


NOMINATION SIGNATURE PAGE

2025 Virginia Outstanding Faculty Awards

Nominations must include this as the cover page of the nomination package PDF submission

Name of Applicant:	Neeral L. Shah
Institution:	University of Virginia
Category (choose only one): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baccalaureate Institution• Masters/Comprehensive Institution• Research/Doctoral Institution• Two-Year Institution• Rising Star	Research/Doctoral Institution
Signature of President or Chief Academic Officer:	
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Mission Statement

The University of Virginia is a public institution of higher learning guided by a founding vision of discovery, innovation, and development of the full potential of talented students from all walks of life. It serves the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world by developing responsible citizen leaders and professionals; advancing, preserving, and disseminating knowledge; and providing world-class patient care.

We are defined by:

- Our enduring commitment to a vibrant and unique residential learning environment marked by the free and collegial exchange of ideas;
- Our unwavering support of a collaborative, diverse community bound together by distinctive foundational values of honor, integrity, trust, and respect;
- Our universal dedication to excellence and affordable access.

Source: www.virginia.edu/statementofpurpose

Neeral Shah - Summary of Accomplishments

Dr. Neeral L. Shah is an academic transplant hepatologist renowned for his exemplary contributions to clinical medicine, research, and teaching. He is a true "triple threat," excelling in each of these domains. Over the years, he has provided expert care to countless patients with liver disease, performed thousands of colonoscopies to prevent colon cancer, and collaborated with biomedical engineers to pioneer innovative diagnostic techniques for bleeding disorders. His dedication to medical education is equally impressive, having taught at the University of Virginia School of Medicine for 15 years and shaped the careers of over 2,400 students, many of whom are now practicing physicians. Dr. Shah's accolades are a testament to his impact. He was honored as the Early Career Physician by the American College of Physicians (ACP) in Virginia and received national recognition with the prestigious Herbert Waxman Award as the top educator in the country, presented by the ACP at their international conference. His leadership in the field is further highlighted by his active participation on committees for each of the major gastrointestinal societies in the United States, and his recent election as Governor of Virginia for the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG), representing both academic and private practice gastroenterologists in VA. At the University of Virginia, Dr. Shah has garnered every major teaching award, including the Mulholland Student Society's student-voted teaching award, the Dean's Teaching Excellence Award, the School of Medicine Harrison Distinguished Educators Award, and the All University Teaching Award at UVA in 2016. Despite his many accolades, Dr. Shah remains deeply committed to his patients, continually strives to educate the next generation of medical professionals, and tirelessly seeks innovative approaches to advance the field of medicine.

Teaching: Dr. Shah's contributions to the University of Virginia have been nothing short of transformative, particularly in the realm of medical education. He stands out as one of the few educators who engages with learners at every stage of their professional journey—ranging from medical students and residents to gastroenterology fellows and even practicing physicians and advanced practice providers (APPs) in continuing medical education. His unique role allows him to witness and guide the growth of some learners from their very first day of medical school to the moment they are fully prepared to practice gastroenterology, often a decade later.

Within the medical school, Dr. Shah was instrumental in the development of a new problem-based learning and team-based learning curriculum. His influence in shaping the education of future physicians has been profound; for eight years, he co-chaired the pre-clerkship portion of the curriculum, laying the foundation for every medical student before they transitioned to the clinical wards. His leadership in teaching the gastrointestinal (GI) course for over a decade has consistently made it one of the highest-rated courses in the curriculum. Even when the pandemic abruptly struck, Dr. Shah demonstrated exceptional adaptability by transforming his course overnight to be delivered via Zoom and videoconferencing, ensuring that students maintained the vital personal connections so crucial for bedside medicine.

In the clinical setting, Dr. Shah has significantly impacted graduate medical education as well. As an Associate Program Director, he guided over 100 internal medicine residents each year, subsequently for the past eight years, he has served as the Gastroenterology Fellowship Program Director, overseeing the training of fellows preparing for careers in GI. His versatility as an educator is evident in his seamless transition from classroom instruction to hands-on teaching at the bedside and in procedure rooms.

