Hidden Curriculum

Within every learning encounter, there is an explicit curriculum that students are marked on and an implicit curriculum that students are never told about directly, although they may find themselves judged in other ways because of it. Frequently this hidden curriculum revolves around how the instructor expects students to behave or think.

Unintentional Role Modelling
Students closely watch us for cues about both our professional and personal preferences. Sometimes faculty role model behaviours they would never want students to emulate such as mistreatment of staff, prejudice against or neglect of certain types of patients, backstabbing of colleagues or disrespect for certain types of students.

Intentional Role Modelling
It is very important that you think about how you are going to role model how medical faculty think through problems and behave professionally.

Positive Feedback
If you want students to develop the habits of heart and mind of physicians, you need to let them know when they are performing well and give them opportunities to change their behaviour or correct mistakes. Listen to a podcast about the hidden curriculum.

For further reading:
Uncovering the Hidden Medical Curriculum through a Pedagogy of Discomfort

Study - The Devil is in the Third Year: A Longitudinal Study of Erosion of Empathy in Medical School
In addition, modern medical education promotes physicians’ emotional detachment, affective distance, and clinical neutrality as emphasized through a focus on the science of medicine and a benign neglect of the art of patient care.