PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

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Workshop Goals

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: describe the relationship of professional identity formation to professionalism within a community of practice; identify factors that can positively or negatively affect identity formation; apply this knowledge to better understand their own identities and educational practices
DEFINITIONS

Profession
An occupation whose core element is work based upon the mastery of a complex body of knowledge and skills. It is a vocation in which knowledge of some department of science or learning or the practice of an art founded upon it is used in the service of others. Its members are governed by codes of ethics and profess a commitment to competence, integrity and morality, altruism, and the promotion of the public good within their domain. These commitments form the basis of a social contract between a profession and society, which in return grants the profession a monopoly over the use of its knowledge base, the right to considerable autonomy in practice and the privilege of self-regulation. Professions and their members are accountable to those served, to society and to the profession.


Professionalism
A set of values, behaviors, and relationships that underpins the trust the public has in doctors.

Royal College of Physicians of London, 2005

Socialization
The process by which a person learns to function within a particular society or group by internalizing its values and norms.

Oxford English Dictionary

Community of Practice
A persistent, sustaining social network of individuals who share and develop an overlapping knowledge base, set of beliefs, values, history and experiences focused on a common practice.

Barab et al. J. Learning Sciences. 2002; 11: 489-452

Medical Professional Identity
A representation of self, achieved in stages over time during which the characteristics, values and norms of the medical profession are internalized, resulting in an individual thinking, acting and feeling like a physician.


Professional Identity Formation
An adaptive developmental process that happens simultaneously at two levels: (1) the level of the individual, which involves the psychological development of the person and (2) the collective level, which involves the socialization of the person into appropriate roles and forms of participation in the communities work.

Small Group Discussion I  
Your Personal & Professional Identities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A. What Are Your Personal &amp; Professional Identities?</th>
<th>B. What Factors Influenced the Development of Your Professional Identity / Identities?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Positive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Negative</td>
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<td>Small Group Discussion II</td>
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<td>Is Stony Brook a Community of Practice?</td>
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<td>What Makes it So?</td>
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**Small Group Discussion II**

Is Stony Brook a Community of Practice?

What Makes it So?
<table>
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<th>Key Strategies</th>
<th>Possible Facilitators</th>
<th>Possible Barriers</th>
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GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR ESTABLISHING PROGRAMS IN SUPPORT OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION

1. Establish professional identity formation as an educational objective
   Provide institutional support

2. Take an incremental approach, building on what is already in place (Teaching Professionalism)

3. Allocate responsibility – undergraduate/postgraduate

4. Establish & transmit the cognitive base
   The nature of identity formation
   Socialization
   Communities of practice
   “The norms of the community” – professionalism

5. Engage students in their own identity formation, establishing membership in a community of practice as an explicit aspirational goal

6. Create & maintain a welcoming community

7. Ensure time and opportunities for guided reflection on professional identity formation and communities of practice throughout the educational continuum

8. Address the factors that affect professional identity formation
   Role models/Mentors
   Experiences (clinical & non-clinical)
   Other

9. Provide faculty development

10. Establish a program to assess progress towards the acquisition of a professional identity
    Stress Assisted Self-Assessment
**SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Kenny NP, Mann KV, MacLeod H. Role modeling in physicians’ professional formation: reconsidering an essential but untapped educational strategy. Acad Med. 2003; 78(12):1203-1210.


