TUCSON EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (TEPC)
MINUTES
September 1, 2010

Present: Paul St. John (Chair); Diana Darnell; Mindy Fain; Bill Grana; Carol Howe

Apologized: Elizabeth Dupuy; Sean Elliott; Kristi Grall; Ron Heimark; Anna Landau; Adam Luber; Ted Price; Cindy Rankin; Sydney Rice; Wyatt Unger

Resources: Jack Dexter; Nancy Koff; Gail Koshland; Kathy Mendoza; Kevin Moynahan

Guests: Rishi Goyal; Cindi Standley

There was no quorum for this meeting.

Announcements:

New Members
Dr. St. John welcomed the new and returning members to the TEPC. Bill Grana, MD (Surgery) and Diana Darnell, PhD (Cell Biology and Anatomy) were elected to 5 year terms with the committee; Dr. Darnell returning after fulfilling a temporary membership. The new student member is Elizabeth Dupuy, elected by the Class of 2014.

Guests:
Dr. St. John welcomed Cindi Standley, PhD to the meeting. Dr. Standley is Chair of the Phoenix EPC and Vice Chair of EPC.

Rishi Goyal, MD, PhD was introduced to the members. Dr. Goyal is the Director of the Humanism Thread and also of the Intersessions course.

Voting items

Introduction to Plans for revising the Year III Curriculum
Dr. Moynahan introduced the proposal to modify the Year III curriculum. He noted that we are entering the second iteration of the new Year III-IV curriculum and have recognized the need to modify certain aspects. The proposed changes would return time that was taken from the clerkships to enable intersessions between each clerkship block. The modification will reduce the number of intersessions to two and will extend Year III slightly.

One aspect of the modification that is of particular interest to Year II students is the need for them to complete the USMLE Step 1 exam without scheduling it during the Transition Block is delivered (week of June 27 for 2011). The change also allows the Elective Block to float within the schedule, rotating with a required clerkship. This should ease electives scheduling, however Year II students may find fewer slots available for some courses as Year IV students will also be enrolling in them. The change to the elective block also relieves the difficulty some students had completing prerequisites for away electives at certain schools. Students have generally appreciated having the elective opportunity in Year III. It was reported, as a marker of the success for the new curriculum, that students have been performing very well on the shelf exams given by their clerkships. In addition, results on the USMLE Step 2CS exam show our students delivering high performances. A motion was made and seconded to approve these changes to Year III, and to approve the 2011-12 Years III-IV calendar. The vote will be taken electronically.

Old Policy – Student Petitions for Exceptions to Curricular Policy
A revised version of the policy attending to student petitions for exceptions to curricular policy was reviewed. Minor wording change was made to one item and a motion to approve was made and seconded. Confirmation will be made by electronic vote.

Developmental Curriculum Standards for the CBI method
Dr. St. John introduced a draft charge for a working group of faculty and education professionals to revisit the rationale and methods of Case Based Instruction with the goal of bringing developmental curriculum principles into the methodology in an organized manner. He noted that while the concept of a developmental curriculum has been largely understood, it has proven difficult to interpret those principles into design and delivery.
A number of important tasks will be before the workgroup. Among them will be to clearly articulate the competency objectives the CBI method is designed to support. In addition, the workgroup is to identify markers of advancement for students’ learning skills and to establish guidelines that express those markers within the design and delivery of CBI experiences. Personnel from OMSE, the TCMS and Student Development will serve as workgroup members. Dr. Moynahan suggested that two Year III students, from among those four who conducted a comprehensive review of CBIs last year, be asked to consult with the workgroup. Their report was delivered to Dr. Moynahan, who will soon release it to the committee. The idea to include these students was accepted. It was noted that the outcome of this effort will be scholarly and comprehensive, as suggested by the list of issues to be covered in the charge. The committee members agreed that setting a completion date of February 1, 2011 is appropriate for the task.

Dr. St.John mentioned that this effort is the first of several that will review all teaching modalities in light of the developmental curriculum. The vote to approve the charge and to establish the work group will be made electronically.

Discussion

Intersessions and Humanism – Dr. Goyal

Dr. Rishi Goyal was introduced to the committee. Dr. Goyal is director of the Intersessions course and is also the head of the Humanism Thread. He reported on the plans for intersessions for this year. The course will have a focus on clinical thinking, with extensive opportunities for students to use patient simulations for basic skills required of Neurology, Critical Care, ICU and ED Surgery. Students will be paired into two rotating groups, one of which conducts a session, the other observing and evaluating.

Basic clinical skills will be reviewed with FCM-directed instruction on physical examinations (back, knee, shoulder, elbow, wrist & hand, ankle& foot). It was reported that students appreciate and enjoy these sessions. Skills in airway maintenance, including surgical means, inserting central lines (using ultrasound, which has become standard procedure) and FAST-focused abdominal sonography for trauma.

Dr. Goyal is also the Director of the Humanism Thread and has earned a doctorate in English literature. He briefly discussed his research interest, which is on the “invention” of old age as a literary concept. He noted that structural elements for literature based upon aging issues (e.g., memory, dementia, chronic illness) were largely undeveloped until the 20th Century.

Town Hall Questions

Dr. St.John directed the committee to a list of questions compiled by Dr. Heimark. These are to help inform discussion of the curriculum at the planned “Town Hall” meeting. The date for the meeting has been set for Nov. 3, 4:30-6:00 pm, place to be determined.

Drs. Darnell, Moynahan, Waer and Koff will hold a preview meeting with department heads prior to the Town Hall. Dr. Grana suggest that a bulleted list of topics be prepared and sent to the department heads prior to that meeting. Dr. St. John asked all members to submit any questions additional to the list provided. It was suggested that each member of TEPC review the questions and select one or two for which they can provide a clear, efficient response. In addition, the list should probably be prioritized, as there are more questions available than there will be time to answer them. It was noted that some of the questions had been covered at previous meetings of the faculty, and that perhaps only updates were necessary for those. Dr. Koff remarked that the Town Hall exercises are looked upon favorably by the LCME, and that keeping responses current is good practice for the next accreditation cycle.

For Future Agendas

- Curricular Outcomes
- Annual Block Reviews

Minutes provided by
Jack Dexter, PhD
Office of Medical Student Education