


GRADUATE CAPABILITIES BUILDING UPON CHARACTER STRENGTHS

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Benefits of Collaborative work

- had encouraged cross Faculty collaboration and fertilisation of ideas and sharing of resources for the enhancement of the first year student experience.
- UNSW Medsoc has been provided structured support for establishing and sustain their peer mentor program
- Through consultations, UNSW Medsoc Peer Mentoring Program is expanding the coverage and the benefits to hospital/student internship Mentoring
- The atmosphere has often been open, consultative and respectful. The cooperation and the motivation to further students' growth and development and sustaining and further developing Medicine Peer Mentor program lead to a synergy that gave the Medicine Mentors a pioneering online learning experience.



university of new south wales
medical society

Medicine Peer Mentor Program

Minimum of 3 mentoring sessions spread over a period of 8-10 weeks.

1st session:
 ~ wk 1-2 of 1st years Foundation Course
 ice breaking exercises, get to know you session
 scheduled in 1st years timetable following a lecture by President and Vice-President of Medsoc

2nd Session:
 ~wk 6 (close to first exams, assignment and project due by wk 7 and 8)
 advice regarding the course, textbooks, note taking and general troubleshooting
 Scheduled in timetable for most groups (unless mentors could not make it)

3rd Session:
 ~Wk 8-10 of first years starting in Beginnings, Growth and Development (BGD) course
 no set program, up to mentors to tailor to mentees
 scheduled via negotiation of mentors and mentees

Beyond:
 Many groups continue meetings...

History of Medicine Peer Mentoring

- Similar structure
- Too structured?
- Drop in compliance past first session
- Poor organization due to loss of corporate knowledge
 - Held in March, Medsoc exec/council take office in January

Medicine's Graduate Capabilities


- **Effective Communication**
- **Teamwork**
- **Ethical and Legal Responsibilities**
- **Reflective practitioner**
- Using Basic and Clinical Sciences
- Social and Cultural Aspect of Health and Disease
- Self-Directed Learning
- Patient Assessment and Management

Medicine's Graduate Capabilities

- Weighed equally
- Tested every 2 years in end of Phase exams
 - Portfolio exams demonstrating achievement
- Minimum level of achievement in each capability every phase
- All Mentors Passed phase 1 exams and thus demonstrated achievement in all Capabilities

4: Effective Communication with Patients, Team Members, Colleagues and the Community			
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Communicates Effectively with Patients and Families			
• Understands good communication principles. (1.4.1)	•		
• Applies principles to a 1:1 consultation with a patient. (1.4.2)	•		
• Demonstrates sensitivity with dying patients and their families. (2.4.4)		•	
• Effectively applies principles in a clinical setting with an awareness of language and cultural issues – includes explaining procedures or obtaining consent. (2.4.1)		•	
• Communicates appropriately with difficult or aggressive patients. (2.4.2)		•	
• Conducts proficient in depth consultation. (3.4.1)			•
• Explains likely progress and outcomes of a disease. (3.4.2)			•
• Finds common ground with patient in identifying the problem list, negotiating a management plan and agreeing roles and responsibilities. (3.4.3)			•
• Communicates bad news sensitively. (3.4.4)			•
Communicates Effectively with Peers and Tutors			
• Presents reports effectively to peers. (1.4.3)	•		
• Demonstrates effective communication with a range of health care professionals. (2.4.3)		•	
• Presents clinical cases effectively to groups of peers and tutors. (2.4.6)		•	
• Communicates effectively across a clinical team including documentation. (3.4.5)			•
Communicates about Health Behaviour			
• Develops effective health promoting messages appropriate to target groups. (1.4.4, 2.4.7)	•	•	
• Explores patient views that may be detrimental to health. (1.4.5)	•		
• Able to write or critique a piece of medical journalism. (3.4.6)			•
Written Communication			
• Writes clearly, logically and appropriately for the intended audience. (1.4.6)	•		

STRENGTH



A natural capacity for feeling, thinking and behaving (Linley and Harrington, 2007)

A combination of talents (Buckingham and Clifton, 2001)

Can be taught and acquired through practise (Gilham, et. al., 2011)

Character Strengths
Mechanisms that define morally valued virtues (Peterson and Seligman, 2004)

Why Build Strengths in Student Affairs?



- Actualizes human development and learning goals (i.e. responds to educational objectives)
- Student Affairs have effect on shaping student experience including emotional and social
- Strengths propel self authorship (self chosen or authentic goals)

Why Identify and Develop Strengths?

- Strength-Based Curricula are connected with intrinsic motivation and effort.
- Students apt in using their strengths in educational landscape are good at mobilizing social support and building upon successes.
- There is some evidence that strengths are associated with work satisfaction.
- Highlighting performance strengths will increase performance.
- People who use strengths experiences less stress.
- People who uses their strengths will more likely achieve their goals.

The Role of Mentor-Hub for Learning and Growth



Mentors Assist incoming first year students:

- Through difficult time in their transition and development
- To make first year students feel included in their new environment
- Acting as a channel of information
 - find their way around university
 - making social contacts
 - accessing university resources
 - feeling part of the university community
 - university requirements.

Medicine specific:

- Building links between future tutor-students (student clinical teaching encouraged)

ONLINE MODULE'S COURSE BACKGROUND



- reflective exercise based on the principles of Positive Psychology
- provides opportunities for Mentors from the Medicine Peer Mentoring Program gain awareness:
 - of which top graduate capability applies most in their role as Mentors
 - how their character strengths come into play
 - choose a Graduate Capability that they wish to further improve on
 - how their strengths can be utilized
 - identify committed actions to enhance their chosen Graduate Capability

Snapshot of the Online Learning:



Graduate Capability that is most applicable in the role as Mentor: Effective Communication

Best Moment in Mentoring Experience:

I felt that during question time of the first meeting I was able to effectively guide/facilitate discussion when people were quiet and shy and being able to explain clearly an overview of the course and my experiences afterwards.

Identified Character Strengths that are involved in the best Mentoring Experience:

Hope, optimism, and future-mindedness
 Creativity, ingenuity, and originality
 Judgment, critical thinking, and open-mindedness
 Curiosity and interest in the world



Relationship of Strengths and Graduate Capability (Effective Communication):

I used my future-mindedness, optimism and creativity to tailor the meetings for my mentees. I tried to remind myself how I felt as a first year and what they'd want to know about their future in medicine at UNSW.

Role of Strengths in enhancing graduate capability:

I believe that having a positive outlook on life and a bit of fun makes one an effective communicator. Being optimistic, gives me a sense of confidence and helps me appeal to others.

Chosen Graduate Capability to work on: Team work




Strengths to Build upon Chosen Graduate Capability (Team work):

- Gratitude
- Humour and playfulness
- Bravery and valour

Committed Actions:

- Have more group discussions about controversial topics to provide an opportunity to discuss all sides of the issue.
- To come up with my own management plan for the patients and compare that with what the treating team comes up with and explore the rationale for the differences.
- Every 6 months, re-visit these areas and see whether any improvements have been made and what further areas may be intervened upon



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Where to next from here?

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