Real-life Issues in Rural Undergraduate Medical Education

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Forming a Professional Identity

- Conducted research study with 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} year KYCOM women students.

- Purpose: To better understand how these medical students were forming their professional identities as future physicians.
Physician Professional Identity

- Medical competence: knowledge, skills
- Social Skills: interactions with patients, peers, and others
- Critical thinking and problem-solving: information gathering, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, assessment, etc.
Key Study Findings

- Influence of Clinical Preceptors as Physician Role Models
- Intersection of Personal and Professional Identities
- Selection of Residency Program Specialty
This time of clinical training is when I learned what it means to be a female osteopathic physician. I learned from talking with women in medicine and how they balance their own lives . . . I started to form my own identity from what I saw in other doctors and from what I liked and did not like from their practice and patient care. (Michelle)
Principal Points Learned

- Clinical Preceptors, particularly women physicians, are potent role models.
- Teach our medical students how to become physicians and how to live their lives as physicians.
  - Become osteopathic physicians.
  - Develop their professional identities.
  - Learn how to manage career with family.
Principal Points Learned

- Potent influence of clinical faculty, especially women physicians, on women medical students’ becoming physicians
  - selecting residency and career specialties
  - balancing career with family responsibilities, and
  - navigating gender and political dynamics.
Recommendations

- Hire an adequate number of women physicians as medical school faculty and clinical preceptors to serve as mentors and role models.

- Offer effective career advising programs to assist medical students to select a specialty choice that is right for them.
Faculty Development for Clinical Faculty

- Prepare clinical preceptors for roles as professional mentors to medical students.
Thank You!