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New Pharmacy Students to Undergo Professionalism Training

Students entering the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy this fall will undergo a day of professionalism training in conjunction with their typical orientation schedule. The new program, called Rx DAWGS Boot Camp, is designed to introduce students to the professional attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions that are necessary for success in the study and practice of Pharmacy. A professional etiquette dinner, sponsored by CVS Caremark, will kick-off the Boot Camp; the event will feature a presentation on dining etiquette by UGA Career Services and a “white coat” fashion show of professional attire, sponsored by Macy’s.

“The Rx DAWGS Boot Camp is the first step in responding to the demand for increased professionalism among student pharmacists. We want to encourage our students—from the very beginning—to develop a solid professional identity, which will contribute to their success both in pharmacy school and in their careers as healthcare professionals,” said Joan Watson, assistant dean for Strategic and Academic Initiatives, who plans to expand the Boot Camp to five days for 2015-16. “Thanks to the hard work of the Professionalism Task Force, we are able to build upon the Rx DAWGS acronym to structure an enriching program for our incoming Pharmacy students.”

Joining Watson in the planning and implementation of the Rx DAWGS Boot Camp is Lindsey Welch, director of Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences in the College. Among the activities planned for the Boot Camp are the exploration of professionalism case studies, which provide examples and anti-examples of professional behaviors and attitudes; a presentation entitled, “Technology, Multitasking and How People Learn,” given by Dr. C. Edward Watson, director of the UGA Center for Teaching and Learning; a learning strategies session on how to be successful in pharmacy school; and a presentation by the Dean’s Student Advisory Council (DSAC) on the importance of being involved in student and professional organizations. The Boot Camp will conclude with a mixer where first-year students will be able to meet faculty and staff from the College in an informal environment.

The White Coat ceremony, at which all first-year students receive their professional white coats, is the capstone of the orientation events. At the conclusion of the White Coat ceremony, students will recite the Rx DAWGS Pledge of Professional Behavior to show their commitment to professionalism in the study and practice of pharmacy:

Rx DAWGS Pledge of Professional Behavior

As a student pharmacist in the College of Pharmacy at the University of Georgia, I am Respectful. I hold my patients, colleagues, and collaborators in esteem and value their knowledge and experiences regardless of their culture, ethnicity, geographical location, or income. I recognize and heed the authority of my professors and preceptors.
I exceed expectations in all that I do in the classroom, the laboratory, and in the professional arena. I am self-aware and committed to self-improvement, exhibiting leadership through my motivation and work ethic.

I am Dependable, virtuous, and discerning. I hold myself to the highest principles of ethical and legal conduct. I exercise sound judgment regarding my own self-image, and I protect the privacy of my patients.

I am an Agent of change. Through my flexibility and adaptability, I accept and promote innovations that improve patient care.

I am Wise and reflective. I consider the ways in which my skills, knowledge, and experience impact my colleagues and patients. I seek to apply my learning in authentic contexts and adjust my practice according to the diverse needs of those I serve.

I am Genuine in conversation and correspondence with faculty, staff, patients, and other healthcare professionals. My communication is effective because it is clear, honest, respectful, and considers the diversity of those I serve.

I am Service-oriented. The welfare of others is my utmost concern. I am compassionate and empathetic; I promote and practice volunteerism to better serve my community and constituency.

Together, we are Rx DAWGS, and we accept our obligation to continually improve our professional knowledge and competence in order to provide the best possible care for all our patients and to make positive contributions to our communities and our healthcare system.

In addition to the Rx DAWGS Boot Camp for incoming first-year students, activities designed to reinforce professional attitudes and behaviors across all years of the Pharm.D. program are being developed with the combined efforts of College administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

View photos of Rx DAWGS Boot Camp in the Photo Gallery.