Beyond the university, Dr. Shah's influence extends to the broader medical community. He has played a key role in organizing continuing medical education conferences at both local and regional levels. Notably, he served as the Director of a regional GI conference in Williamsburg, Virginia, for several years and has been the driving force behind the Annual GI Conference at

UVA. As the UVA conference director, Dr. Shah has consistently invited trainees from any program to attend the conference. Additionally, he applied for and secured a grant from the Jefferson Trust at UVA to support visiting scholars from underrepresented minorities in attending the conference. Recognizing that trainees from various backgrounds often lack the disposable income to attend additional conferences not funded by their own training programs, Dr. Shah extended invitations to all interested gastroenterology trainees, ensuring they could attend the conference regardless of cost. Since the grant's inception, this program has consistently supported scholars each year, drawing participants from institutions in Illinois, North Carolina, Maryland, Washington, D.C., and New York. Impressively, all of the scholars have chosen to pursue careers in gastroenterology, with many going on to apply for fellowship positions at the University of Virginia. These conferences have provided a diverse range of learning opportunities—lecture-based, case-based, and procedural—for thousands of physicians and trainees across Virginia and neighboring states.

Dr. Shah's dedication to education also reaches undergraduates, particularly in biomedical engineering. Drawing on his degree in biomedical and chemical engineering from Cornell, he has led design projects where students tackle real-life medical challenges. His involvement in studio classroom sessions and mentorship of student groups during their capstone projects exemplifies his commitment to fostering innovation and interdisciplinary learning.

In every aspect of his work, Dr. Shah has shown an extraordinary ability to inspire and educate, leaving an indelible mark on learners at every stage of their careers.

Discovery: Dr. Shah has been deeply involved in discovery since he first began his career at UVA. With undergraduate degrees in chemical and biomedical engineering, he sought to apply his expertise to bridge the gap between bench research and clinical practice. Early in his tenure, Dr. Shah identified a significant challenge in treating patients with liver disease who experience bleeding events. The prevailing approach often involved administering large volumes of blood products in a non-specific manner, which was neither efficient nor effective. Recognizing the need for more targeted treatments, Dr. Shah collaborated with the biomedical engineering department, securing an NIH SBIR (Small Business Innovation Research) grant to explore innovative ways to measure coagulation and develop precise treatment algorithms.

In 2010, Dr. Shah contributed to the design of a groundbreaking prototype machine that uses ultrasound waves to detect specific coagulation defects in blood samples. His guidance led to the development of a four-channel model, corresponding to four potential therapeutic options for managing bleeding in patients. This innovative approach resulted in the creation of the Quantra Hemosonics machine, now FDA-approved and widely used by anesthesiologists to optimize the use of blood products in clinical settings.

Beyond his clinical contributions, Dr. Shah has also pioneered new models of medical education. He was instrumental in expanding a highly successful elective course into a mandatory "Internship Readiness Course" for all graduating medical students at UVA. This transformation required scaling the course from 20 students to 160 students, which Dr. Shah helped achieve through innovative teaching methods, making efficient use of limited resources.

Dr. Shah's research in education led to two notable publications. The first study demonstrated that high-quality clinical instruction could be delivered without the need for \$100,000 simulation mannequins, making it more accessible and sustainable for all learners and schools. The second study introduced an interprofessional paging training program in collaboration with the nursing school, simulating urgent scenarios for medical students. This unique interprofessional program, which benefited both medical and nursing students, has been published as a module for adoption by other institutions nationwide.

Knowledge Integration: As Dr. Shah fully immersed himself in medical education, he focused his efforts on knowledge integration and the creation of innovative learning tools. Early in his career, while caring for patients on the wards, Dr. Shah observed that students were moving away from traditional textbooks and instead gravitating towards digital tools and visual summaries to help them retain essential information. Some of these digital tools involved case-based scenarios, which effectively reinforced learning by allowing students to anchor their knowledge with real patient cases.

