

Sample Application to Establish A Gold Humanism Honor Society Chapter

Proposal to Establish a Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS) Chapter at the Welby College of Medicine

1. Description of the Role of GHHS at Welby College of Medicine

The Welby College of Medicine endeavors to facilitate the growth of competent, compassionate, culturally sensitive, and socially responsible physicians. The strengthening of personal attributes such as integrity, compassion, altruism, respect, excellence, and empathy is essential to this process. Welby promotes these humanistic traits throughout the four year medical school curriculum. Humanistic values are also modeled by faculty and residents in clinical teaching experiences.

The Welby College of Medicine also has a strong commitment to service. All of our medical students volunteer in at least one of the free clinics in the area. The Medical Humanities Interest Group was established by students in 1997 and has been advised by George Clooney, MD, since its inception. This group hosts a variety of activities that promote humanism in medicine as well as advises Dr. Clooney regarding the selection of the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award winners each year.

Establishing a GHHS chapter at Welby would serve to both recognize those students, faculty, and residents who exemplify humanistic attributes and to bring formal recognition to the value we place on compassionate, patient-centered care at our institution. We believe our GHHS members will serve as leaders and role models who will enhance the culture of support and compassion for patients and health care providers.

2. GHHS Chapter Advisors

Two members of the medical school faculty are enthusiastic about serving as our GHHS Chapter Advisors:

1. Dr. Clooney, Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Clooney serves as the Director of the Medical Student Professionalism Committee and is a faculty advisor for the Medical Humanities Interest Group.
2. Dr. Casey, Instructor, Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Casey is a strong supporter of medical students and has won a number of teaching awards.

3. Peer Nomination and Selection Process

In the winter of the third year, students will be asked to fill out the Peer Nomination Survey (McCormack WT et al. Peer nomination: a tool for identifying medical student exemplars in clinical competence and caring, evaluated at three medical schools. *Academic Medicine* 2007; 82:1033-9). For each of the survey questions, students will list three students in their class who best fit the described situations. The survey results will produce a list of candidates who will then be further reviewed by a Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will be comprised of deans, faculty, clerkship directors, Leonard Tow Award recipients, and previously inducted GHHS student and resident members. The students in the top 20-25% of the ranked survey results will first be evaluated for academic standing. Only students in good academic standing will be eligible for GHHS membership. These students will then be asked to submit a resume and a personal statement that addresses the question, "If selected to become a member of GHHS, what programs will you develop to promote compassionate care and support for patients and health care providers in our teaching environment?" The Selection Committee will meet in early spring to review, discuss, and select the nominees. The total number of GHHS members will be no more than 10-15% of the medical school class. Selected students will be notified and asked to accept GHHS membership. The results will be announced to the medical community. The newly selected GHHS members will meet with outgoing GHHS members to share ideas, pass along programs and activities, and to create a history and tradition for GHHS.

As our GHHS chapter develops, each year up to four faculty members and up to six residents will also be selected by GHHS members for induction into GHHS.

4. Plans for Inducting New Members into GHHS

A formal induction ceremony will be held in the late spring after the third year. The induction ceremony will be organized by the members of the Welby GHHS chapter and the Chapter Advisor. A standard component of the ceremony will be a keynote speaker on a topic related to humanism in medicine. Students will be recognized individually, receive a GHHS certificate and pin, and recite the GHHS Oath during the induction ceremony. A reception will follow for our GHHS members and their friends and families. Our GHHS chapter members will also be honored at our Senior Dinner, as well as at all medical school award ceremonies and at graduation.

5. GHHS Mentoring and Chapter Activities

New GHHS chapter members will meet shortly after selection in the spring with outgoing GHHS members to begin planning GHHS activities for their fourth year. The Chapter Advisor will assist the group as needed throughout the year to facilitate completion of the programs and events. We plan to hold at least one organized event for all first-year medical students (most likely a ceremony to honor the people whose bodies are used in dissection), at least one event for second-year students introducing them to clinical rotations, and at least three workshops or dinners for third- and fourth-year students that will focus on key elements of providing compassionate patient care.

6. Our Vision for Branding and Sustaining Our GHHS Chapter

The initiation of a GHHS chapter at the Welby College of Medicine will be announced to the medical community via a number of avenues. These will include through web-based newsletters, at faculty and student leadership gatherings, and at departmental meetings. We will create a Welby College of Medicine GHHS website where we will post information about GHHS, its mission, and the goals and activities. We will strive to make our GHHS chapter a visible example of Welby's commitment to professionalism and humanism in medicine. The leadership of the Welby College of Medicine, including the Dean, is dedicated to sustaining the chapter for the long term.