Developing education leaders through an innovative endowed chair program

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Sept. 25, 2019
I do not have an affiliation (financial or otherwise) with a pharmaceutical, medical device or communications organization.

Je n’ai aucune affiliation (financière ou autre) avec une entreprise pharmaceutique, un fabricant d’appareils médicaux ou un cabinet de communication.
UCSF Provides Top Graduate-Level Education in Health and Sciences

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3,300
Students enrolled in degree programs

1,500
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1,000
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Representing 94 countries
We support the growth of teachers through formal faculty development activities.

FIND UPCOMING AME EVENTS.
Academy of Medical Educators (AME)

- ~150 faculty members across all four professional schools
- Competitive application-based selection process emphasizing achievement and innovation in: direct teaching (required), mentoring and advising, curriculum design, educational leadership, or learner assessment
- Create and update an Educator Portfolio
- Expectation of service to the Academy
- Fosters cross-pollination with other departments
History of AME Endowed Chair Program

- In 2001, UCSF established a matched endowed chair program in support of teaching excellence, career development and professional identity formation.

- Like other endowed chairs, the holder receives discretionary income to pursue value-added education work.

- Unlike other chairs, these chairs are co-funded by the School of Medicine and an academic department, and limited to two 5-year terms.
Research Question

What is the impact of holding an endowed chair for medical educators on individual chair holders?
Study Design

- We conducted a **grounded theory** study
- We interviewed chair holders who had completed at least one 5-year term
- We double-coded all transcripts and reconciled codes
- When analyzing the codes, we identified themes through an iterative consensus-building approach
Results

- Twenty-three of 24 (96%) eligible faculty members from 14 departments participated.

- We identified **five** themes:
  - Symbolism
  - Resources
  - Education/Educator
  - Development
  - Impact
Symbolism

- Holding an endowed chair confers legitimacy and credibility to the individual.
  - “But where does that confidence come from? Someone's giving you that magical feather of an endowed chair, that says, we believe in you, you're a medical educator. You're the best that your department has to offer in this area. You know, you've been selected in this role. And that gives you confidence. And then you're willing to stretch further, and then it gets self-reinforcing at that point, externally reinforcing. So, it's the magic feather.” [EC22]

- It also becomes an important symbol for leadership as a way to highlight their commitment to educators.
  - “I think that says a lot in term of the degree to which education is valued both in your department and your institution. So, the symbolic nature of that, of how important the education mission is, that's the first thing. That the fact that an endowed chair for education existed, that's the most important thing.” [EC13]
The chairholder now had resources. Initially, individuals may have had to think about how to use these resources.

“The big motivator was that I had really come to understand that there were ways to use this well, how to right-size my plans for the amount of money, to not be too limited in scope or too big in scope. And that I was feeling much more purpose driven about it, so that was highly motivating. I had finished the transition from thinking of it as an award or a gift to something that was attached to a purpose.” [EC7]
Eventually they recognized that these resources allowed them great flexibility to do things that were of value to self and to the institution.

- “The initial beauty of the chair was that it was highly flexible.... The chair went to a person, in this case it was me, who had a long track record of mentorship, education. The original idea was “let's give this person some wiggle room” to, you know, do some things that you don't have to apply to a grant organization and you don't have to go to the chair of the department and say I need the money for this thing. You just get a little bit of flexibility.” [EC12]
Chairholders felt increasingly empowered as key educators.
- “It allowed me to have a lot of credibility to be able to say, "We need to do things this way, we have to be careful about this. This is concerning for its impact on our students or on our residents." I think it [was] very helpful.” [EC3]

Holding the chair also provided heft to help and advocate for other educators. This often arose from their expectations on receiving the chair.
- “It was also the expectation I think that if you are the holder of the chair, that you had at least tapped into some of the issues for educators in the department of medicine because it was again a department of medicine, and you acted that way for them. You became the liaison to the chief of medicine for educator issues.” [EC23]
The chair provided opportunities for professional development of self.

- "For me, it was a tremendous part of my career development. I think it felt like the transition from being a more junior person who's dabbling in education to really emerging as a true educator." [EC3]

Chairholders were also devoted and intentional in their commitment to the development of others, often via networking.

- "It has provided [junior faculty] with financial support to attend national meetings to then benefit their careers to network, know who else is doing work in their area of interest. And provided them with a network of people who can write support letters for them, help them move up in their careers, create leadership opportunities for them." [EC21]
Impact

- There was significant individual and institutional impact. Individuals had growth of their scholarship, their careers advanced, gained an academic metric, and had recognition on their CV.

  "The greatest impact is that they are slowly helping to create a culture of value for education. Somewhat equivalent to an Endowed Chair for research, or an Endowed Chair for clinical service." [EC2]
Impact, cont’d

- In many cases, there was a legacy of programmatic development that was sustained beyond their term.
  - “But once it dawned on me that you can develop people and those people can make a community, then it was clear that this was the way it had to go. And it's been borne out, it's just been ... Even after I stopped being the chair, communities keep on going.” [EC4]
Conclusion: a model of impact

1) ↑Visibility with chair title and resources result in opportunities

2) ↑Commitment to education and development of self and others

3) Substantial individual and institutional impact

Symbolism

Education/Educator Development

Impact

Resources
Acknowledgements

- Peter Chin-Hong, MD. Dept. of Medicine.
- Helen Loeser, MD. Dept. of Pediatrics.
- Alissa Peterson, MD. Dept. of Psychiatry.
- Patricia O’Sullivan, EdD. Depts. of Medicine & Surgery.

- I also thank my colleagues in the UCSF/Haile T. Debas Academy of Medical Educators for their contributions.
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