In 2016, Dr. Shah developed a case-based app, called CaseQ, designed to integrate basic science with clinical medicine, using patient cases from his own experience. He carefully selected cases that were representative of the most common diagnoses in hospitals across Virginia. This tool enabled students to make use of downtime—whether between patients or during their commute—by accessing educational content on their phones. The app not only facilitated learning but also helped students avoid distractions, such as social media, by engaging them in relevant medical cases during their free time on their handheld devices.

Dr. Shah also has served as the Director of the GI fellowship program for eight years and the Director of the UVA Regional Conference for GI providers in Virginia. As a Fellowship Program Director, he has been instrumental in directly training over 50 gastroenterology providers who work in the field. His regional conference, which has continued to thrive even during the pandemic, has provided cutting-edge education to more than 1,000 providers, including physicians, advanced practice providers, and nurses. His efforts have significantly enhanced the care of GI patients throughout Virginia.

Dr. Shah also recognized a growing trend among medical students who were turning to visual study aids to help memorize and recall information. However, he noticed a lack of infographics tailored for medical education. While infographics were commonly used to simplify complex topics for patients, there was no equivalent resource for learners in the medical field. In response, Dr. Shah developed a series of infographics on gastrointestinal and hepatology topics that quickly became popular among his students. These infographics were posted on the internet, gained global attention, and were soon being used by students in over 20 countries.

The success of these infographics caught the attention of a managing editor at McGraw Hill publishing, who saw the potential to expand this resource across the entire medical school curriculum. Dr. Shah then assembled a team of 13 associate editors and content experts from various medical fields, along with over 90 student contributors, to create 600 infographics covering the majority of topics in medical education. This comprehensive resource is now available in print or online through AccessMedicine and is subscribed to by 98% of medical schools in the United States. It is also used in 70 countries worldwide, with translations into Spanish to make it more accessible to Spanish-speaking providers in Latin America.

Dr. Shah's keen observation of how learners digest information and his ability to transform this insight into widely used visual study tools is a testament to his ingenuity in the field of medical education.

Service

Institutional Level - Dr. Shah has held numerous influential roles within the UVA medical school and across the University. He served as an Associate Program Director for the Internal Medicine residency program, overseeing 100 residents each year, and subsequently for eight years, he has been the GI Fellowship Program Director, overseeing the training of 12 fellows each year. Within the medical school, Dr. Shah played a pivotal role in transforming the curriculum in 2010 and has continued to hold a leadership position in this area. He currently co-

chairs the pre-clerkship curriculum, overseeing the educational program for medical students before they begin their clinical rotations. Additionally, he founded and served as the inaugural Director of the Academy for Excellence in Education, an organization dedicated to enhancing faculty development in medical education at the UVA School of Medicine.

Service to the broader University community includes serving on the Vice Provost Committee on Academic Strategy, providing critical insights for departmental reviews. He is currently a member of the Provost's Awards committee, which determines teaching awards across the University. Given his extensive experience and leadership at UVA, Dr. Shah was entrusted by the Executive Vice President and CEO of UVA Health to lead a culture initiative, including the rewriting of the mission, vision, and values statement for UVA Health.

Community - Dr. Shah has made significant contributions to the community by providing expert liver care to patients who travel from across Virginia to seek his specialized knowledge. To better serve his diverse patient population, he has taught himself Spanish, enabling him to effectively communicate with non-English-speaking patients referred from underserved clinics. During the pandemic, Dr. Shah played a crucial role in organizing the care model for trainees at UVA Hospital and actively participated in community efforts, including drive-by COVID vaccination clinics for children.

