

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
Executive Committee  
of the SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine  
March 1, 2010**

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**Present: S. Rinnert, M. Nowakowski, R. Twersky, P. O'Neill, K. Williams, I. Bodis-Wollner V. Anderson, R. Viswanathan, J. Brown, C. An, F. Gress, M. Avitable**

**Presiding Officer's Report**

Minutes were reviewed and accepted with a revision by Dr. Viswanathan.

Dr. Rinnert gave a brief update on the new academic building. There was a kick off meeting with the architecture company Partnership. Next week, there will be a meeting with representation from the School of Public Health and College of Medicine. The Dean wants major input from this group. Dr. Rinnert stated that he will invite them to an Executive Committee meeting. There was no discussion on where the new building is going to be located; several sites will be evaluated. Dr. Rinnert stated that this building will include a state of the art simulation center and will have major instructional space for the school of Public Health. This instructional space will be available for other users. Dr. Rinnert will meet with CHRP and Nursing regarding simulation space. The time for this project to be completed is 3-4 years. Dr. Avitable stated that Downstate is in need of a testing center. Dr. Rinnert stated that the basement of the library might become the space for the testing center. He will bring up this question at his meeting. Dr. Bodis-Wollner wanted to know if there was going to be a faculty lounge. Dr. Rinnert stated that there was a faculty lounge on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor in the Health Education Building. Dr. Twersky asked about the funding of the building. Dr. Rinnert stated that 100 million dollars were allocated for this project.

Faculty Development will be cosponsoring Psychiatry's Grand Rounds. It will be held in the auditorium on April 14, 2010 at 1pm. The speaker will be Dr. Leah Dickstein, Lecturer, Tufts University Dept of Psychiatry. Her topic will be "Women Faculty Development in Academic Medical Center." All are invited.

The Faculty Development Conference will be held on April 27, 2010 from 8am-1pm. Faculty Development and the Medical Research Library will cosponsor a presentation of AccessMedicine. It will be held in Lecture Hall 1B in the Education Building. Another Faculty Development event will be Introduction to Skillsoft e-learning. It will be held on March 15, 2010 in PC Training Rm 1.

**Sub-Committee Reports**

**CEPC**

Dr. Williams requested feedback from the Executive Committee in regards to a memo that was sent from Dean Terracina. Dean Terracina wanted the CEPC to review a policy which states that medical students will not have to pay student loans while they take a leave of absence to enroll in a research program. The committee met and agreed that students should not be required to pay back student loans when they are in research programs as long as they are fulltime and approved. Dr. Rinnert wanted to know if this policy would apply to students who wanted to enroll in other programs such as MPH or MBA programs. Dr. Williams stated that he would find out. After a brief discussion, the Executive Committee, approved this policy.



Dr. Williams presented a summary of the proposed curriculum.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- Nationally, more and more medical schools are engaging in curriculum reform, emphasizing extensive integration of basic and clinical science.
- Looking at curricula of other schools who have gone through curriculum renewal and made integration a priority, we found that several had gone to an earlier clinical clerkship start, as well as teaching clinical skills very early in Year 1.
- The Timeline Committee wanted to find a way to get an earlier start to clinical clerkships, allowing more flexibility for electives and career exposure earlier than in the present curriculum. We also wanted to do so without over-compressing the time allotted for basic science focus.
- The two timeline proposals the committee is presenting are an April of Year 2 clerkship start and a Mid-May of Year 2 clerkship start.
- Both proposals include adding 4 additional weeks to the curriculum by starting
- MS1 two weeks earlier and reducing the summer between first and second year by two weeks.
- A major benefit of starting the clinical clerkships earlier relates to the current fourth year of our program. With an earlier clerkship start, students will have more time for career decisions based upon clerkships experience, separate tracks including research, appropriate remediation without career compromise and adequate elective experience that will enhance student capability during their residency training.
- It should be emphasized that the integration of basic science into the clinical curriculum is essential and needs to be well thought out, developed and implemented efficiently.
- The Committee would like to express that the task was a considerable challenge without certain key content information.

Dr. Williams presented the various 2<sup>nd</sup> year curriculum timeline proposals for April and May. He pointed out the difference between April and May. Also, he discussed the changes and how they would affect faculty members.

