

## Promoting Professionalism in Medical Education

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## General Learning Goals

- Analyze the importance of professionalism within the academic mission
- Be able to list important characteristic behaviors often attributed as defining professionalism in medicine
- Introduce the idea of professionalism as a belief system by which to shape health care



## Outline of Presentation

- What is professionalism and why is it important?
- The evolution of professionalism
- Defining professionalism through aspirations and behaviors
- Examples of teaching professionalism
- Expanding the definition to incorporate a mindset and belief system toward a development of a professional identity



## Profession Defined

- “the occupation which one professes to be skilled in and to follow:
  - (a) a vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others, or in the practice of an art founded upon it,
  - (b) in a wider sense, any calling or occupation by which a person habitually earns his/her living

- Oxford English Dictionary



## What is a Profession?

- Possession of a body of specialized knowledge
- Practice within some ethical framework
- Fulfillment of some broad societal need
- Social mandate which permits a significant discretionary latitude in setting standards for education and performance of its members

E Pellegrino Mount Sinai J of Medicine 2002; 69: 378-384



## Medical Professionalism Defined

“... the means by which individual doctors fulfill the medical profession’s contract with society.”

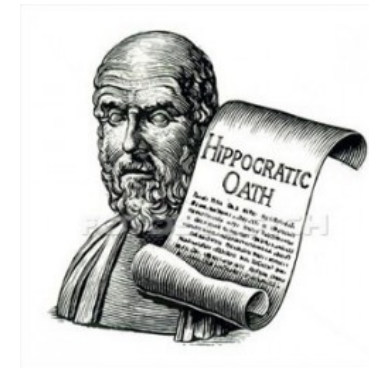
J Cohen – Medical Education, 2006; 40: 607-617

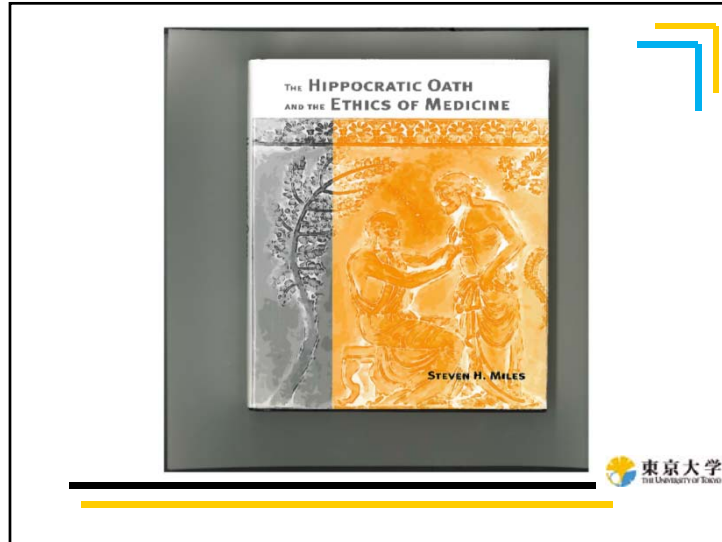


## Culturally Defined



## Medical Professionalism Beginnings





## Hippocratic Oath Sections

- **Who are Physicians? What is the source of medical professionalism?**
  - Creators
  - Teachers
  - Learners
- **To what are physicians committed?**
  - Health of the Public
  - Deadly Drugs
  - Abortion
  - Integrity
  - Error
- **In what way are physicians accountable?**
  - Consent and Truth-telling
  - Exploiting patients
  - Discretion in speech

## Other Oaths in medical education

- **The Prayer of Maimonides**
- **The Declaration of Geneva**
- **Institutional oaths**

## Doctor's Simultaneous Roles

- **The “healer”**
- **The “professional”**

SR Cruess, RL Cruess BMJ 1997; 315: 1674-1677

## Characteristics of Professions



## Evolution of Professionalism

- Initially, assumed that the service orientation of the medical profession would benefit society
- In the decades 1960-90's public trust eroded as the service orientation seemed flawed
  - Inherent conflict between altruism and self-interest
  - Emphasis on remuneration
  - Failure of adequate self-regulation
  - Decreasing ability to address problems deemed to be important by society

## Project Professionalism

- First published in 1995 American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM)
- Seven Elements of Professionalism
  - Altruism
  - Accountability
  - Excellence
  - Duty
  - Honor
  - Integrity
  - Respect for Others

## Medical Schools Objective Project

- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) 2002
- Determined professionalism to be a key outcome in Medical School Objective Project (MSOP)

## One of Six Core Competencies

- Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) 2004
  - Professionalism
  - Patient Care
  - Interpersonal Communication
  - Medical Knowledge
  - Practice-Based Learning: Self Improvement
  - Systems-Based Practice: System Improvement



## A Physician Charter - 2002

- Collaboration
  - American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation
  - American College of Physicians Foundation
  - European Federation of Internal Medicine
- Medical Professionalism in the New Millennium: A Physician Charter*
  - Three Fundamental Principles
  - Ten Professional Responsibilities (Commitments)



## Three Fundamental Principles

- Primacy of Patient Welfare
- Patient Autonomy
- Social Justice



## Ten Professional Responsibilities (1-5)

- Commitment to Professional Competence
- Commitment to honesty with patients
- Commitment to patient confidentiality
- Commitment to appropriate relations with patients
- Commitment to improving quality of care



## Ten Professional Responsibilities (6-10)

- Commitment to improving access to care
- Commitment to a just distribution of finite resources
- Commitment to scientific knowledge
- Commitment to maintaining trust by managing conflicts of interest
- Commitment to professional responsibilities



