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The Evolving Definition of Education Scholarship: What the Clinician Educator Needs to Know

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Medical education is faced with a growing number of challenges. The playing field that most of us know and recognize has been evolving over the past decade. Many of the truths we knew as educators are no longer accurate and we are faced with educating our learners in this new environment. Accreditation standards through national organizations are more rigorous and based on attainment of competency; therefore, outcome-based education has developed as a key factor. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) introduced the six domains of clinical competency to the profession, and in 2009 it began a multiyear process of restructuring its accreditation system to be based on educational outcomes in these competencies. The Liaison Committee on Medical Education in standard 6.1 of its Functions and Structure of a Medical School states that “the faculty of a medical school define its medical education program objectives in outcome-based terms that allow the assessment of medical students’ progress in developing the competencies that the profession and the public expect of a physician.” Both undergraduate and graduate medical education accreditation agencies are focusing on educational outcomes. It is no longer good enough to demonstrate that your learners performed the skills; now you must document achievement of those competencies. Our clinical environment is less conducive to concentrating on education due to documentation, billing requirements, and the sheer volume in our emergency room departments. Evolving educational pedagogy is more focused on small groups, simulation, and less on large-group formats. These challenges are opportunities for educators but require new strategies, which require research to determine the best approach.

The Western Journal of Emergency Medicine (WestJEM) dedicated itself two years ago to being a forum for educational scholarship. Partnering with the Council of Emergency Medicine Residency Directors (CORD) and the Clerkship Directors in Emergency Medicine (CDEM), WestJEM has developed an education supplement whose goal is to promote quality educational scholarship. Every educator, as a necessary element of their regular responsibilities, should generate educational scholarship. All quality teaching is based on a scholarly approach that will naturally lead to educational scholarship.

The definition of scholarship has evolved over the past several decades. In 1990 with the release of the Boyer report for the Carnegie Foundation a clearer definition of scholarship was defined. Boyer described four types of scholarship:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of scholarship</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship of discovery</td>
<td>Original research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship of integration</td>
<td>Making connections across disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship of application</td>
<td>Use of research, experience and expertise to provide a service to the greater community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship of teaching</td>
<td>Study of teaching and learning processes in a systematic method to optimize learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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