

## Overarching Goal

The *Overarching Goals* of the curriculum serve as the foundation for our curriculum and define its content. Emphasis is placed on goals that meet the growing needs of a changing society and medical practice. A strong foundation in science provides special opportunities for students to participate in creative endeavors that foster the life-long pursuit of scholarship.

1. **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention:** Students apply scientific knowledge and use clinical skills to promote health and prevent disease in individuals and communities.
2. **Mechanisms and Treatment of Disease:** Students acquire knowledge at the molecular, cellular, organ-system, whole body, and societal levels, and integrate this knowledge with clinical science and skills to diagnose and treat disease.
3. **Clinical Reasoning:** Students exercise clinical judgment based on a thorough understanding of the patient, application of sound scientific principles, and knowledge of the health care systems. Clinical reasoning is learned through practice, self-reflection, and feedback
4. **Patient Care:** Students achieve competency in the care of patients at a level required to excel in residency.
5. **Professionalism and Communication:** Students demonstrate respectful and ethical behavior in all of their professional interactions and provide compassionate, empathic care to patients and families. Professionalism and communication skills are acquired through practice, self-reflection, and feedback.
6. **Responsibility to Society:** Students learn to practice medicine with cultural competence and fiscal responsibility in preparation for work in a society characterized by diverse populations and economic constraints.
7. **Creation and Dissemination of Knowledge:** Students manifest independent and creative thinking fostered by a collaborative graduate school environment. They perform mentored scholarly research culminating in a formal written thesis to promote critical thinking, understand the scientific method, and contribute to medical knowledge.
8. **Physician as Scientist:** Students learn to approach medicine from a scientifically minded perspective and are educated and mentored by leading scientists. This prepares them for careers in biomedical science and as medical practitioners, and to become the next generation of medical scientists and leaders in academic medicine.

Each goal has been thoroughly reviewed by a task force comprised of content experts, interested parties, and students. These task forces made recommendations for content and pedagogy across the four years that are being used to guide the curriculum rebuild process.

## Guiding Principles

The *Guiding Principles* for renewing the curriculum were created to guide the process, set expectations for educators and students, and inform decision about curriculum design and structure. They along with the *Overarching Goals* define the educational vision and impart the values of our school that together serve as the blueprint for our curriculum reform.

**1. Integration:** Basic, clinical, and social sciences are integrated throughout all years of the curriculum.

- The design and implementation of the curriculum are interdisciplinary and interdepartmental.
- Basic scientists and clinicians plan and teach together to assure that the curriculum repeatedly emphasizes and demonstrates the importance of the basic sciences in understanding and practicing clinical medicine.
- Educators understand how their teaching fits into the goals and content of the overall curriculum and communicate this perspective to students.
- Residents and faculty model and reinforce the skills and professional attitudes we want our students to emulate.
- Students understand the structure of the curriculum and their professional responsibility within it.
- Students have early clinical experiences to provide inspiration and context for learning the scientific foundations of medicine.

**2. Learning Environment:** Yale's distinct identity among medical schools is built on the principles and values of the Yale System of Medical Education. Respect for student initiative and maturity, close faculty mentoring, and a required thesis to promote scientific inquiry are all hallmarks of our unique learning environment. Students are assessed based on their performance, but there is no class rank and efforts are made to minimize competition. Emphasis is placed on collaboration, self-directed learning, and the expectation that students take more than the usual responsibility for their education. Creating this learning environment, and preserving the values of the Yale System in a renewed forward-looking curriculum, is a responsibility shared by students and faculty, and will require that:

- The curriculum design be flexible and provide opportunities as well as time for students to explore their interests and pursue individual goals.
- Students accept their responsibility to actively participate in the curriculum and recognize that certain activities require their presence and engagement in order for effective learning and meaningful assessment to take place. This becomes increasingly important as the curriculum continues to shift toward small groups that rely on interactive discussion and collaborative case-based learning.
- Assessment methods emphasize an ability to correlate and apply knowledge rather than recite information, and include multiple opportunities for direct observation by and feedback from faculty and other educators\*. Students embrace the importance of feedback as a means of assuring they have acquired the knowledge, skills, and professional attributes to prepare them for residency and exceptional medical practice.
- Faculty continue the close mentorship and guidance of students that occurs within as well as outside the scheduled hours of the curriculum and commit to the increasing use of small group interactive learning.
- Institutional and departmental leadership recognize, encourage, and support the substantial commitment of faculty.

**3. Scholarship and Creative Thinking:** The curriculum is built on the scientific foundation of medical knowledge in which independent, scholarly research is required. The myriad of opportunities for research under the mentorship of skilled faculty makes our school unique and special, and requires that:

- Sufficient time be provided in the curriculum to allow the pursuit of scholarship.
- Faculty remain committed to mentoring students to become creative thinkers and contributors to the many fields of medicine.

**4. Assessment and Reflection:** The school has a responsibility to society to ensure that its students demonstrate proficiency in competencies related to health care delivery. The school also reaffirms the importance of preparing the student for life as a physician in which continued assessment, feedback, and reflection are woven into the fabric of one's professional life. Meeting these dual responsibilities requires that:

- Multiple opportunities for assessment are imbedded in the curriculum, allowing students and educators\* to determine that the overarching goals and specific learning objectives of the components of the curriculum are being met.
- Students, through ongoing feedback and reflection, use the results of assessment to evaluate their progress and identify areas in need of improvement.
- Educators\* use feedback from multiple sources in order to improve the curriculum.
- Educators\* and students, through mentoring and dialogue, continually reflect on their experiences to improve their performance as professionals.

**5. Educator Development:** The institution must provide formal preparation and training of faculty, residents, and other educators\* so that:

- Educators\* possess expertise in effective teaching and assessment methods.
- Educators\* involved in curriculum design are able to create learning objectives, associated learning activities, and corresponding methods of assessment to achieve the overarching goals of the medical school curriculum.
- Residents understand their unique influence and impact on the education and professional development of medical students.

*\*The term "educator" refers to faculty, residents, fellows, nurses, physician associates, and all others who provide educational experiences for our students.*