

Award for Excellence in Teaching Presented to Dan Z. Louis

May 15, 2012

I have the pleasure this evening of speaking to you about Daniel Z. Lewis, the 2012 recipient of the Jefferson School of Population Health (JSPH) Award for Excellence in Teaching. Professor Louis teaches our public health and health policy students about the organization and delivery of healthcare in the United States and other countries around the world. As his students will tell you, his knowledge of health care systems, their strengths, weaknesses, cost and quality is exceptional.

At present, Professor Louis is Research Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine and Managing Director of the Center for Research in Medical Education and Health Care at Jefferson Medical College, a relationship that began in 1985. Prior to coming to Jefferson, he was Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of SysteMetrics/McGraw-Hill in Santa Barbara, CA, a firm he founded that specializes in health services research and the development of databases, models and software designed to provide information for health care management. Born in New York City (Brooklyn, I believe, at a time when the Dodgers still called Brooklyn their home), he holds a BA in mathematics from Alfred University in New York and earned his MS in Operations Research from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; all totaled he has more than 35 years of experience in health services research.

Along with his friend and mentor, Dr. Joseph Gonnella, former Dean of Jefferson Medical College (JMC), Professor Louis is one of the developers of the Disease Staging or classification system for evaluation of severity of illness that is now used in the United States and internationally

to assess quality and costs of health care. Their seminal paper introducing the Disease Staging system, published in 1984 in *JAMA*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, is considered a major contribution to the field.

Currently, Professor Louis is Jefferson's principal investigator for a major series of projects, performed with his colleague Vittorio Maio, PharmD, MS, MSPH of JSPH, in collaboration with the Regional Health Care Agency of the Emilia-Romagna Region of Italy. These projects, which take him to Italy quite frequently (primarily to Rome and Bologna), include development of models to predict risk of hospitalization for patients with chronic disease, assessments of the timeliness and appropriateness of acute hospitalization, analyses of patterns and quality of care for women with breast cancer, and studies of the integration of hospital and outpatient care, among others.

In addition to teaching in the School of Population Health's MPH and health policy programs, Professor Louis lectures to first-year medical students in JMC on the cost and financing of the US healthcare system, at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Rome, Italy, as part of their Master's Program in Health Administration, and at the University of Pisa, Faculty of Economics, in their Master's Program in Management of Health Care Organizations.

In speaking to students and reviewing evaluations of his courses, several patterns emerge about Professor Louis' teaching. In addition to his incredible knowledge of the subject matter, students cite him for the superb organization, clarity and precision of

his lectures and the vigorous nature of class discussions. The most frequent adjectives used to describe his teaching are "excellent," "engaging," "clear," and "precise." One student even commented that "the test was truly AWESOME – clear, concise, great examples." (Imagine, a student enjoying a test and calling it awesome!) One student summed it up the best when she commented, "I was not really expecting to enjoy this class, but I did – a lot! I will miss it."

When not teaching, researching, or traveling back and forth to Italy, he lives in Center City with his wife, Evie Cogan. He enjoys basketball, visiting his two daughters, reading mysteries, and playing with his new iPhone, which he had to be coaxed into buying but which he now cannot live without. He is a wine and food connoisseur, and his secret ambition is to emulate his son-in-law and become an internationally recognized food critic who travels the world in search of the perfect meal accompanied by the perfect wine.

It is with sincere appreciation that we present you with the 2012 Award for Excellence in Teaching. We thank you for sharing your prodigious knowledge with our students, for your generosity in devoting your time and effort to their learning, and for the elegance and excellence of your teaching – precise, clear and always engaging. As the students say, you are AWESOME – or FANTASTICO. In either language, that's all in capital letters! ■

Presentation of Award for Excellence in Teaching written by Caroline Golab, PhD, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, Jefferson School of Population Health