



Progress Toward Medical School Accreditation

April 12, 2012 marked another major milestone in the development of the new WMU School of Medicine (WMed). After several years of planning, involving over 270 people serving on various committees, subcommittees and workgroups, the necessary documentation was submitted to the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) for preliminary medical school accreditation. This documentation included over 450 pages of narrative responding to 149 accreditation standards and more than 102 appendix items, for a total submission of 1,100 pages.

The LCME is the nationally recognized accrediting authority for medical education programs leading to the M.D. degree in U.S. and Canadian medical schools.

Accreditation Timeline

March 2012: WMed granted Applicant School status by LCME.

June 2012: Following a favorable review of the recent submission, the LCME will grant WMed Candidate Status and will schedule a site visit to be held this summer.

Summer 2012: LCME Site Visit

October 2012: The LCME will review the site visit findings to determine if WMed meets the LCME standards; if so, the LCME will grant WMed Preliminary Accreditation. This allows WMed to begin recruitment for medical students for the inaugural class to begin in August 2014.



LIAISON COMMITTEE ON
MEDICAL EDUCATION

WMed Educational Philosophy

Since the fall of 2010, the Educational Program Committee has been meeting every other week to oversee the development of the medical education program for WMed. A key deliverable is the creation of the WMed Educational Philosophy which will be shared widely through medical school publications and the website to inform applicants, faculty and students about the philosophy of the educational program. The Philosophy reads:

WMed recognizes the need for innovative medical education to meet the changing health care needs of individuals, our communities and the global society. We promote a learner-centered approach that comes to life through adult learning principles of self-directed, peer-supported, and experiential inquiry and learning to fulfill our mission to advance the health of humanity through excellence in:

- Medical education – across the continuum from undergraduate, to graduate, to continuing education;
- Clinical care – of individual patients as well as community public health and global health;
- Research – discovery and other forms of scholarship; and
- Service – to our community and globally.

WMed faculty use contemporary technologies and instructional strategies that focus on problem-solving in a stimulating team-oriented learning environment. We respect our students' initiative for self-directed learning, and maturity as they gain insights and experience to make sound decisions. We understand their need for connecting medical knowledge to real-world situations through reflection, hands-on experience, and faculty mentoring in a safe environment. We help them establish achievable development goals, and hold them accountable for their own learning.

At WMed, learning is a shared activity that requires our students to acquire and integrate new knowledge through experiential interaction with faculty, peers, and others in a collegial and supportive atmosphere. Our team-oriented environment enables individual and group learning through problem-based active learning strategies including simulation-based learning, team-based learning and case-based learning.

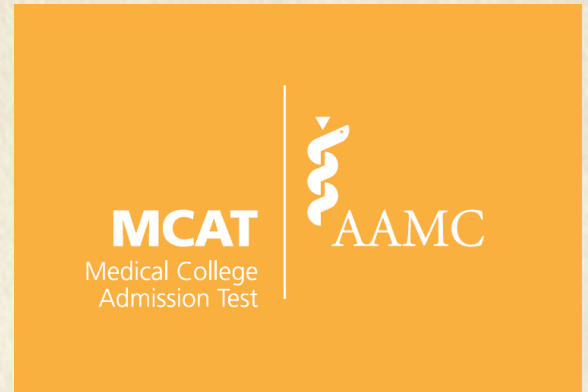
Our patient and family-focused curriculum encompasses the breadth of biomedical sciences and clinical medicine – from genes to cells to individuals to society and the world – that integrates professionalism, critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, personalized medicine, health care quality, team-based care, scholarship, active citizenship and lifelong learning. Our graduates are prepared to excel in any chosen specialty field.



A Holistic Process for Medical Student Admissions

The WMed Admissions Committee will be charged with the responsibility of admitting a class of entering students capable of successfully completing the curriculum and who have the potential to become outstanding physicians. A holistic admissions process has been developed that incorporates personal attributes and characteristics, cognitive capabilities, breadth and depth of past experiences. The admissions process is individualized and balances each applicant's academic portfolio with the capacity for critical thinking and logic, ethical and personal values and the attributes that demonstrate the potential to become an outstanding physician.

