TUCSON EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (TEPC)
MINUTES
February 2, 2011

Present: Paul St. John (Chair); Diana Darnell; Elizabeth Dupuy; Mindy Fain; Kristi Grall; Bill Grana; Ron Heimark; Randy Horowitz; Adam Luber; Ted Price; Sydney Rice;

Apologized: Sean Elliott; Carol Howe; Anna Landau; Cindy Rankin; Wyatt Unger

Resources: Susan Ellis, Jack Dexter; Gail Koshland; Kevin Moynahan; Jack Nolte; Amy Waer

Guest: James Warneke, MD

Minutes: The minutes of January 5, 2010 were approved as amended.

Announcements:

1. New COM Student Affairs Website (http://medicine.arizona.edu/student-affairs/tucson) – Paul St. John
Dr. St. John demonstrated the new Student Affairs webpages, includes pages on policies. EPC/TEPC curricular policies affecting students are posted to those pages. The intention is to maintain a single set of policies to which all other pages link. This has not been completely implemented. Additional links to TEPC pages

Discussion:

Dr. Warneke provided a brief overview of the history of the Electives Subcommittee and of its oversight responsibilities. Susan Ellis is currently staffing the subcommittee and drafts reports for the committee. Membership on the subcommittee has been stable for some time. Two students have recently been added, one each from the Years III and IV classes. A primary function of the subcommittee is to review elective proposals and to decide whether or not to recommend them up to the TEPC for approval.

Dr. Warneke led the committee members through a review of an enrollment report for electives. Some enrollment patterns will be reviewed by the subcommittee, for example to determine the kinds of experiences students typically engage when taking independent studies, which can be numerous within certain departments. There are currently about 290 course offerings available, while some 120 of those actually recorded enrollments. The subcommittee will be reviewing electives that had not been enrolled and checking to see if they are up-to-date, or perhaps if they should be retired. Students provide evaluations on elective experiences each year. Currently the evaluation program is not linked to the enrollment system, but efforts are underway to make this so, which should greatly improve efficiency and accuracy of evaluations. Every year the subcommittee will be providing TEPC with a “State of Electives” report.

Electives grading was reviewed. A new assessment form has been redesigned and will be available to instructors online. Assessment is based on the 6 competencies that have been established for the curriculum, and the grading scale, Honors, Pass, and Fail was discussed at length. Dr. Koshland reported that efforts to make grading more uniform across electives is underway. Current accreditation standards for the college require certain aspects of grading must be comparable between the Phoenix and Tucson programs. These are under review as grading policy is currently being updated. It was explained that a grade of honors may be expected to be given more frequently within electives than in required clerkships, because students take electives to fulfill their own interests and so approach the experiences with interest and enthusiasm. Students are also relying on electives directors to write good letters of recommendation for residencies, and thus are likely to perform well.
2. **Format for Block Reports** – Gail Koshland

Dr. Koshland presented a draft template for TEPC’s Final Annual Block Reports. She briefly reviewed the full annual reporting processes including the submission of block reports by the Evaluation Subcommittee and the TCMS. The process for TEPC would be for a member of TEPC work with a designated OMSE staff person to compile the findings of the two subcommittee reports within the framework of strengths, recommendations and concerns. It is estimated that the identification of recommendations can be made within one meeting of the TEPC member and OMSE staffer. At the presentation of the draft report to the full TEPC, the recommendations will be reviewed and modified, as necessary.

For each recommendation, a short rationale will be given and the sources of information used for those recommendations will be cited. Follow-up expectations for block directors are written into each report. The report will also have areas where concerns may be cited that deserve some comment or clarification by block directors. Issues that arise from block reviews that pertain to the curriculum as a whole will be identified in the reporting process, but addressed separately.

Timing for the reports was discussed and a schedule reviewed. It was proposed that a regular interval of six weeks be established after a block ends and a report from TEPC is completed with recommendations back to the block. Because the current reviews are out of step with this order, the plan is to use the review products in hand as formative feedback to the Musculoskeletal, with the understanding that its review will occur on schedule next year. The materials prepared for the Life Cycle blocks will be rolled forward into the review for this year’s iteration, which is currently underway. The work underway for CPR will also be rolled forward to this year’s delivery of the block.

Dr. St. John suggested that TEPC members be assigned to block reports in advance. A sign-up list will be developed that provides the schedule for reports so that TEPC members will be able to consult their own schedules before signing up. He noted that clerkship reviews are also TEPC responsibility and that those processes are under development.

3. **Block Content Review Vis-à-vis USMLE** – Jack Dexter, Gail Koshland

Dr. Dexter provided the committee with a presentation of a pilot project to map curricular topics as they identify with subjects listed in the USML Step I exam subjects outline. The project involved three phases: (1) The USMLE Step I subjects outline was deconstructed and translated into equivalent National Library of Science MeSH terms; (2) A retreat of faculty and others ensured the MeSH-translated list was accurate and complete; (3) The curriculum database, to which all content is encoded with MeSH terms, was searched and compared to the USMLE-MeSH outline. A presentation of this effort at the AAMC’s Western Group of Education Affairs (WGEA) conference is planned.

The frequency and locations of each matched MeSH term coded in the ArizonaMed database were graphically reported for all Years I and II courses. This effort provides the first time a graphical representation has been developed of subjects as they appear across Years I and II. Other ways to track content have been under development at other medical schools. Notably, Vanderbilt has a system that tracks content in the text-based materials, including student notes for their curriculum using natural language routines. More will be reported on those models in the near future. Overviews of this effort have been given to both Years I and II classes.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.
The next meeting of the TEPC is scheduled for March 2, 2011.

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