EDUCATION MATTERS

FIRST YEAR MEDICAL HUMANITIES CURRICULUM – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The MBBS six-year cohort is the first to experience the new 25-hour Medical Humanities (MH) curriculum, which enables students to explore the person behind the white coat in medicine, to examine significant events in the medical history of Hong Kong, and to build self-awareness and mindfulness. The learning took place in whole-class lectures, workshops, a field trip, and experiential practice using the genres of narrative and literature, visual arts, film and performance. A special guest speaker series entitled “Conversations and Connections” enabled students to learn from the candid sharing of eminent doctors about what it meant to be a doctor and the winding path to get there. Professor Chow Shew-ping (周肇平), Professor Felice Lieh-Mak (麥列菲菲), Professor Yuen Kwok-yung (袁國勇), Professor Gabriel M Leung (梁卓偉) and the then Dean Professor Lee Sum-ping (李心平) all graced the stage over the past year.

In addition to the contributions of our Faculty members, a key aspect of the curriculum is the involvement of community partners including the Museum of Medical Sciences (MMS) and the Absolutely Fabulous Theatre Connection (AFTEC). At the MMS, students made meaningful connections with the history of the Bubonic Plague and SARS in Hong Kong, which complemented earlier lectures given by Professor John Malcolm Nicholls and Professor Yuen Kwok-yung. Knowledgeable doctor-docents led students on the Taipingshan Heritage Walk and brought to life the sites significant in the Plague of 1894. Local drama educator Ms Lynn Yau, CEO of AFTEC, and world-renowned concert pianist Ms Nancy Loo used a locally adapted version of the well-known story “Imelda,” written by surgeon Dr Richard Selzer, as a teaching tool. By performing, rewriting and re-performing scenes of the play, students explored the nature of doctor-patient relationships, medical ethics and the doctor behind the white coat. This novel approach to reflection was highlighted in the report by this year’s external consultant, Dr Allan Peterkin, Head of the Health, Arts and Humanities Program at the University of Toronto.

The MH curriculum will continue its progressive roll-out with the Year 2 programme beginning in September 2013. It will continue building on the themes from Year 1, with an additional focus on exploring the nature of suffering and healing.
Award-winning Creative Work Exhibition

The much anticipated first year of the new MH curriculum culminated with an engaging afternoon of student presentations of their award-winning artwork, held on April 5, 2013. The audience was introduced to fantastic creative works in the forms of videos, calligraphy, poetry, claywork, and digital art. Through their art, students reflected on what it meant to be a good doctor, on building resilience, and on the history of SARS in Hong Kong. With the generous support of our medical librarian, Ms Ruth Wong, these inspiring works are now on display in the Yu Chun Keung Medical Library at the medical campus for an open-ended run.

Beneath My Shell