Preface

Faculty Development in Surgery

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Practicing as a surgeon in an academic institution can be overwhelmingly rewarding and yet terribly frustrating. As Medicare dollars dwindle and institutional expectations for revenue production grow, the pressure has never been higher on individual department of surgery to be the primary driver of revenue while still maintaining a high level of academic prowess. Given this backdrop, navigating the waters of academic medicine can be a daunting task for junior faculty fresh out of fellowship/residency. Indeed, almost little or no attention is given to this topic during medical or surgery training. Given the rigors of surgical training, work-hour limitations, and the wealth of knowledge to be learned by the trainee, very little time is left to understand the complexities of a future in academic medicine. Starting as a new faculty member in a department of surgery at any of the major academic institution, the goal of most graduates, unless directly specified in the initial contract, is plainly to “work hard and stay out of trouble.” This goal is most critical in surgery where outcomes, especially poor ones, are monitored closely. This goal along with a multitude of other obligations, both personal and work related, leaves little room to grasp the

importance of their own development as junior faculty. Furthermore, few graduates have an inherent knowledge of the inner workings of academic institutions and what is needed to advance their own careers. Simply publishing as many peer-reviewed articles as possible may not be enough. Yet, few academic institutions provide a road map or resources necessary for junior faculty on planning their own career development. My goal for this issue was to help provide a “blueprint” for junior surgical faculty as they embark on a hopefully fulfilling career in academic medicine.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank each of the authors for taking precious time away from their busy practices and families to review and explore some of the challenges facing young surgeons in academic medicine. All the authors are accomplished surgeons and academicians whose insight and knowledge into each of the individual assigned chapters provides for a comprehensive, intriguing, and hopefully, helpful review of a very complex topic. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. David Beck for agreeing to provide the canvas for this work and for affording me the opportunity to put this volume together.

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