

A Grant to Enable UMSM Faculty to Engage in a Master of Health Professions Education Program

The Educational Development Office, UMSM, May, 2004

Summary

The purpose of this award is to encourage University of Miami faculty to complete a master's degree in education. The grant pays the complete cost of tuition (\$14,000) for the two-year Master of Health Professions Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). The criteria for selection of candidates include a commitment to medical education as part of the candidate's career path, the support of the candidate's chair, and a reasonable expectation that the candidate will contribute to the educational community at UMSM in the future.

Background

The Educational Development Office is dedicated to fostering expertise in teaching at the University of Miami School of Medicine. In our view expertise is a process, a life-long journey, sustained by the desire for continual improvement. Collectively the researchers and physicians who teach medical students at UMSM are expected to maintain expertise in several areas as stated in our mission statement: medical education, research, high-quality care, and community outreach. During tight fiscal times education often loses ground to the other demands.

Ironically, medical teachers are being drawn away from teaching improvement activities just as the field of education has the most to offer. The last twenty years has witnessed an explosion in the number of journals, conferences, societies, and research dedicated to teaching and learning. A period of formal study in education, such as that provided by a master's degree in health sciences education will enable candidates to engage in expert performances as well as to function as expert resources to other faculty. Moreover, a master's program will provide candidates with the skills needed to become the primary investigators on research projects that would engage many other faculty. Thus, a small but highly educated cohort could jump-start the development of a critical mass of educational scholars on this campus.

Finally, engagement in a Master's of education degree program will provide promotion committees with tangible evidence of the serious level of commitment of the candidates to scholarship in education. Promotion committees, as guardians of academic values, apply the same guidelines for promotion to both educators and researchers. Faculty are rewarded for excellence or expertise, not for routine service. Unfortunately university teachers rarely acquire the training needed to engage in systematic improvement of teaching and in the scholarship of teaching that would enable the products of their efforts to be recognized. Study at the master's level will enable faculty to define career paths in medical education.

Selection of a Master's Program

A survey of high quality master's programs revealed three that were focused on practical skills of medical education: the University of Southern California's (USC) Master's Degree in Education, Specializing in Medical Education, The University of Illinois at Chicago's (UIC) Master of Health Professions Education, and a new program still in development at the University of Toronto. The UIC program is the most comprehensive, oldest, and has the largest number of enrollees from many countries. It would provide our graduates with a comprehensive

knowledge of medical education and connect them with a global network of medical educators. In addition, the UIC program can be taken almost entirely on line. The only residency requirement is a four-day conference in July each of the two years. The on-line feature is a very desirable one for faculty with families and heavy clinical responsibilities.

Developing our Own Master’s Program here at UMSM

Our long-term aim is to develop a program that offers a master’s degree in health science education here at UMSM. The graduates of the master’s at UIC or other places will form the teaching faculty for this new master’s program. UM has a strong faculty of education and a number of UMSM faculty members who teach qualitative and quantitative methods. Although these teachers could address generic educational topics such as “Issues in Higher Education,” “Curriculum and Instruction,” “Organizational Development,” or methods courses such as “Qualitative Methods” and Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences, they have not yet applied their disciplines specifically to medical education.

Budget

UMSM will pay the tuition, roughly \$7000, for each of the two years of the master’s program. The candidate will pay the incidental fees. Below is a rough breakdown of the total costs of the Master of Health Professions Education program.

Year One

Tuition **\$7000.00**

Incidental costs

Return flight Miami to Chicago in July \$ 262.00
 Accommodation for 4 days in July, (\$90 to \$145 range) \$ 440.00
 Estimated cost of food for 4 days in July (@ \$50/day) \$ 200.00
Books \$ 700.00
Total **\$1602.00**

Year Two

Tuition **\$7000.00**

Incidental costs

Return flight Miami to Chicago in July \$ 262.00
 Accommodation for 4 days in July, (\$90 to \$145 range) \$ 440.00
 Estimated cost of food for 4 days in July (@ \$50/day) \$ 200.00
Books \$ 700.00
Total **\$1602.00**

Application

Applications will be reviewed prior to March 2005 for enrollment in the 2005 academic year. Two candidates will be selected each year, as long as funding is available. Grants will be awarded based on the following criteria:

1. The career path of the candidate. Candidates will be favored who have made a commitment to medical education as a major part of their career path.
2. Departmental support for the Candidate. Candidates will be favored who have the support of their chair for the necessary time they will be taking to complete the master's degree.
3. A reasonable expectation that the candidate will remain at the UMSM where they can contribute to the expertise of our growing educational community.

Statement of Career Path

Please briefly describe the role of master's of health sciences education in your career path.

Statement by the Candidate's Departmental Chair

Please briefly describe the support that this candidate can expect from your department while he or she is enrolled in the Master's of Health Science Education program at UIC.

Specifically, indicate the number of days or half-days of protected time during which the candidate will be able to engage in teaching or educational scholarship at the salary support of \$90.00 per hour.

Statement by the Candidate of Contribution to UMSM

Please briefly state your current plans and expectations regarding your employment at UMSM after obtaining the master's degree. Specifically, we would like to know your interest in teaching in our own master's program in the future when it is developed.

Although an unanticipated situation, such as moving to another institution, may prevent a candidate from contributing to education at UMSM after he or she has earned a master's degree, we would at least like to choose candidates who begin with an intention to contribute their expertise to this institution.

Please send your application to Dean Mark O'Connell or Dr. Richard Tiberius,

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