

**Year 2 Curriculum Committee**  
**Friday, December 7, 2007**  
**7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

Frank Aguirre, MD  
Mary Aiello, MA, Staff  
Peter Borgia, PhD, Year 2 Director  
George Dunaway, PhD  
M. Rebecca Hoffman, MD  
Carolyn Holmes, RN, MSN  
Rhona Kelley, MS  
Debra Klamen, MD, MHPE  
Janak Koirala, MD

Kerri Lockhart, Class of 2010  
Fritz Lower, MD  
John Murphy, MD  
Karen Reynolds, RN, MS  
Gary Rull, MD  
Shelley Tischkau, PhD  
Steven Verhulst, PhD  
Brenda Yale, MS, RN

**Absent:**

Amy Arai, PhD  
M. Steve Evans, MD, MS  
Nicole Roberts, PhD  
Sandra Shea, PhD  
Andrew Sherrick, MD  
Tracey Smith, APRN, BS, MS  
Don Torry, PhD

**Guest:**

Jean Afflerbach, MS, MBA  
Brian Moore, MD

**1. Instant Scoring of Unit Exams**

Dr. Borgia re-arranged the order of the agenda to accommodate the members who planned to attend the Year 2 Pathology session. Subsequent to the previous discussion on "instant scoring" of unit exams, Dr. Borgia received a petition from 43 students to reconsider the Year 2 Curriculum Committee's (Y2CC) decision. Dr. Borgia indicated that he is mildly positive toward the student request. The major problem with the request is that questions may be dropped from the final scoring and thus there is a chance that a student's final score could go up or down. Dr. Borgia described how the LXR software would reveal the preliminary score. At the end of the exam, the student would have the option of learning his/her score. The student would also receive a note stating, "This is a preliminary score and the score may go up or down." The general consensus from the class is they want an idea of how they did when they finish the exam. Ms. Lockhart indicated that although not all students had signed the request, no student had opposed the request. Dr. Borgia indicated that he had asked Dr. Constance's opinion on the subject. Dr. Constance suggested if the committee adopts the instant score reporting, that it not be implemented until the

Neuromuscular Behavior (NMB) Unit exam. Since both students and faculty will leave immediately for the winter break following the CRR exam, there will be no opportunity for communication between students and faculty. Dr. Rull noted this will be an issue in the Cardiovascular, Renal, Respiratory (CRR) unit every year.

Dr. Klamen indicated that she sympathizes with the students but also has some reservations concerning the request. She indicated that currently, final grades are released fairly quickly. She felt that grades should not be released until they are final. In addition, she remarked that while most students will feel relieved upon receiving a preliminary exam score, other students have a high anxiety level based on their preliminary score. Dr. Dunaway is most concerned about the students that are "on the bubble" since they will not know whether they have passed the exam or not. Dr. Lower indicated that he is concerned about the student who has not done well on the exam. He would hate for a student, who received a low score, to become depressed and then commit suicide. It may be possible that the score could be passing.

Dr. Rull mentioned that a goal of USMLE in computerizing its exam was "instant scoring" but that they have not yet implemented that policy. Ms. Lockhart asked if it would not be a bad idea to just try "instant scoring." Dr. Dunaway reminded the committee this is what the students want. Dr. Verhulst indicated that he feels if the committee implements "instant scoring," that the 'opt out' option not be allowed. He indicated that he feels that this adds another layer of stress. Dr. Klamen then offered there is always stress in taking exams. Dr. Dunway recommended tabling the discussion until the next meeting since scores will not be released early in CRR. In the meantime, research can be done on whether other schools that have computer based exams use "instant scoring."

Dr. Borgia tabled the issue to get more information, if any. Dr. Klamen asked Ms. Lockhart to tell the class that the committee is not dismissing the issue and has the students' best interests at heart. Dr. Rull suggested, if Dr. Borgia finds favorable information, the committee should adopt a set of guidelines for the "instant scoring" policy.

## **2. Approval of minutes**

The minutes from the October 26, 2007 meeting of the Year 2 Curriculum Committee (Y2CC) were approved with minor corrections. Dr. Klamen asked that her degree be corrected.

## **3. Announcements**

Dr. Klamen, announced that Colleen Siefert is here and will discuss the Competency Project today at noon. Theresa Waters, Electronic Health Records Educational Specialist, is working on cases for the Y2 students and hoping to use the PBLMs as a way to help the students learn how to use the electronic medical record.

