

Geriatrics Excellence in Teaching Series for Faculty and Fellows

at Duke University School of Medicine



SUMMARY

Target Audience

Geriatrics faculty and fellows

Purpose

To enhance skills in teaching, curriculum development, and educational scholarship

Program

Ten monthly, one-hour seminars using discussions, case review, role play, readings, and writing assignments

History

The program has been held annually since 2005

Operating Costs

Program director and faculty time; light refreshments; teaching materials

Outcomes

All respondents agreed that the series provided them with resources that they have been able to use in their teaching practices; 88% were more confident in designing educational programs as well as in teaching medical learners

Available Materials

Article with list of seminar topics; website with slides, handouts, and references

For More Information

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Program Overview

In 2005 the Duke University Division of Geriatrics and Aging Center established a year-long Geriatrics Excellence in Teaching Series (GETS) to help geriatrics faculty and fellows develop as clinician-educators. The program, which is also open to other health professionals at the Duke Aging Center, focuses on developing skills in teaching, curriculum development, and educational scholarship that are essential for succeeding in careers in geriatric academic medicine.

The program provides an innovative approach to training clinician-educators through a variety of active learning strategies that:

- expose participants to innovative, adult learning-centered approaches for enhancing learning and instruction in medical education
- provide a conceptual space for faculty and fellows to discuss contemporary issues in academic medicine.

Program Operations

The year-long program consists of ten one-hour sessions covering a variety of topics in medical education. The sessions occur monthly during the existing Geriatrics Grand Rounds program slot. Attendance ranges from 15 to 20 participants per session.

A PhD-level educator serves as the program director. Sessions are facilitated by the program director and one or two invited faculty or fellows from the Division of Geriatrics and Aging Center. Invited facilitators are identified based on their expertise in a given topic area or by their expressed desire to learn more about the topic to be covered; there is no financial incentive or compensation for



their participation. The program director works closely with the cofacilitators in developing and implementing the sessions.

Topics for the series are determined by the program director, based on a review of the faculty development literature and contemporary issues in academic medicine, and on the results of an annual needs assessment conducted with faculty and fellows. All sessions are taught using active learning strategies (including small- and large-group discussion, video review, case discussion, role play, readings, and writing assignments) to foster learners' participation. Sessions usually start with a discussion of participants' perceived challenges in the topic area being considered. This information provides facilitators with an understanding of the needs of the group and helps them to focus the seminar on the participants' interests. There is limited use of PowerPoint slides; sessions are interactive and focus on participants' challenges and on constructing new knowledge.

Participants gain the skills to develop their academic careers; they learn how to improve their teaching practices and to develop effective educational programs and educational scholarship.

Cofacilitators have the opportunity to be mentored by a PhD educator to develop and implement educational programs, and to collaborate with peers in the development of educational activities.

Staffing Requirements

The following personnel are needed:

- Program director (5%) (Funded by the Reynolds grant)
- Invited faculty or fellows to teach the sessions— faculty are encouraged to participate; some volunteer to teach.
- Administrative staff (for preparation of handouts, course promotion, etc.)

Program Costs and Funding Sources

The costs involved are: the program director's time; fellows/faculty time to plan, cofacilitate, and attend the sessions; light refreshments; and photocopying of teaching materials. Each one-hour session costs approximately \$60, excluding faculty time.

The program is supported by a grant from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation Aging and Quality of Life Program, but will be incorporated into the regular budget once the Reynolds grant expires.

Process and Outcomes Data

Participants assess each program session via a feedback form. They are asked to rate the quality of the session, usefulness of the content, and adequacy of interactive opportunities for questions and discussion. Participants also describe how they will apply what they learned in the session to their teaching practices.

An end-of-program survey is conducted to assess participants' satisfaction with the program and to determine the impact of the series on their roles as educators. The survey asks participants to rate:

- the overall benefit of the series
- the utility of concepts and tools offered for their teaching practices
- whether or not they have used knowledge and skills taught in the program
- the degree to which the series helped them improve their confidence as educators/teachers.

The survey also asks participants to identify the session they found most beneficial, to name topics they would recommend for future sessions, and to provide general constructive feedback for improving the program.

All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the GETS provided them with resources (concepts and tools) that they will be able to use in their teaching practices. All also reported to have used knowledge and skills



learned in the series in their teaching practices.

88% agreed or strongly agreed that, as a result of their participation in this series, they were more confident in designing educational programs as well as teaching medical learners; 100% agreed that they would recommend the series to other faculty and fellows.

Some specific comments from participants regarding skills learned that were particularly helpful to them as teachers/educators include noting the importance of:

- Focusing on teaching as an important goal and a valuable skill that can be learned and practiced
- Principles of adult learning theory such as establishing the learner 'need to know': "The distinction between pedagogy and andragogy will help me design curricula and talks in the future"
- Matching instructional strategies and evaluation methods to learning objectives
- Providing feedback to learners
- Soliciting feedback for both the portfolio and self-development as a teacher
- Remembering to set learners' goals at the beginning of encounter and then give specific feedback on these goals.

For more details on program outcomes, please see *Available Materials*.

Implementation Lessons

- A needs assessment of participants determined the topics deemed most relevant to participants daily lives as clinician-educators.
- Sessions were designed to be interactive and to promote skill development through actual practice of a variety of strategies.
- Open discussion time during sessions proved essential for allowing all attendees an opportunity to identify shared challenges and propose effective solutions.

- The program was offered in a time slot customarily reserved for a very traditional didactic Grand Rounds. This time proved convenient for both faculty and fellows.
- Participation of clinician-educators as coteachers was a particular strength of the program, as clinician-educators were able to practice planning and implementing educational skills sessions with a professional educator. Drawing on the existing expertise of the group, this collaboration among faculty positively impacted the quality of the GETS and the experience of faculty and learners alike.

Available Materials

Publications

- The Geriatrics Excellence in Teaching Series: An Integrated Educational Skills Curriculum for Faculty and Fellows Development
Pinheiro, S, Heflin, M
Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 2008;(56)4:750 - 756

Website

- Slides, handouts, and references are available at <http://careinaging.duke.edu>

For More Information

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This document is part of a compilation of approaches to geriatrics recruitment, career development, and programmatic expansion, based on the work of the John A. Hartford Foundation "Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Training." For more information, visit www.afar.org/recruitment or www.jhartfound.org.