Got Respect?
Institutional Focus on Respect in the Learning and Work Environment
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Background

• UTMB’s Professionalism Charter describes respect as a core value imbedded within all of its professionalism commitments.

• Through institutional surveillance mechanisms, the UTMB Professionalism Committee identified perceived disrespect as a frequent underlying cause in reported unprofessional interactions between faculty, staff, and students.

• The Professionalism Committee is comprised of faculty, administrators, staff, and students from all 4 schools and the health system.

Every member of the UTMB community has a responsibility to fulfill obligations with compassion and respect.

Program Description

• The Professionalism Committee developed a series of 6 one-hour noontime interactive sessions focused on respect.

• Objectives were to:
  • Outline the mission of the Professionalism Committee and the commitments of the Professionalism Charter
  • Illustrate the behaviors inherent in a culture of respect
  • Increase respect across health professions
  • Demonstrate methods for improving communication skills and giving feedback

• All sessions contained information on the Professionalism Committee, the Professionalism Charter, the importance of respect, and methods for providing appropriate feedback.

• Each session was tailored to a specific audience (faculty, staff, or students):
  • Facilitators matched the audience.
  • Location and food enabled audience attendance.
  • Session format, literature, vignettes, and application exercises varied based on audience.
  • CME and CNE credits were offered to faculty and staff.
  • Questionnaires and feedback were solicited anonymously from all attendees.

Outcomes

Mean number of session attendees per audience:

For student sessions, all 4 schools participated:

• Over 97% of participants indicated that sessions achieved the objectives.

• New strategies for promoting and/or demonstrating respect reported by 89% of faculty, 76% of staff, and 99% of students.

• All students reported increased respect for other healthcare professionals.

Conclusions

• Interactive sessions focused on respect and tailored to specific audiences may be a useful method for promoting respect in the learning and work environment.

• Such sessions increase the awareness of professionalism and related efforts across the institution.

• Selection of facilitators, location, content, and exercises based on the target audience may enhance the success of the sessions.