



The Office of Medical Education

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The Office of Medical Education (OME) was established in 1989 by Dean Christian Gulbrandsen. Today, OME continues to be a branch of the Dean's Office, and plays a central role in developing and executing the educational mission of the medical school.

In 2001, the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) ratified the following vision statement:

Our vision is to be the best medical school in the world with an Asian-Pacific focus. Our mission is to educate students to become outstanding physicians, scientists and other health care professionals, and to conduct research and community service in areas of specific interest to our region and the community.

With this organizational vision clearly in mind, the vision statement of the Office of Medical Education reads as follows:

The Office of Medical Education strives to be a centerpiece of excellence within the medical school. Our challenge is to respectfully rival all other exciting JABSOM initiatives in proving that leadership, innovation and excellence in medical education will always be our school's primary legacy.

OME has gone further and articulated the following goals:

The Office of Medical Education (OME) is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in medical education and to providing educational leadership for the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine.

We will serve a central, critical role in the ongoing development, implementation, support and evaluation of the JABSOM MD Program curriculum.

We will serve as a wellspring for thoughtful innovation and high quality research in medical education.

We will serve and support our faculty in areas related to teaching and educational scholarship.

We will serve as our medical school's flagship for promoting problem-based learning locally, nationally and internationally.

OME has direct responsibility for the development, implementation and evaluation of a number of educational programs for medical students. This is accomplished by working closely with the JABSOM Curriculum Committee, the various departments of the medical school, and a number of community organizations. In some situations, a particular course may be primarily managed by another department within the medical school, with OME provid-

ing consultative support as requested. In all instances, the OME recognizes and appreciates that the provision of an outstanding educational experience for our medical students is only possible due to the generous support and contributions of the faculty of the school of medicine (both compensated and volunteer); the numerous hospitals, clinics and community agencies that provide educational opportunities for JABSOM students; and the people of Hawaii who support the medical school.

Selected examples of medical student courses coordinated by OME include the widely recognized problem-based learning (PBL) curriculum that serves as the foundation of the first two years of the four-year curriculum, the community service course ("Community Health") that spans the first year of the curriculum, the weekly medical interviewing and physical diagnosis course that runs throughout the first two years of the curriculum, and a community-based longitudinal clinical experience for third-year students ("Unit 6L program"). Some of these OME programs place students on the outer islands, provide training opportunities in underserved communities, or offer international training experiences.

OME also provides faculty development and teacher training opportunities. In addition to a year-long fellowship designed to help junior faculty develop teaching, curriculum development and academic leadership skills, OME provides faculty development workshops in clinical teaching and problem-based learning facilitation skills. These workshops have been provided to local, national and international faculty groups. PBL training workshops have also been offered to public school teachers and other community groups.

Educational research and scholarship is another valued activity in the OME. Areas of particular interest include the impact and effectiveness of educational innovations, furthering our understanding of the phenomenon of problem-based learning, and the development of student assessment and program evaluation tools. OME faculty currently serve as the principal investigators for grants from the Federal Department of Education, the Freeman Foundation, and the National Library of Medicine. These grants allow for the creation and implementation of new educational experiences, and add to the reputation of JABSOM as a leader in educational innovation. OME also frequently collaborates with faculty from other departments throughout the medical school in other educational research projects, grants, faculty development and program evaluation efforts.

The OME benefits greatly from the efforts of dedicated faculty and administrative staff. Most of the faculty in the office divide their time between OME and another primary department, where they also serve in positions of educational leadership and advocacy.

The faculty and staff in OME share a passion for education and a deep commitment to the welfare of our medical students. OME faculty serve as course directors for 15 medical student courses, chair a number of educational committees and subcommittees, and teach in over 40 courses altogether. OME staff provide administrative support for 20 medical student courses, prepare standardized patients for frequent examinations and learning experiences, plan and implement workshops for visiting students and faculty from Asia, and provide school-wide support for educational research, program evaluation and student assessment.

Two other programs that fall under the larger umbrella of OME deserve special mention. The first of these is the Center for Clinical Skills (CCS). The staff and faculty of CCS are responsible for the medical school's outstanding standardized patient (SP) program. Standardized patients are volunteers recruited from the community and trained to portray patients with specific illnesses, or in need of specific types of counseling. Standardized patients are used extensively for both teaching and student evaluation within the JABSOM curriculum.

The phrase "international education" can take on many meanings within a medical school, but at JABSOM it has long represented a willingness by both faculty and students to share medical knowledge and educational techniques with others throughout Asia and the Pacific region. One base for such programs is the Program for Medical Education in East Asia, which is another program within the Office of Medical Education. Seven years ago, the program began simply,

providing instruction in PBL techniques for the faculty from a new medical school in Korea. Since that time, the Program for Medical Education in East Asia has expanded to working with more than 3 dozen schools in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China.

What does the future of the Office of Medical Education hold? OME is currently in the process of defining strategic goals that will be fully aligned with the new JABSOM Strategic Plan. These goals will focus on fulfilling the core educational mission of the school, and will take advantage of the energy, idea and talents of OME personnel. OME will also be very involved in ongoing curriculum evolution activities. Under the combined leadership of OME and the JABSOM Curriculum Committee, the medical school is embarking on a thoughtful, thorough examination of curriculum, fully realizing that we are working from a position of strength and success. OME is also looking to further diversify revenue streams, including pursuing new grants and contracts in areas of proven strength. Another point of emphasis will be exploring and creating new partnerships, both within the school and with external organizations and institutions. Finally, OME will continue to innovate and create new opportunities in medical education for JABSOM students and faculty.

With a growing legacy of excellence in curriculum development and management, educational scholarship, interdepartmental partnerships, international influence and educational leadership, the Office of Medical Education serves a valuable and central role in helping the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine fulfill its educational mission.

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