Applicants must submit all necessary information through the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS), which includes a transcript of all undergraduate courses and all advanced placement courses taken in high school, scores from the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) and a minimum of three letters of recommendation. Applicants who have achieved the minimum grade point average and MCAT score will be invited to complete a supplemental application that contains two parts: 1) two brief essay questions and 2) an online screening tool designed to evaluate for specific skills and talents. The online screening tool uses 16 constructs and seeks to identify high performing individuals who demonstrate motivation as well as the personal attributes for a successful career in medicine.



The admissions process is designed to insure that each applicant is given appropriate consideration based on the totality of all submitted information and is not eliminated based upon a single grade, test score or life obstacle. Each completed application will be reviewed in a holistic method by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and faculty reviewers on the Admissions Committee. All reviewers will be trained in the process of holistic review using the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) endorsed Experience-Attributes-Metrics (EAM) criteria. Completed applications, analysis of the online screening tool and the holistic review will be presented on a rolling basis to the Admissions Committee, which will select applicants to visit campus for an interview day that is scheduled between August and March of the academic year prior to admission. During this interview day, students will participate in an informational session to learn more about WMed and the curriculum, a facility and community tour, a 30-minute interview with a member of the Admissions Committee, a structured interview, an essay question, a structured group activity, and a set of Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI). MMIs will be carefully constructed to give all participants equal opportunity to demonstrate their personal integrity, compassion, problem-solving skills, teamwork and leadership skills.

A complete report for each applicant, including GPA, MCAT scores, essay questions, online screening tool results, holistic review of the application, structured telephone interview report and interview day ratings is compiled. Each applicant at this stage will be reviewed at a scheduled meeting of the Admissions Committee. A quorum of the Admissions Committee must be present at the meeting in order to vote on applicants. The members will vote using a 10-point Likert scale. Applicants with the highest overall scores will be offered admission to WMed. Through the admissions process, WMed is committed to select applicants based on talent and fit while considering the added value individuals may bring to the class based on their life, education, and cultural experiences.

Designing Instruction Using Critical Thinking Concepts

Eli Collins-Brown EdD, Department of Medical Education, WMed

In the March issue, we defined critical thinking and why it is so important to teach our students to think critically. But how do we do that? Our teaching will not be transformed simply because we philosophically believe in the value of critical thinking. We must find practical ways to bring it into instruction, both structurally and tactically, which can be accomplished through an intentional instructional design process. We think about the concepts of the course that we need to include and then we think tactics, just how will we teach these concepts?

When we design a course structurally, we need to let the students know what will be happening in the course, how they will be assessed and what they should be striving to achieve. We do this by thinking about:

- your concept of the course
- the general plan for implementing that concept
- the requirements the students must meet
- the grading policies in the course
- performance profiles (what determines A work, B work, etc.) (Paul & Elder, 2011)

We provide this information to the students through the syllabus, but also need to provide them with instructions on how the course will work or a course orientation. Once we decide on the structural elements, we need to consider which instructional tactics (methods) will promote critical thinking in our students as they learn the concepts. We can use tactics such as “Socratic instruction, teaching students how to read critically, devising an oral test format, developing tactics for student self-assessment: these are all complex tactics. As the complex ones have multiple parts and often require an extended period of time to be carried out, they are generally harder to master. On the other hand, most simple tactics, like calling on students who don't have their hands up, asking that students summarize what other students have said, requiring students to state the purpose of an assignment or to express the question on the floor-are rather easy to learn and can take up much less time.” (Paul & Elder, 2011 para. 6).

With a bit of attention and intention towards cultivating critical thinking in our instruction, we can enable our students to become critical thinkers.

An Overview of How to Design Instruction Using Critical Thinking Concepts, Paul & Elder 2011 - <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/an-overview-of-how-to-design-instruction-using-critical-thinking-concepts/439>

Employment Opportunities

WMU School of Medicine is currently recruiting a Chair of the Department of Biomedical Sciences, Chair of the Department of Medical Education, Engagement Manager, and Web Developer. More detailed information about these positions is available at www.wmich.edu/medicine in the Employment section.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Western Michigan University School of Medicine is to advance the health of humanity through excellence in medical education, clinical care, research, and service. These pursuits are interdependent and together assure optimal care for today and hope for tomorrow.