



# Academic Coaching: An Innovative Tool in Medical Education at UC Davis School of Medicine

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## Introduction

- Executive coaching is an established practice in the business and sports communities.
- Academic coaching in medical education is an emerging modality to encourage lifelong learning.
- Coaches work with learners by:
  - Evaluating performance via review of objective assessments.
  - Assisting the learner to identify needs and create a plan to achieve these needs.
  - Helping the learner to be accountable.<sup>1</sup>
- Coaching programs are thought to facilitate:
  - Earlier faculty-student partnership.
  - Growth of professional identity and development.
  - Early identification of struggling learners.

## Aim

To describe the design, implementation, and lessons learned from a one-year pilot of an Academic Coaching Program at the University of California, Davis School of Medicine.

## Design & Implementation

### Needs Assessment

- On a survey disseminated to medical students the year prior to creation of the program, students identified the desire for more faculty partnerships earlier in their medical education.

### Recruitment of Coaches

- Five academic coaches were hired from the following departments: Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, Family and Community Medicine, and Ophthalmology.
- Each coach was provided 20% FTE time for this role.

### Initial Program Design

- The initial focus was on pre-clinical medical students in their first and second year of medical school.
- Each faculty member was responsible for coaching 45-52 (total 238) medical students.
- Coaches had access to student performance data.
- Coaches did not evaluate medical students.
- Faculty development meetings were held monthly.
- There was a mandatory minimum of two, one-on-one coaching sessions throughout the year held via weekly office hours.
- Objectives were developed:
  - Understand the goals of the coaching program
  - Articulate pathway to medicine
  - Reflect on personal traits
  - Introduction to goal setting using the S.M.A.R.T.<sup>4</sup> template
- A mission statement was also developed:
  - **To coach adult learners to develop professional skills and identity in a supportive environment using techniques that promote lifelong learning and self-reflection.**



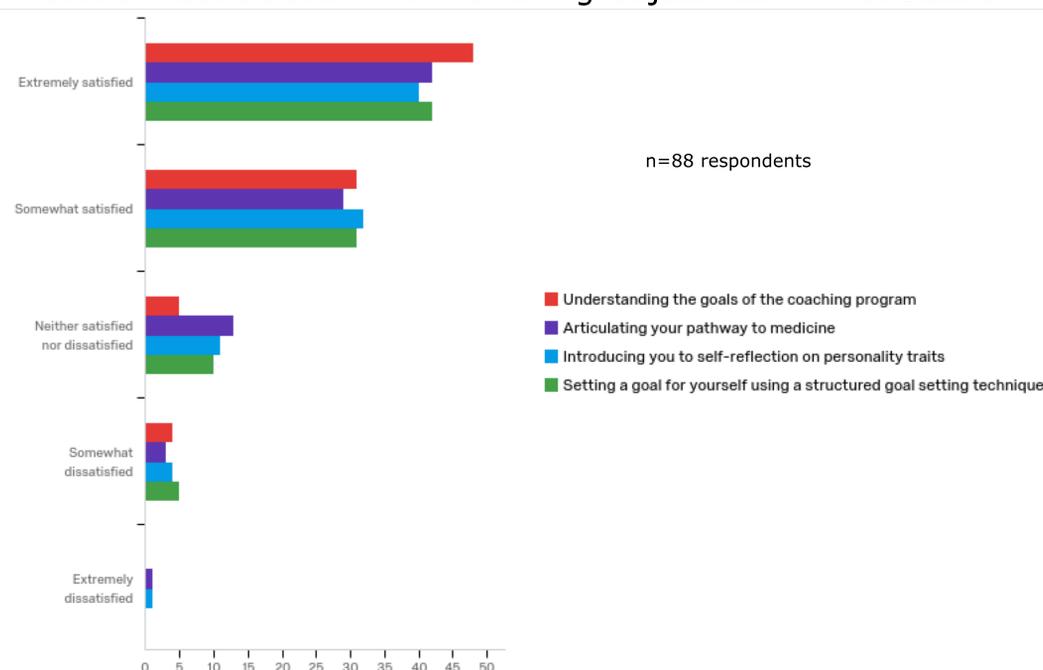
The Academic Coaches and Associate Dean of Students\* (from left to right): Olivia Campa, M.D.; Sharad Jain, M.D.\*; Kara Toles, M.D.; Micaela Godzich, M.D.; Blanca Solis, M.D.; Francis Sousa, M.D..

## Evaluation & Results

*"My biggest takeaway from my coaching experience, so far, is that a coaching session is designed to allow you to develop more self-reflection and learn how to adapt to certain things without losing your core. It's not about stepping out of your comfort zone but expanding your comfort zone."* –MS1

A mid-point evaluation survey was sent to all medical students.

### Student Satisfaction with Achieving Objectives in First Session



## Conclusions & Next Steps

Overall, the program was well-received by all faculty involved and a majority of the students. Stated objectives were largely met and feedback was generally positive. Some recurring themes in the constructive feedback from students were:

1. Request that each coach have less number of students
2. More meetings with each coach
3. Assistance with connection to faculty advisors and career mentors

### Next Steps

The program will be restructured in the following ways for the 2019-2020 academic year:

- Expansion to total of 15 academic coaches
- Incorporation of the third and fourth-year medical students
  - Each coach will have ~32 students
- Coaches will be incorporated into the Doctoring Curriculum as facilitators and instructors to teach clinical skills.

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