Professional and Societal Level - Dr. Shah is currently the president of the Virginia GI Society, where he advocates for patients and GI providers through legislative efforts and organizes an annual conference in Williamsburg, attended by nearly 300 providers from across the state. Dr. Shah is also deeply involved with the three major GI societies, holding significant committee positions related to education in each. Within the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases, he served as vice chair for three years and chair for an additional three years on the Communication and Technology Committee, where he contributed to the redesign of the organization's website and app, tools widely used by learners globally. In the American Gastroenterological Association, Dr. Shah has served on the Education and Training Committee and is currently one of the Editors in Chief of the primary review textbook for those preparing for their certification exam and has led an annual board review course at the national conference. Dr. Shah plays a key role in the American College of Gastroenterology, having served on the Education Committee, as an editor for their online learning platform (ACG Universe), an Associate Editor for a section of their flagship journal, and currently as the Governor of Virginia, representing all academic and private practice GI doctors in the state at the national level.

Dr. Neeral L. Shah is a distinguished academic transplant hepatologist who has made remarkable contributions to clinical medicine, research, and medical education. At the University of Virginia, he has been a transformative figure, shaping the careers of over 2,400 medical students, residents, and fellows, and earning every major teaching award, including the All University Teaching Award at UVA in 2016. Dr. Shah's influence extends beyond UVA through pivotal roles in the development of medical education resources, such as a widely adopted series of infographics that are now used in 98% of U.S. medical schools and in over 70 countries. As the Virginia GI Society president, he is a leading advocate for gastroenterologists, organizing educational conferences and influencing state legislation. His leadership in national GI societies, including his role as Governor of Virginia for the American College of Gastroenterology, has further cemented his reputation as a key figure in the field and improved patient care. His dedication to mentoring the next generation of physicians ensures that his impact will be durable. Throughout his career, Dr. Shah has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence, making him a deserving candidate for the Commonwealth's highest honor for faculty. His contributions have left an indelible mark on the medical community, both locally and globally.

Neeral Shah - Personal Statement

When I was promoted to tenured full professor at the University of Virginia, my mother said, "That's great, congratulations! So, what's next?" To a casual observer, this might seem callous, but there's more to the story. My parents, from different socioeconomic circles in India, were never meant to be together. Defying societal expectations and potential arranged marriages, they eloped to the United States with just two suitcases and \$8, truly embodying the American Dream. My mother worked as a cook and housekeeper, while my father started as a busboy. They studied at night, with my mother quizzing and helping my father as he eventually earned a college degree and an MBA. Their philosophy was, "Knowledge is something that nobody can ever take from you," a belief they deeply instilled in me. My brother and I were often embarrassed when our parents invited our teachers for an Indian dinner at our modest home at the end of the school year. This was their way of thanking the teachers for all their hard work in passing knowledge onto their children.

Teaching - Inspired by my parents' reverence for education and my incredible teachers, I strive to embody four key aspects in my own teaching:

1. **Creating a Safe Space for Learning:** Education should always be conducted in a safe space by fostering a personal connection, whether in the classroom or hospital. A simple method is to use each other's names. Each year, I make it a priority to learn the names of all the students in my class. I study the class roster to memorize the names of all 160 students. In our teaching auditorium, I try to address each student by name. This sense of familiarity and connection helps me create a safe environment for learning.
2. **Breaking Down Complex Topics:** Teaching complex topics in a stepwise manner helps avoid overwhelming the learner. By limiting cognitive load, students can better absorb medical information and apply it when caring for patients. I've organized my teaching to formulate complicated topics into a framework that covers 90% of the key information. This allows me to spend more time helping learners navigate the nuanced final 10% for optimal, personalized care for patients they encounter.
3. **Applying Knowledge to Real-Life Scenarios:** Learning information is more impactful when it culminates in practical application. This is why I always use case examples from my own medical practice to illustrate the concepts students may read about in textbooks. The transition from textbook knowledge to bedside application is essential in training exceptional healthcare providers.
4. **Ensuring Accessibility to Education:** Education should be accessible to everyone. Having experienced schooling with modest resources, I feel strongly that finances should not be a barrier to education. I've explored ways to teach similar topics in medical simulation without the need for expensive mannequins, developed an emergent clinical paging program that connects nursing students with medical students for scenario practice, and created free web-based resources and case-based apps for medical students to use on their own time.

