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Teaching Professionalism in Today's Social World: Challenges and Strategies

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adha American Dental Hygienists' Association

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Professionalism, a core competency in health care, is difficult to clearly define and even harder to teach. Add in social media, information technology and today's societal norms and it becomes not only challenging to evaluate student development in professionalism but difficult to agree on how to calibrate across multigenerational faculty members. Today's program will explore the meaning of professionalism, the role that the school or institution's culture plays in promoting professionalism and strategies for incorporating and evaluating professionalism into the curriculum.

Learning outcomes:

- Define professionalism in health care and contemporary society
- Describe the key attributes of a health care professional
- Discuss the role that society and the institutional culture play in professionalism
- Discuss strategies to calibrate faculty interpretations of professionalism
- Describe strategies for teaching and assessing professionalism

Professionalism – word origin is Latin: *professio* = public declaration

Miriam Webster's defines professionalism as the conduct, aims or qualities that mark a profession or professional person

Patients/accrediting bodies and society as a whole expects professionalism

Commission on Dental Education Standard 2-19

Graduates must be competent in the application of the principles of ethical reasoning, ethical decision making and professional responsibility as they pertain to the academic environment, research, patient care and practice management.

Examples of evidence to demonstrate compliance may include:

- Documents which articulate expected behavior of students such as policy manuals, college catalogues, etc.
- Evaluation of student experiences which promote ethics, ethical reasoning and professionalism
- Evaluation strategies to monitor knowledge and performance of ethical behavior

American Dental Education Association Statement on Professionalism in Dental Education

Approved by the 2009 ADEA House of Delegates   www.adea.org

Values Defining Professionalism in Dental Education

- Competence, Fairness, Integrity, Responsibility, Respect, Service-mindedness

Pair/table share

List three behaviors/traits that demonstrate professionalism

List three challenges to professional traits/behaviors in today's society

Educator and Institutional Roles in the Development of the Future Professional

- The formal versus the "hidden" curriculum
- "Behavior is affected by the culture and context an organization creates"
  L Paine, Harvard Business School, 2006

- Curricular focus is on the acquisition of knowledge and skills versus professionalism

- Faculty expect that entering students will "behave as professionals and adopt the expected norms of the profession"
  Stern, DT, ed. Measuring medical professionalism. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Predictors for Professional Behavior

"Admissions requirements (cumulative GPA, science GPA, admissions test scores, references, personal essays) predict academic success, however, they lack predictive power relative to professional behavior."   Stern, DT, et al. The prediction of professional behavior. Med Educ. 2005;39(1) 75-82.

"The strongest predictor of unprofessional practice is documented unprofessional student behavior. Professional board disciplinary action is strongly associated with formerly documented student non-compliance, irresponsibility, impaired relationships with peers, faculty, staff, unreliable attendance at clinic, argumentativeness, rudeness and diminished capacity for self-improvement."

"Professionalism can and must be taught and modeled."

Papadakis, MA, et al. Disciplinary action by medical boards and prior behavior in medical school. N Engl J Med 2005;353(25):2673-82.

The School/Institution Sets the Direction for Professionalism

~ Inspiration versus Intimidation?

Pair/table share

List at least three ways you teach/model professionalism at your school/institution

Describe how you assess professionalism at your school/institution

Creating your Professional Culture

- Professional culture does not occur by chance
- Administration/faculty/student buy-in to embrace a culture of professionalism
- Business case for professionalism –Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic
- Assessment: "They don't respect what you expect. They respect what you inspect."
- Formative feedback focused on professionalism
- Learners will model the respect that they receive
- Developing professional skills
- Appearance, social and communication skills
- Social media policy
- Academic integrity
- Community service
- Life-long learning/competency

Pair/table share

Think of an example for clinic or the classroom when you want to provide feedback to your learner on their positive demonstration of professionalism (case presentation, extra effort with a difficult patient, helping a peer, etc.) Frame your feedback to focus on the learner's growth as a professional.

Think of an example from clinic when you needed to provide your learner feedback on their lack of professionalism (attire, lateness, lack of preparation, etc.) Frame your feedback to focus on the behavior and its impact on the patient.

Commitment to Professionalism

"Faculty attitudes and behaviors powerfully determine student attitudes and behaviors"
Huddle TS. Viewpoint: teaching professionalism-is medical morality a competency? Acad Med 2005;80 (10):885-91.

- Faculty consensus on professionalism is essential
- Role of self-reflection on professionalism as an educator
  ADEA Tool for Action on Professionalism in Dental Education   www.adea.org
   Six defining values: Competence, Fairness, Integrity, Responsibility, Respect, Service-mindedness
- Regular discussion of challenges, critical incidents, faculty professionalism and new issues at staff/department meetings

Pair/table share
Share how your institution promotes faculty development/calibration in the area of professionalism

Many of the facts that students acquire while in school will evolve and change over time but their standards of professionalism are established as students.

References and Resources

American Dental Education Association. ADEA statement on professionalism in dental education. J Dent Educ 2013;77(7):940-945.

Christie C, Coun M, Bowen D, Paarman C. Effectiveness of faculty training to enhance clinical evaluation of student competence in ethical reasoning and professionalism. J Dent Educ 2007;71(8):1048-1057.

Cruess SR, Cruess RL, Steinert Y. Role modeling-making the most of a powerful strategy. BMJ 2008 Mar 29;36(7646):718-21.

Masella, RS. Renewing professionalism in dental education: overcoming the market environment. J Dent Educ 2007;71 (2):205-216.

Mueller PS. Teaching and assessing professionalism in medical learners and practicing physicians. Rambam Maimonides Med J 2015;6(2)e001:1-13.

Video useful for student discussion groups

Social Media Professionalism in the Medical Community

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N8A5LMlego