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A Competency-based Approach to Faculty Development
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Background
Faculty development at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine (VCU SOM) has previously focused on enhancing teaching and learning in the medical and clinical education settings. While this work is important, the narrow focus does not address all facets a faculty member’s role. To broaden their programming, the VCU SOM faculty development team adopted a competency-based approach to the development and planning of faculty development activities. In January 2019, this new approach was implemented.

Summary of work
The Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs completed a research project focused on successful medical faculty who promote through the tenure process and advance in their careers. She identified the following categories for success: teaching, service, scholarship, advancing, and leadership. Each of these categories contains action-focused competencies that align with career progression within a focus of work. The faculty development team adopted the identified competencies to their curriculum development and planning processes.

Summary of results
The results of this adoption have been clearer goals for learners, a mapped structure for faculty development activities, and a broader range of topics offered that align with focus of work stages.

Discussion
Faculty development activities are now categorized into five (5) categories: Teach, Lead, Serve, Discover, and Advance with each category color coded for easy recognition in event marketing materials. A new logo reflecting these competency categories is now included on all Office of Faculty Affairs communications. Faculty are beginning to recognize and register for activities they need for promotion, tenure, and advancement.

Conclusions
The adoption of the competencies for success from the Senior Associate Dean’s study has enriched faculty development offerings providing a recognizable structure allowing faculty to easily identify competency areas for development.

Clear organization of faculty development activities aligned with competencies for success can lead to a comprehensive approach to career development and growth for medical school faculty.