Discovery - My career at UVA began with clinical research, studying patients with liver disease to address gaps in our understanding of how blood clots form in these patients. With a degree in engineering, I sought out a collaboration with biomedical engineers to explain the clinical dilemma and current limitations. I helped conceive a prototype for a new medical device. With my insight about blood products use in the clinical setting, I advised the engineers about how to provide appropriate results to allow more judicious use of blood products and conserve resources. By using my expertise to bridge the gap from bench research to bedside care, we now have a device that is approved for use in clinical care of patients.

As I became more involved in medical education, my focus in research shifted to new ways to deliver engaging, efficient, and enduring educational content. This skill set was especially helpful during the pandemic. I vividly remember teaching the gastrointestinal course with 160 students when, at 2 p.m. on Thursday, March 12, 2020, I was informed that in-person classes would be suspended the next day. I realized quickly that coming back to in-person instruction would be difficult. Drawing on my research about technology in medical education, I worked through the night to transform my teaching materials into a fully on-line curriculum. This swift application of my expertise ensured that the students did not miss a beat in their education.

Integration of Knowledge - As I became more involved in education, I noticed a generational shift in the resources being used. Students increasingly relied on graphical and visual aids rather than long textbook chapters. I also observed the use of infographics in advertising and patient information handouts. This inspired me to create infographics as study aids for medical learners—a resource that had not been developed before. My efforts caught the attention of an editor, who approached me to expand this into a comprehensive set of 600 infographics covering topics for learners in medical school, nurse practitioner programs, and physician assistant schools. After two years, I developed sets of infographics for both medical and surgical topics, available in English and Spanish. These resources are now accessible in 98% of US medical school libraries and in over 70 countries worldwide. It's incredibly fulfilling to know that these tools are helping learners integrate medical knowledge that will improve patient care. I'm still thrilled when I receive emails from learners who use these infographics regularly, like the one I received today that said, "Infographics have saved my life throughout didactics."

Service - Through my work and commitments, I have strived to be a role model and serve my institution, the medical field, and the community. At my institution, I have dedicated over ten years to overseeing the medical student curriculum and as residency and fellowship program director. I have also directed medical conferences to bring together our faculty and providers from across Virginia. Beyond our institution, I have contributed to the field of gastroenterology on an international level by serving on major committees focused on education. I am currently the co-editor for board review books that help certify new graduates, serve as the editor for the online resource "ACG Universe," and am an associate editor for The American Journal of Gastroenterology. These roles allow me to shape the future of gastroenterology education and support the learning of professionals around the world.

I was deeply honored when UVA Health leadership asked me to lead a culture journey and develop a new mission, vision, and values statement for our organization of 16,000 team members. This year-long process involved gathering input from over 3,000 team members, ensuring that our collective vision truly reflects our shared goals and values. I also take pride in organizing community initiatives, such as a COVID vaccine drive during the initial rollout, where we successfully vaccinated 500 children each day. I remain passionate about making a meaningful impact wherever I can.

Through all my experiences, and as my parents instilled in me, I strive to give my students something that no one can ever take away—knowledge. I am fortunate to not only teach, but also practice medicine. I would never trade either aspect of my job, as direct patient care allows me to share personal stories that enrich my teaching. These stories enable my students to better understand and eventually apply what they learn to their own patients. I believe I have found the perfect balance that keeps me excited to discover how I can answer my mother when she asks, "So, what's next?"

