

Title: The Design and Implementation of an Academy of Educators

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Background: The development and support of medical educators is a vital component of the success of medical and graduate schools. Academies of educators are a successful model through which faculty development goals can be attained, improving both educator and learner satisfaction.

Goal/Objective: Under my direction, the medical school will design and implement an academy of educators that will support the unique faculty needs across the UMass Chan campus.

Methods: Stakeholders were convened from across three graduate schools and graduate medical education. These stakeholders consisted of preclinical and clinical educators, basic scientists, PhD educators, and administrators. Interviews of leadership of other academies throughout the country were conducted. The stakeholders reviewed the interviews and appropriate literature. Overarching philosophies were agreed upon. Mission and vision statements were developed in a consensus driven fashion. A needs assessment was then developed and distributed to all experienced educators throughout the institution to guide the development of the final academy product.

Outcomes: A total of 135 educators completed the needs assessment survey for a response rate of 66%. Respondents were distributed across academic rank, and 52% had >16 years teaching experience. Participants reported participation in a variety of faculty development offerings, many of which were specialty society or departmentally based. A small minority of responses participated in institutional offerings (63/386; 16%). Comments revealed opportunities for faculty recognition and gaps in faculty development in overarching the categories of Teaching Methods, Curriculum Development, Assessment, and Leadership.

Discussion: Faculty recognition and support in educational activities enhances faculty experience and improves engagement. Such recognition and support can be projected to further enhance learners' experience by increasing faculty skills. The UMass Chan Medical School identified gaps and has developed a plan to support faculty through the establishment of an academy. Members of the working group were chosen based on their level of experience and domain of expertise. The mission and vision developed by the working group emphasizes the breadth of experiences and the need to support faculty across all schools. The results of the needs assessment particularly draw to light several domains that faculty identify as gaps.

Summary and Impact: The group was able to work efficiently and effectively to establish the framework for a new UMass Chan Medical School Academy of Educators to include faculty development led by respected colleagues and the recognition of advanced educators. The robust needs assessment identified several areas of opportunity that will directly impact both faculty and learners across the institution. The working group is developing the model by which the Academy will identify core faculty master educators, provide regular faculty development, and establish an Academy Fellowship to develop master educators for the future. It is anticipated that the UMass Chan Academy of Educators will undergo an official launch in August 2023 with the installation of the initial cohort of members.