department of Psychology in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, are being incorporated, and Gruppen is working to formalize ties with the School of Education, which is not only providing the MESP with additional educational resources, but also a potential master's program that would allow

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MESP graduates to attain a formal education degree after additional coursework.

Scholars point to the connections developed among participants during the MESP, and the collaboration that continues afterwards, as one of the most important benefits of the program. "I think the most helpful thing for me was gaining contact and networking with people who are doing educational research all the time," says John Frohna, M.D., a member of the first MESP cohort and chief resident in the Department of Pediatrics.

Robert Lash agrees. "MESP has allowed the formation of a community of people interested in medical education here that otherwise wouldn't have come together," he says. "When I'm looking for people to be involved in teaching activities at the Medical School, one of my first go-to lists is MESP alums. The caliber of people is tremendous." 

—RS



Photo: Gregory Fox

Medical Education Day 2003

Molly Cooke, M.D., director of the Academy of Medical Educators at the University of California-San Francisco, gave the plenary address of this year's Medical Education Day program on February 18 at the Towsley Center. The Academy, nationally recognized as a groundbreaking initiative, was established to serve as a community for UCSF faculty with significant commitment to medical education, in order to enhance career development as well as promote and support the best possible teaching and learning. Cooke, a founding member of the Division of General Medicine at San Francisco General Hospital, is also well known for her work in the field of HIV ethics.

The U-M's annual Medical Education Day program highlights innovations at all levels of education at the Medical School, addressing current challenges in the field as well as issues specific to medical education at Michigan. In addition to the plenary session, small group workshops, poster presentations and computer demonstrations describe the latest in educational activities and tools. 

A LONG AND ILLUSTRIOUS HISTORY OF LEADING THE WAY

The Department of Medical Education celebrates 75 years of professional physician training

In 1927, the U-M's Department of Postgraduate Medicine, under the leadership of Professor James Bruce, became the first department in the nation to provide education to health professionals beyond medical and graduate school degrees. After several name changes, continuing progress, and significant growth in staff and resources, what is now called the Department of Medical Education continues to offer professional education to physicians through programs that are nationally recognized models in the field.

Last year marked the 75th anniversary of this department, which has set major trends in continuing medical education and medical education research both within the U-M Health System and at hospitals across Michigan — trends which have influenced teaching hospitals and medical schools throughout the U.S.

Before the late 1960s, Medical Education was merely a 30-seat classroom and three small offices for the administrative staff and a faculty of about 10 physicians with partial appointments to the department. In

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—Red Hiss

1969, the Towsley Center building not only gave the department a home, but further established it as a formalized center for medical education. In the mid 1970s, the department officially became involved in undergraduate medical education at the U-M and created the Office of Educational Resources and Research, which provided the department its first full-time faculty — Ph.D.s who specialized in education and other behavioral and social sciences.



Roland "Red" Hiss

In addition to the department's 75th anniversary, 2002 also marked the twentieth year that Roland "Red" Hiss (M.D. 1957, Residency 1964, Fellowship 1966) has served as its chair. Hiss has not only been synonymous with medical education at Michigan, he has hardly parted from the U-M in general since his undergraduate

years. He began pursuing his bachelor's degree at the University in 1950, went into the Medical School immediately afterward, then strayed from Michigan for just four years to pursue a rotating internship at Philadelphia General Hospital and serve as a flight surgeon at the Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine in San Antonio, Texas. Hiss returned to the U-M in 1961 for his internal medicine residency and a fellowship in hematology.

Red, as his many colleagues and coworkers call him, joined the Medical School faculty in 1966. He has taught hematology and other subjects to an estimated 8,000 medical students. Says Hiss, "The collective experience of teaching so many students at this school is probably the part I liked most about my career and felt that I had the most impact in."

Hiss's influence on medical education has extended outside of the U-M as well. He was one of the key developers of the Michigan Diabetes Research and Training Center, an organization that supports biomedical research in diabetes and promotes widespread adoption of research discoveries into health care at the community level. Hiss has acted as the director of the Center's Prevention and Control Division since 1977.

In June of this year, after more than two decades as chair of the Department of Medical Education and 37 years on the faculty, Hiss will retire. Although he won't be directly spreading his extraordinary range of medical knowledge to students and faculty at the Medical School, his legacy and distinctive teaching philosophy will continue.

"If there's any kind of theme to my career in medical education, it is the continuous education of practicing physicians at their worksites. Traditional continuing education has its place, but the real learning that everybody experiences — physicians and others alike — is when they have a problem in the clinical setting, and they need help solving it. This is the 'teachable moment.'" 

—RS

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Larry Gruppen named as new chair of Medical Education

Larry D. Gruppen, Ph.D., professor of medical education and director of the Office of Educational Resources and Research and the Medical Education Scholars Program, is the new chair of the Department of Medical Education and the Josiah Macy Jr. Professor of Medical Education. Gruppen's appointment was effective April 1.

Photo: Martin Vioet



Gruppen is a cognitive psychologist whose areas of research interest include the fundamental aspects of clinical reasoning and the development and assessment of medical expertise. He is committed to developing and facilitating educational methods for the professional development of physicians, especially the mechanisms of self-assessment and self-directed learning.

An active member of the Central Group on Educational Affairs at the American Association of Medical Colleges, Gruppen is also heavily involved with curriculum development and content appraisal at the U-M Medical School. [M](#)

U-M Medical School Profile, 2002-03

- Year founded: 1848
- First classes held: 1850
- Total number of medical students: 668
- Average class size: 170
- Average number of applications: 4,500
- Residence - Michigan: 52 percent Out-of-state: 48 percent
- Gender - Men: 58 percent Women: 42 percent
- Minorities: 14 percent (Puerto Rican, Mexican-American, African-American, Native American)
- Total number of interns and residents: 933
- Buildings: 20
- Alumni, including M.D. graduates, residents and fellows: 19,000

Vascular interventions . . . multidisciplinary breast cancer management . . . rheumatology and musculoskeletal disease . . . these are but a few of the topics of upcoming U-M Continuing Medical Education courses.

For information on course content, dates and locations, visit Medical Education's Web site at www.med.umich.edu/meded, call (734) 763-1400, (800) 800-0666, or e-mail OCME@umich.edu.

Upcoming Events in the U-M Medical School

2003

M A Y

- May 29 Senior Lunch, Sheraton Inn, 11:30 a.m.
- May 30 Commencement, Crisler Arena, 4 p.m.

J U N E

- June 5 4th Annual Emeritus Faculty Dinner, Barton Hills Country Club, 6 p.m.
- June 29 2nd Annual Dean's Ride to Dexter, 10 a.m.

A U G U S T

- August 4 M-1 Welcome Orientation Week Begins
- August 10 Family Day; White Coat Ceremony, Rackham Auditorium, 4 p.m.

S E P T E M B E R

- September 5-6 Reunion Weekend Football Game: U-M vs. Houston

D E C E M B E R

- December 4 3rd Annual Faculty Awards Dinner, Barton Hills Country Club, 7 p.m.