Neeral Shah - Abbreviated CV

Education

1993 - 1997	Cornell University	BS - Chemical and Biomedical Engineering
1997 - 2001	Albert Einstein College of Medicine	MD - Medicine
2001 - 2004	George Washington University	Internal Medicine - Residency
2004 - 2005	George Washington University	Internal Medicine - Chief Residency
2005 - 2008	Lahey Clinic Medical Center	Gastroenterology - Fellowship
2008 - 2009	University of Virginia	Transplant Hepatology - Fellowship
2014	Harvard Macy Institute	Medical Education for Health Professionals

Academic Appointments

2023-present	Professor with Tenure, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
2019-present	Harrison Distinguished Teaching Professor of Medical Education
2016-present	Program Director, Gastroenterology Fellowship Program, UVA
2013-2019	Associate Program Director, Internal Medicine Residency Program, UVA
2018-2023	Associate Professor with Tenure, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
2015-2018	Associate Professor, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
2012-2015	Associate Program Director, Transplant Hepatology Fellowship Program, UVA
2009-2015	Assistant Professor, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Honors and Awards

2023	UVA School of Medicine - David A. Harrison Distinguished Educator Award
2021	UVA School of Medicine – Class of 2023 – Teaching Excellence, Professionalism
2020	UVA School of Medicine – Class of 2022 – Teaching Excellence, Professionalism
2019	Harrison Distinguished Teaching Associate Professor of Med Education, chair
2018	UVA School of Medicine – Class of 2020 – Teaching Excellence, Professionalism
2017	Department of Medicine – Internal Medicine Residency – Mentorship Award
2017	American College of Physicians – VA State Chapter – Young Physician Award
2016	University of Virginia - All University Teaching Award
2016	Alpha Omega Alpha – Anne Brodie – Teacher's Teacher Award
2016	UVA School of Medicine – Class of 2018 – Teaching Excellence, Professionalism
2015	UVA School of Medicine – Class of 2017 – Teaching Excellence, Professionalism
2014	Herbert S. Waxman Award for Outstanding Medical Educator
	American College of Physicians – National Chapter
2014	Harvard Macy Institute – Educational Program for Health Professionals
2013	UVA Department of Medicine Research Grant – Promote research for residents
2013	UVA School of Medicine – Class of 2015 – Teaching Excellence, Professionalism
2012	Academy of Educators – American Gastroenterological Association
2012	Academy of Distinguished Educators – University of Virginia
2012	Dean's Teaching Excellence Award – School of Medicine – University of Virginia
2012	Outstanding Educator Award – Department of Medicine – University of Virginia

Present Leadership Positions

2023–present	Governor, State of Virginia, American College of Gastroenterology (ACG)
2022-present	President, Virginia Gastroenterological Society (VGS)
2021-Present	Leadership Cabinet, Division of Gastroenterology
2021-Present	Director, Academy for Excellence in Education, UVA School of Medicine
2021-Present	Chair, Academies Collaborative, American Academy of Medical Colleges
2021-Present	Associate Editor, American Journal of Gastroenterology (Impact Factor – 10.38)
2020-Present	Chair, Communication and Technology Committee

American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD)
 2019-present Director, Excellence in Education Week, UVA School of Medicine
 2017-present Editorial Board, Education Universe, American College of Gastroenterology
 2017-Present Gastroenterology Fellowship Director, Division of Gastroenterology
 2013-Present Chair, Pre-clerkship Committee, UVA School of Medicine
 2010-Present GI System Co-Leader, NxGen Curriculum, UVA School of Medicine

Clinical Research Projects

2011-2013 National Institutes of Health – NIDDK – SBIR Program
 “Development of a POC Diagnostic to Manage Hemostasis in Chronic Liver Disease” Role – Sub-investigator - Grant – 1R44DK085844-01A1

Medical Education Research Projects

2017-2019 UVA School of Medicine - “Computer Based Case Simulation Development”
 Educational Fellowship Award - \$12,500
 2016-2017 UVA School of Medicine - “Medical Education Innovation technologies in the
 pre-clerkship curriculum”
 2015-2017 UVA School of Medicine - “Mobile case based app development”
 2016-2017 AAMC - Innovation Award - “The Clinical Anatomy and Imaging Laboratory:
 Vertical integration in the pre-clerkship Curriculum”

Selected Publications

Shah NL, Intagliata NM, Northup PG, Argo CK, Caldwell SH. Procoagulant therapeutics in liver disease: a critique and clinical rationale. *Nature Reviews Gastroenterology Hepatology*. 2014 Nov; 11(11): 675-82.

