

Minutes of the meeting of the
Executive Committee
of the SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine
Feb 6, 2012

Present: M. Feuerman, K. Powderly, M. Nowakowski, S. Eisner, S. Rinnert, R. Twersky, P. Maccabee, I. Bodis-Wollner, A. Norin, S. Ostrow, R. Joks, V. Anderson

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Feuerman; minutes were approved.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Barbara Delano

Presiding Officer's Report

According to LCME, Downstate is required to present a diversity mission statement. Dean Taylor drafted the mission statement and requested feedback from the Executive Committee. Dr. Feuerman presented it to the committee for review. (See Attachment I) Members of the committee felt that Kevin Antoine, chief Diversity Officer, should be invited to the Executive Committee meeting to discuss the mission statement. Dr. Feuerman stated she would contact Dean Taylor to seek permission to forward the mission statement to Mr. Antoine for review.

There's been an ongoing discussion about the adoption of a pass-fail grading policy for the foundation years in the new curriculum. Dr. Feuerman sent an email with questions (See Attachment II) regarding pass/fail to Dr. Papp. As of today, she has not received a reply. There was a discussion of the pros and cons. Dr. Anderson shared her opinions on the pass/fail discussion. "I have been discussing this with students as they entered my life, I had many of them on rotation and I interviewed them for medical school and I can tell you that many students are not happy with that idea of pass-fail. They feel like they're working as hard as they can and want to be ranked. They want to be able to compete...." She also added, "Buffalo tried pass-fail ten years ago and because of a student revolt, it's no longer pass-fail."

Dr. Rinnert stated that pass/fail can reduce stress and students can concentrate better. Dr. Rinnert disagreed with the notion that students would not achieve higher if there were a pass/fail option. Dr. Rinnert reviewed studies pertaining to pass/fail and he concluded that students did not perform lower because of the pass-fail option and they did not become incompetent physicians because of pass/fail.

CEPC

On Feb 2, CEPC held an emergency meeting with block directors from MS1, MS2 and some unit directors from the future curriculum. At the end of the meeting, a few members of CEPC came up with a compromise decision on pass-fail. The tentative agreement states:

"The CEPC supports the implementation of a pass-fail grading system with the addition of the pass with distinction at the completion of the foundations years. A pass with distinction would be awarded to all students who have achieved a cumulative mean grade of 85 or above (that number is still to be decided.) At this point, 85 or above in the medical knowledge competency

and exceptional achievement in fulfilling the curricular goals of the other five competencies would be the cutoff. Class ranking would be based only upon performance in the core clinical medicine portion of the curriculum. It is important to CEPC that the grading system be transparent, that it foster cooperation rather than competition among students. CEPC believes it is important that with distinction designation not be calculated as the top percentage of the class like the top 10% or whatever, but rather as outlined above. Actual grades on unit exams should be retained solely for the purpose of calculating the medical knowledge component with distinction designation and not for any other purpose. We support the distinction designation because it gives an opportunity for exceptional students to be recognized for their performance in the foundation portion of the curriculum.”

The Executive Committee decided not to approve this decision pending a final decision from CEPC. Dr. Eisner will meet with CEPC next week to get a final decision. Once the decision is made, she will email the members of the Executive Committee with the ruling.

Teaching Tenure Track

Dr. Barbara Delano, head of the ad hoc committee on teaching tenure track presented her report to the Executive Committee. (See Attachment III) This report was well received. CAPQ and Faculty and Professional Staff Personnel Policies Promotion and Appointment committee will be involved with setting up guidelines for tenure. The Executive Committee agreed to accept this report and recommend that it be pursued.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen E. Powderly, PhD