## Responses to the “Charter”

- Many Favorable
- Many organizations and institutions have adopted it
- Some criticisms have been stated
  - Competence rather than excellence?
  - Relies on the language of contracts
  - It is a reaction to the growing corporate dominance of physicians and health care



## Sir William Osler



## Educating Medical Students



# Into the Profession of Medicine

*The White Coat Ceremony Address*  
(For Entering Medical Students)



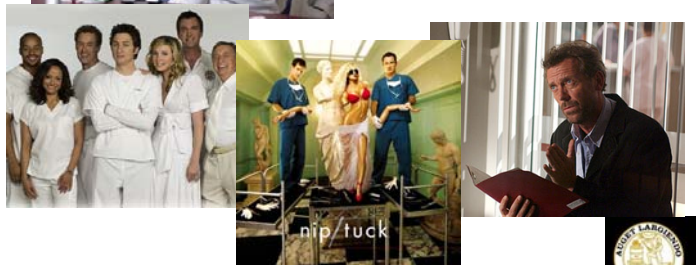
# Gold Humanism Honor Society



Paul B. Underwood, Jr. Chapter



humanism-in-medicine.org



# New Mindsets

- Learn to collaborate, not compete
- Get beyond the “what”



## It's More than a "Job"



## Aspects of Professionalism



## Aretha Franklin -- Respect







## The Humanistic Physician

- **R**espect
- **E**quanimity
- **S**incerity
- **P**erseverance
- **E**xcellence
- **C**ompassion
- **T**rust





## Trust


## A New Way of Learning









## Differences in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year

- Learn by doing
- Think “on your feet”
- Take responsibility for your education
- It’s not all about you. . . .  
it’s about the patient

## A New Frame of Reference

- Less like a “student”
- More like a “physician”

## Things you must do

- Fulfill your role as a Student Physician
- Take an active role in your education
- Figure out how to manage your time
- Find your passion
- Effectively Communicate



## Things you should do

- Keep a journal
- Don't forget to breathe
- Be there when someone dies
- Don't forget to grieve



## Sir William Osler

- “He [sic] who studies medicine without books sails an uncharted sea, but he who studies medicine without patients does not go to sea at all.”
- “It is much more important to know what sort of a patient has a disease than what sort of a disease a patient has.”



## Four (or so) Years Later

- Completion of coursework
- National Residency matching program
- Commencement with Oath Ceremony



## Take PRIDE in your Accomplishments

- **P**assion
- **R**espect
- **I**ntegrity
- **D**iscipline
- **E**xcellence



## Contemporary Oath



## Sustaining Professionalism

- **Role of Academic Medicine**
  - Improving the selection of future doctors
  - Improving the formal instruction of their learners
  - Purging their own learning environments of unprofessional practices

J Cohen Med Education 2006; 40:607-617



## Improving Selection

- Admission to medical school essentially means admission to medicine
- Few cannot handle the academic rigors and intellectual hurdles
- Few reliable tools able to predict the student's capacity to fully develop the character traits necessary to be a doctor



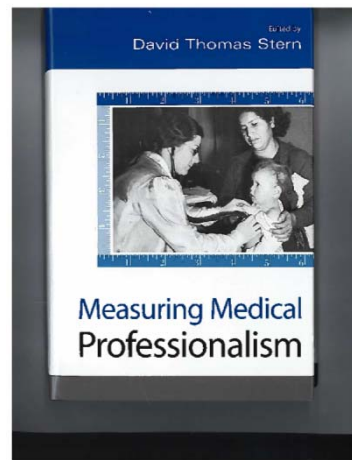
## Improving Instruction

- Formal curriculum delineates the necessity of professional development
- Educational curricular offerings and educational experiences can promote or detract from this development
  - Longitudinal patient care experiences
  - Incorporation of humanities in teaching
  - Providing structured time for reflection



## Purging Unprofessionalism

- The “hidden curriculum” is very powerful in transmitting values
- Improving “professionalism quotient” of learning environments
- Modelling professionalism by teachers
- Minimize/eliminate elements of corporate influence
- Offer public recognition of exceptional professionalism



## Assessing Professionalism

- Peer assessment
- Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs)
- Critical Incident Reports
- Learner-maintained Portfolios
- Direct Observation by faculty



## P-MEX

### Professionalism Mini Evaluation Exercise

Contains 21 specific behaviors

Completed by a trained observer following a 15-20 minute patient interaction

Behaviors are evaluated on a 4-point scale

“unacceptable”

“below expectations”

“meets expectations”

“exceeds expectations”



## American Board of Medical Specialties

- **Operational Definition of Professionalism**
  - Certification
  - Maintenance of Certification
- **Ensuring that practitioners are worthy of trust**
- **Normative belief system about how best to organize and deliver health care**



“**Medical professionalism** is a belief system about how best to organize and deliver healthcare, which calls on group members to jointly declare (“profess”) what the public, individual patients, and peers can expect regarding shared competency standards and ethical values, and to implement trustworthy means to ensure that all medical professionals live up to these promises.”

ABMS - 2012



## Professional Identity Formation

- **Teaching professionalism should develop practitioners who possess a professional identity.**
- **Those with that identity understand the obligations and internalize the value system of the medical profession**

Cruess, Cruess, Boudreau, Snell and Steinert Academic Medicine 2014; 89: 1446-1451



## A suggested “short definition”

“Professionalism is placing the best interests of patients at the center of everything you do.”

Barnhoorn and Youngson – Medical Teacher 2014; 36:545