Barry DS, Dent JM, Hankin M, Moyer D, Shah NL, Tuskey A, Soukoulis V. The Clinical Anatomy and Imaging Laboratory: Vertical Integration in the Pre-clerkship Curriculum. *MedEdPORTAL*. 2019 May 15.

Mutter MK, Martindale JR, Shah NL, Gusic ME, Wolf SJ. Case-Based Teaching: Does the Addition of High-Fidelity Simulation Make a Difference in Medical Students’ Clinical Reasoning Skills?. *Medical Science Educator*. 2020 Jan 10:1-7.

Cetrone E, Mutter K, Pedersen K, Shah NL, Martindale J. A paging training program for a fourth-year internship readiness course. *MedEdPORTAL*. 2020 Nov 13;16:11021.

Shah, NL (Editor in Chief) *Infographic Guide to Medicine*, McGraw Hill Publishers: Shah N. The *Infographic Guide to Medicine* (EBOOK). McGraw Hill Professional; 2020 Dec 22. and on Access Medicine

Shah NL, Miller JB, Kalman RS, Kumar S. AASLD Educating and Engaging in the Digital Age: Editorial from Communications and Technology Committee. *Hepatology*. 2021 Dec;74(6):2935-8.

Shah, NL (Editor in Chief) *Infographic Guide to Surgery*, McGraw Hill Publishers: Shah N. The *Infographic Guide to Medicine* (EBOOK). McGraw Hill Professional; 2024 and on Access Medicine

Neeral Shah - Excerpts from Letters of Students, Trainees, Colleagues, and Patients

Dr. David Moyer - Colleague in Medical Education, Anatomy Content Leader at UVA

School of Medicine - Dr. Shah is the easiest system leader with whom to work because he is guided not by what is best for his schedule or his colleague's schedules, but instead is motivated by what is best for the education of our students. He is always open-minded, willing to listen, and willing to implement changes that can improve the educational process. He is also complimentary and encouraging to his colleagues as we implement new methods of learning. Dr. Shah has a contagious energy that promotes improvement even if a session is already evaluated as being satisfactory by students.

Dr. Jessica Davis - Former Medical Student and GI Fellowship Trainee at UVA, currently Assistant Professor at Veterans Administration Medical Center, Washington DC

- Neeral exudes warmth and interest in each team member regardless of training level and has a strong desire and ability to support trainees longitudinally throughout their career. When I explained to Neeral my desire to find residency in Washington, DC, he recommended his former program, George Washington University. I ultimately completed both residency and chief residency in internal medicine there, following in Neeral's footsteps. My interest in hepatology, seeded as a medical student, persisted. I kept in contact with Neeral and was determined to make it back to UVA for fellowship training so I could work with Neeral and the rest of the amazing hepatology faculty.

Dr. Joanna Odenthal - Former Medical Student Mentee at UVA - I first met Dr. Shah as one of the system leaders for the preclerkship GI course, which is widely recognized among medical students as one of the best organized systems in the preclerkship curriculum... The course also incorporates multimedia approaches to education, including videos of lecturers' endoscopies that augment learning, and ends with a hands-on day in the anatomy lab where students are able to try their hands at the various procedures about which they had been learning. While focusing on the big picture, Dr. Shah is also known for working diligently to learn (and remember) students' names, making sure to say hello in the hallways after class or even years later on the hospital floor. Though a small gesture, it is one that few faculty make and that speaks to his care and empathy as an educator.

Dr. Maryellen Gusic - Former colleague of Medical Education at UVA School of Medicine, currently Director of Faculty Affairs at Medical University of South Carolina - Dr. Shah's teaching activities include classroom and clinical teaching and span the educational continuum from medical student to peer teaching in continuing medical education activities. His excellence as a teacher has been recognized by an impressive number of teaching awards; from five medical school classes, from his department, from the UVA Alpha Omega Alpha chapter, from the state and national American College of Physicians, from the School of Medicine (Dean's Teaching Excellence Award) and the University (All University Teaching Award).....An important component that distinguishes faculty as educators beyond "great teaching" is scholarship, i.e. materials, presentations, publications that undergo peer review and are available for others to adopt, adapt and build upon.....He has presented posters annually (with one exception) since 2014 at the School of Medicine Medical Education Week sponsored by the Academy of Distinguished Educators. He has presented at the regional American Association of Medical Colleges, the SGEA meeting and at the national meeting for academies of education.

