

Second Year Program Problem-Based Learning

Content Theme - Humanities

Updated for 2007-8

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Project Objectives:

To learn how humanities can help develop empathy toward and understanding of both patient and student-physician.

Patient Confidentiality

It is of utmost importance that patient confidentiality be respected in all these settings. You should not leave any of these settings with anything that may identify the patient (i.e., full name, medical record number) written in your notes or on your belongings.

Dress appropriately and wear your name badge whenever interacting with patients.

Student Reading Assignment: Whenever possible, the content theme coordinator will provide each student in the group with a small number of humanities-based readings relevant to the target patient you have selected. In addition, there are some optional readings, for your enjoyment only. Time permitting, we will read and discuss a couple of the selections in the small group session. A reading packet may be picked up from the Medical Education Office.

Student Activities and Assignments

The goal of this session is to learn how the humanities can help develop empathy toward and understanding of both patient and student-physician. To complete these exercises, you must first identify a patient from your clinical setting who made an impression on you in some way. This may involve a patient whom you particularly liked or disliked, whose medical or life situation moved or troubled you, or an interaction with the physician that taught you something either negatively or positively about the practice of medicine. The patient does **not** need to be someone you know well or have had extended contact with. It would be helpful if you know the patient's diagnosis.

There are four required assignments.

- 1) **Point of view writing** - write a couple of paragraphs from the patient's point of view, using the first person ("I"). Imagine that you are standing in the

- shoes of the patient. Describe an encounter with the patient's physician or the patient's perspective about their illness.
- 2) **Parallel charting** – write a chart note that includes information about the patient (appropriately disguised) and your reactions to the patient that would not normally appear in the medical chart. These may be your observations about the patient, your feelings about the patient, including issues of transference and countertransference; and anything else you deem important. Please include a very brief medical summary of the patient's situation as well.
 - 3) **Literary supplement** – write a half-page essay discussing how the reading provided generated additional insights and possibilities regarding the patient.
 - 4) Complete **one** of the following options. Whichever you choose, try to use your creative work to enhance your feelings of empathy for the patient, the physician or both. The completed assignment should be no longer than one page and may be shorter.

a) Critical incident essay – using personal, non-technical language, write a paragraph or two about some aspect of this patient's experience, including your own reactions and observations.

b) Poem – write a poem that captures an aspect of the patient that moved, troubled, or upset you.

c) Draw a picture - make a sketch of a patient (be sure it cannot be used to identify the patient). Provide a brief written explanation of why you chose this patient, and what you wanted to capture in your picture.

d) Skit - create a role-play about an encounter between the patient and the physician.

Project presentations will be made at a small group meeting and collected.