### **APRIL START**

- allows seniors to begin career exploration and senior coursework earlier
- more dedicated time for scholarly project
- more time for protected Step 2 study time or remediation time
- more senior year time to be devoted to selective – either specialty driven, track driven or a choice of core of selective that students choose from.
- vacation in the third year falls on the December/January break



## MID-MAY START

- more time to basic science focused material in MS2
- more time for the integrated block, if implemented
- potential for more time for Step 1 studying
- vacation in the third year for Related Clerkship Block C may be variable, as there would be no natural break at the traditional December/January vacation period, Attention needs to be paid to this.
- allows less time for career exploration than April start
- in the first Transition year – 4-6 weeks of overlap (as opposed to 10) – less stress on the clerkship hospital sites

Dr. Williams presented a list of advantages for the proposed changes in the curriculum.

### **Proposal: Start Date of First Year begins two weeks earlier**

#### **Advantages:**

1. Gain two weeks in overall curriculum time
2. Earlier start date gives time for Introductory, “Early Immersion” block.
3. From an Admissions standpoint, earlier matriculation date may lead to better retention of accepted students.

The date should be no earlier than August 1.

#### **Issues of Potential Concern:**

1. Need to coordinate with MD/MPH and MD/PhD programs
2. Resources – reduced summer for faculty and staff

### **Proposal: Reduce Summer Between First and Second Year from 10 weeks to 8 weeks**

#### **Advantages:**

1. Gain two weeks in overall curriculum time
2. Student focus group did not see this as a problem.

#### **Issues of Potential Concern:**

1. Research or clinical opportunities could be limited with a decrease of weeks. There are some limitations for external funding sources that may require a longer time commitment.
2. Will require careful coordination with the School of Public Health in that it could result in limited or no vacation for MD/MPH students.

### **Proposal: Study Time for USMLE Step 1 examination to be 6 weeks**

#### **Advantages:**

1. Students should have protected time to study for the USMLE Step 1 examination. Currently approximately 90% of students take 6 weeks to study USMLE Step 1.
2. The present proposal of a cumulative, integrated, summative exercise and assessment immediately preceding the protected study time for USMLE Step 1 is part of studying for Step 1 and could be very beneficial.



**Issues of Potential Concern:**

1. Could be perceived by students as less time to study for USMLE Step 1 since students currently have 7 weeks between the last day of second year and the deadline to take Step 1. These 7 weeks are supposed to include a 1 week vacation, although some students who feel they need the time take all 7 weeks to study.

Dr. Williams also explained the effects of starting earlier with the faculty.

## **SUMMARY OF ANY IMPLICATIONS FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL RESOURCES AND TIMING**

### **Faculty Issues**

It was difficult to have a discussion about any aspect of the timeline without including the increase of responsibility on both basic science and clinical faculty.

- An early August start would mean a shorter window of time in the summer available for vacation for faculty.
- Potentially longer teaching days could put a strain on the administration of the curriculum
- Clinicians needed in the earlier integration of clinical skills education – identifying preceptors- clear increase in demand on clinician's already full plates.
- Basic scientists needed for teaching in Core Content sections of clerkships
- Faculty needed to supervise scholarly projects or oversee student tracks
- Changes in the expectation of the role of our educators
- Identifying and training faculty and residents
- Necessity for incentives and additional pay for time served; a tenured eligible teacher track for promotion

Dr. Williams stated that this is a proposal in which items can be changed.

### **Nominations**

Dr. Nowakowski stated that we need 1 secretary, 2 basic science and 4 clinical for the executive committee. She will ask the members whose terms are expiring if they want to be run again. Dr Nowakowski will advertise in the Executive Committee newsletter.

### **Faculty & Professional Staff**

Dr Avitable stated that he sent everyone the final questionnaire and received one reply with changes which will be incorporated. It will then go out to the chairs and junior faculty.

### **Research, Resources and Budget**

This committee did not meet. There was a meeting with the dean regarding the new building. Ideas were discussed and three members of this group will meet with the architects.

### **Bylaws**

No report

### **Committee on Student Activities and Faculty-Student Relations**

Dr. Rinnert reported on behalf of Dr. Powderly. Some students did not sign up for the Sesquicentennial Ball because of the price. Dr. Rinnert asked the committee to support a notion to have departments and individual faculty members sponsor students. One suggestion was to have students who chair committees sponsored. Dr. Rinnert will ask the Dean to approach the Chairmen and have them identify students.

### **Academic Standards and Admission**

No report

### **New Business**

The next Faculty Assembly will be on June 2<sup>nd</sup> in LH1B The President and Dean Taylor will attend.

The next meeting will be held on May 3, 2010 at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen E. Powderly, PhD