Katie Webb - Former Medical Student Mentee at UVA - Not only did Dr. Shah design our formal educational programming to be as engaging as possible, he continually showed us how much he valued personal connections. During breaks, Dr. Shah would converse with students.

In a room of over 100 people, he took the time to make each of us feel valued. He asked us our names, inquired about our weekend activities, and got to know not only our academic interests but our interests outside of school as well. Dr. Shah's commitment to connecting with his students is quite unique in the medical school; faculty members are busy, often hurrying from one obligation to the next, but Dr. Shah put in the time to be fully present and connect with us. For me, this served as motivation to be a more engaged and focused student. During the final week of the GI system, we had the opportunity to see Dr. Shah interview one of his patients. This was a patient who had been extremely ill and underwent a life-saving liver transplant. The patient praised Dr. Shah for the time he devoted to their care, explaining the disease process in terms they could understand, exploring treatment options in the broader context of the patient's lifestyle and wishes, and being compassionate yet straightforward in discussing outcome and prognosis. That patient interaction highlighted to me that Dr. Shah is not only an educator who would do anything for his students, he is also a clinician who would do anything for his patients.

Joseph Mort - Former Medical Student and Internal Medicine Resident Mentee at UVA -

One of Dr. Shah's greatest strengths as an educator is his ability to innovate. After my first year of medical school, I worked with Dr. Shah on a project creating medical infographics to be used by students learning topics related to clinical gastroenterology. Infographics are a unique way to pass along information using pictures and visual organization instead of solely relying on text. Using infographics for medical education was a novel application at that time. The thirty infographics that we created were distributed on a website for free and used widely in almost 27 countries. From this project, he was contacted by McGraw Hill Publishers to create an entire set of infographics spanning all medical specialties. Dr. Shah led a team of 13 attendings and 100 medical students to create a publication containing over 600 infographics, *The Infographic Guide to Medicine*.

Dr. Curtis Argo - Medical Director of Liver Transplantation at UVA - As fellowship program director, he has mentored many of our GI/Hepatology fellows in medical education, including two fellows who were nominated for Mulholland Teaching Awards by UVA's medical students.

.... Neeral has also provided individual guidance to a number [of] peer-faculty in our division in helping to move the educational portions of their careers ahead by providing stewardship and then handing off opportunities to take on independent roles in medical education at UVA. Lastly, Neeral has been an educational mentor to many junior faculty in our division as well as in the greater Department of Medicine faculty ranks as the Director of the Academy for Excellence in Education.

Mary McDonald - Patient since 2012 - Dr. Shah became my Hepatologist in 2012, over a year after I was diagnosed with a relatively rare liver condition, autoimmune hepatitis, in which my immune system attacks my liver. Though in my late 50s at the time, I had never had a serious medical issue....I realized I needed an expert Hepatologist to guide my treatment, but my attempts to find one in the DC area were surprisingly difficult. Among others, I consulted a Hepatologist at Georgetown of high repute, but she showed little interest in making me understand the rationale for her suggested approach of a two-year course of very high steroids....During this period, a life-long friend who lives in Charlottesville put me in touch with Dr. Shah for a second opinion. It was like the clouds parted. He was very knowledgeable, accessible, and willing to educate me about the course of treatment he recommended and the steps going forward. Dr. Shah prescribed the medication that has successfully treated my AIH since I have been under his care. I decided after my first appointment with Dr. Shah that a two-hour drive to Charlottesville was a small price to pay for seeing (finally!) the perfect Hepatologist for me.