#### **4. Student Report**

Kerri Lockhart, Class of 2010, requested that the NBME Comprehensive Basic Science Examination not be on March 17, 2008. She asked how the date is determined. Ms. Lockhart also noted that in Carbondale, there is an "electronic bulletin board" that students could use to discuss SAQs and other issues amongst themselves and with the faculty. Students would like something similar implemented in Springfield. This would be helpful when answering the SAQs. Dr. Borgia thinks that faculty might not monitor such a bulletin board in a timely fashion. Dr. Rull reported Empathy has developed something similar and that one faculty member is assigned to monitor the bulletin board to look and make sure that student questions are answered in a timely manner. Ms. Lockhart asked whether it is possible to put explanations with the SAQs answers. Dr. Klamen noted that an electronic bulletin board Q&A forum might be a starting place for SAQ explanations. Dr. Murphy mentioned that questions banks often have justifications as to why questions are answered a particular way. Overtime we could build the bank.

#### **5. Hematology, Immunology, Infection (HII) Unit Feedback**

Dr. Borgia summarized the negative comments from the HII student feedback. The most important student comment that he gleaned from the feedback is that this group of students felt that the final exam was not reflective of the SAQs. Students thought that the exam was more difficult than the SAQs. This surprised Dr. Borgia since neither the SAQs nor the exam had substantially changed from previous years and previous students had felt that the two sets of questions were congruent.

Drs. Murphy, Borgia and Torry indicated that they had coordinated faculty effort on the exam composition. The only major change from the exam from two years ago was that a number of microbiology (ca. 30) questions were eliminated. The number of pathology questions was slightly increased slightly and maybe the difficulty of the pathology questions was increased. The instruction of pathology had been improved to address the more difficult questions. In general, pathology SAQs were fairly simple. Dr. Dunaway indicated that he tells students that the ERG SAQs are not reflective of the final exam.

Another item on the concerns list regarded the CAM sessions. There were a number of negative student comments about the CAM/other session. Dr. Rull commented that, compared to last year, the number of student comments concerning the Doctoring Curriculum are down. The CAM sessions are new this year and were instituted due to a shortage of physician mentors. He indicated that the CAM sessions in CRR are receiving favorable feedback. Dr. Borgia's impression was that the number of negative comments concerning mentoring/Doctoring was much reduced from previous years. Dr. Rull commented the students are having a harder time seeing their mentor this year despite a decrease in the number of required hours. He wonders if the students are not trying as hard to make the mentor visits.

There were a number of comments on Population Health and Prevention (PHP). Dr. Verhulst noted that from the comments, some students felt they did not get anything out of sessions. Dr. Aguirre commented students are so focused on boards/basic science that they do not think PHP is important and that this attitude is a national problem.

There were 5-10 student comments regarding "secret resource sessions" (Y2 Help Sessions for "at risk" students). Dr. Klamen suggested that in the future the Y2 faculty make it clear to the class at the beginning of the year what the purpose of the sessions is and that no new material is introduced at the sessions. Some committee members were concerned that the class is exhibiting an immature attitude concerning this issue. Dr. Borgia indicated that Dr. Constance has talked to the entire class about the Y2 Help Sessions. Kerri Lockhart, indicated that she feels pressured by her classmates because she was invited to attend the sessions.

Dr. Klamen was concerned that one tutor group in HII ended group meetings several days early and was going too fast through the cases. Dr. Borgia indicated that he would investigate who the tutor was and would attempt to correct the situation for the future.

## **6. Exam Master for Administering SAQs**

Dr. Dunaway, Dr. Borgia and Rhona Kelley indicated that they have looked at Exam Master for the purpose of administering SAQs. Drs. Borgia and Dunaway indicated that there are several substantive problems in using Exam Master for the SAQs. These have to do with the quality and quantity of the Exam Master questions and with the ease with which faculty generated questions can be added to the existing Exam Master question bank. Dr. Dunaway indicated that Exam Master has volunteered to do an online presentation of Exam Masters capabilities for the committee. They seem to be user friendly in that aspect. The presentation would be similar to a webcast. Dr. Borgia encouraged other unit directors to see Rhona Kelley to use/practice with Exam Master and that the issue will be reevaluated at a subsequent meeting.

## **7. Other Business**

None reported.

## **8. Adjournment**

The Y2CC adjourned at 8:42 a.m.