



UTHealth  
The University of Texas  
Health Science Center at Houston

Vaunette P. Fay, PhD RN, FNP-BC, GNP-BC



HGECC  
Houston Geriatric  
Education Center

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### Objectives

- To develop a student team competition for health professional students from a variety of disciplines.
- Increase the knowledge and skills on the issues facing vulnerable older adults.
- To encourage positive attitudes and ethical beliefs about aging.
- To demonstrate through experiential learning the importance of inter-professional collaboration.

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### Rationale

- We need interdisciplinary teams of health professionals who are knowledgeable and skilled in elder care to reduce health disparities, address causes of vulnerability, and meet the needs of older Americans.
- By 2030, one in five Americans will be over 65 years of age, by 2050, approximately 5% of the population will be over 85.
- The typical older hospital patient has multiple chronic illnesses and functional limitations and geriatric syndromes.



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## Interdisciplinary Faculty

Discipline	Faculty
Communication Sciences and Disorders	Lynn M. Maher, PhD. CCC-SLP
Dentistry	June Sadowsky, DDS, MPH
Dental Hygiene	Donna Warren-Morris, RDH, MEd
Law	John Halphen, MD, JD
Medicine	Carmel B. Dyer, MD
Nursing	Sharon Ostwald, PhD, RN &
Advanced Practice Nursing	Vaunette Fay, PhD, FNP-BC, GNP-BC
Occupational Therapy	Gayle Hersch, PhD
Optometry	Padhmalatha Segu, OD
Pharmacy	J. David Hayes, PharmD, BCPS
Physical Therapy	Carolyn Kelley, PT, DSc, NCS
Public Health	Jacquelyn Slomka, PhD
Social Work	W. Andrew Achenbaum, PhD

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## Overview of Geriatric Competition

- Students are recruited from a variety of health professional and related disciplines and assigned to teams.
- Participating schools include medicine, nursing, pharmacy, occupational and physical therapies, dentistry, dental hygiene, law, social work, public health, health informatics, speech communication disorders and optometry.
- Competition has been held every spring semester since 2008.
- Available for certificate at no cost or for credit in each school.
- Interdisciplinary faculty plan the experience and act as judges.




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## Design- Experience

- Program Orientation– meet faculty and peers, receive passport and all instructions, introduction to experience.
- 24 hours interdisciplinary training – online assignments, clinical assignments, team meetings and discussion boards and access to numerous resources including information on cultural competency, health literacy and ethics.
- Teams work together for three months to meet objectives, aggregate their experiences and prepare their presentations for the competition.




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## Geriatric Clinical Focus

- **2008 Elder Mistreatment** – online cases, community visits with Adult Protective Service workers
- **2009 Disaster Preparedness** –visits to low-income housing for elders displaced by Gulf Coast hurricanes.
- **2010 Home Bound Frail Elders** -home visits to assess health, nutrition, dental care, safety, and disaster preparedness.
- **2011 Nursing Home Advocacy** –training to be a certified Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman with subsequent visits to advocate for residents in LTC facilities.

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## Design- Team Competition

- Teams present their assessments and recommendations before a live audience.
- Interdisciplinary faculty and community partners are judges.
- Scores are given based on the comprehensive assessment of and approach to the problem, innovativeness, feasibility, team work, and their overall presentation.



- All team members receive geriatric assessment book and skill cards and an engraved medallion.
- Winning team is presented with a gift card to the local bookstore.
- Reception honoring all of the participants.

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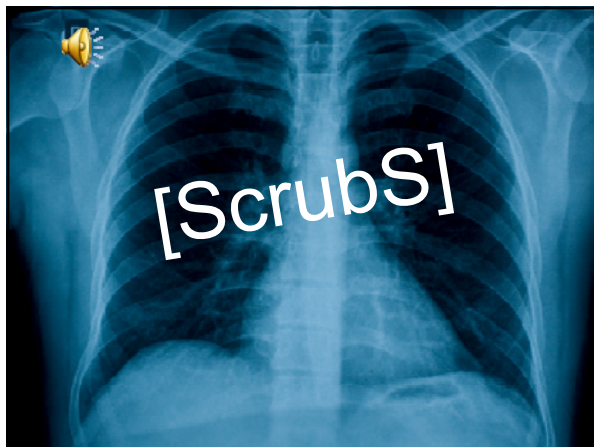
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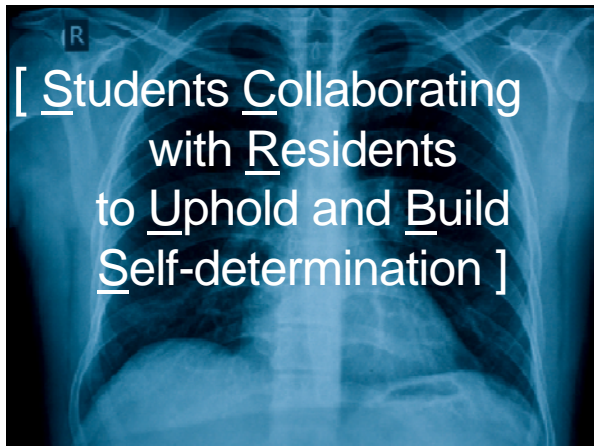
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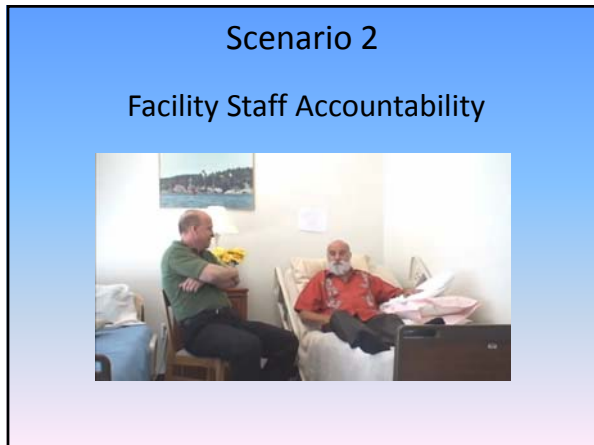
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**Clinical Focus 2012**

- **Elder and Community Interaction: Is it Working?**
- This year have five teams en-compassing 49 students from 12 different disciplines
- Each team was assigned to Community Center in Houston area
- Team assess and analyze the needs of community-dwelling elders and make appropriate recommendations regarding community service uses.
- Competition/presentation 4/16/12

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## Outcomes

- In all years students represented 8-12 different disciplines from three different universities within the TMC.
- Pre-post knowledge tests showed a significant increase before and after.
- 75% of the students: satisfied or very satisfied with the experience.



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## Student Quotes

- *"Overall great experience! Please keep doing interdisciplinary team education projects in the future! It's the only exposure to students from other schools I've had in my 4 years in the Health Science Center!"*
- *"I really enjoyed working with other students and disciplines. It truly validated my role on an interdisciplinary team."*
- *"I am really impressed and awe struck by the positive effects the HGEC has on the community. I also feel that the online courses and the house visits have supported my interest in geriatrics and in healthcare."*
- *"Interdisciplinary work and competition such as this allows us to know what each discipline really does and not what we assume they do. It also opens programs up to different resources and issues that we may not be aware of. Increase the awareness about the competition so others can benefit from it."*

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## Schools that Participate

- **UTHealth Schools** of Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Dental Hygiene, Biomedical Sciences, Biomedical Informatics, and Public Health
- **University of Houston** Colleges of Pharmacy, Social Work, Optometry and Law, and Department of Communication Science & Disorders
- **Texas Woman's University** Schools of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy
- **American College of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine** (new in 2012)

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