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Engaging Stakeholders in Collaborative and Constructive Course Evaluation

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Introduction

Implementing a coherent and coordinated curriculum, which prepares students for licensure exams and subsequent phases of their training, requires the concerted expertise and efforts of diverse stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The Office of Program Evaluation, Education and Research (PEAR) is responsible for student evaluations of courses at the UNM School of Medicine (SOM). In 2016, PEAR collaborated with the SOM Curriculum Committee (CC) to restructure the preclinical course review process to engage CC members more fully in monitoring courses. This poster summarizes evaluation processes, shares information on how other medical schools review preclinical courses, and elicits your feedback on evaluating courses in your department or professional program.



Like the parable of the blind men and the elephant, different stakeholders touch different parts of the curriculum.

Prior Block Review Process

Since 2007, PEAR has implemented a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process for each preclinical block (i.e., course). From the start, the purpose of CQI was to leverage students' intimate knowledge of the curriculum to help Block Chairs (i.e., course directors) improve their respective blocks. Students volunteer to serve on a CQI group for a given block.

Table 1. Block Review 2007-2016

Stakeholder	Actions (post block)
CQI students (5-6 volunteers)	- Document formative feedback—list of topics - Respond to previous CQI recommendations - Analyze data and write recommendations
Block Chair	- Writes Block Chair Report—overview - Responds to CQI recommendations - Presents to CC * No outside faculty review
CC Chair & members	- Discuss reports - Vote to accept * CC role peripheral

Current Block Review Process

To address concerns about a lack of CC involvement and faculty oversight, we re-organized the process by:

- Creating Evaluation Teams, consisting of at least one faculty member on the CC and one or two other reviewers. Evaluation teams:
 - Review the student CQI Report, Block Chair Report and End-of-block Evaluation Reports
 - Communicate with the Block Chair regarding proposed recommendations
 - Draft recommendations and present them to the CC for approval
- Giving the CC greater purview in the approval process. Members:
 - Review recommendations
 - May propose revisions to recommendations
 - Vote on final recommendations

Table 2. Block Review 2016-present

Stakeholder	Actions (post block)
CQI students	- Document formative feedback - Respond to previous CC recommendations
Block Chair	- Write Block Chair Report - Respond to prev. CC recommendations
Evaluation Team (2-3 reviewers)	✓ Outside faculty reviewer(s) - Analyze data and write recommendations - Consult with Block Chair - Present to CC
CC Chair & members	✓ CC has more pivotal role - Review recommendations - May propose revisions - Vote on final recommendations

Challenges to the current process:

- Getting people to volunteer is difficult
 - Each team disperses when review is complete
- Evaluating each block separately and not preclinical curriculum overall
 - Difficult to address systemic issues across or between blocks → opportunity to advocate for addressing systemic issues through other modes or processes
- How might we incorporate other stakeholders?
 - Block faculty
 - Peer observation—formative feedback
 - External content expert
 - External pedagogical expert

How do other medical schools evaluate preclinical courses?

When we presented this topic as a small-group session at the AAMC WGEA Conference (March 2018), a participant suggested that content experts from different institutions could review course content for one another, creating an informal network of reviewers.

Table 3. Three WGEA schools' course review processes

SOM	How do you engage stakeholders in reviewing preclinical courses?	How does your school address LCME standards for faculty oversight?	Solutions/Challenges
CU Denver	Eval. office writes block report with Block Chair and CQI students.	Eval. office presents report to CC for yes/no vote.	<i>Who is evaluating block content?</i>
UC Davis	• Eval. office: - Conducts focus groups. - Writes a report with rec's. • Block Chair responds to rec's and sends response to the class. • Standing subcommittee reviews data w/ detailed review every 3 years.	Subcommittee presents report(s) to CC for yes/no vote.	UA evaluator proposed Block Chairs get content feedback from content experts at other institutions. <i>How do we evaluate the quality and appropriateness of assessments?</i>
UA Tucson	• Block advisory group (3 students) gives formative feedback. • Eval. office: - Conducts focus groups. - Facilitates mtg. with Block Chair and another Block Chair. - Writes block report.	Eval. office presents report to CC for yes/no vote.	

The UNM SOM course review process relies heavily on student data; however, *student evaluations of teaching are NOT a good indicator of student learning.*¹

Your feedback:

- What is the process for reviewing courses and/or other learning activities in your department or professional program?
- How does your department or professional program engage stakeholders in the review process?
- What are the "right" data for reviewing a course or other learning activity?

References

1. B. Uttl, et al., Meta-analysis of faculty's teaching effectiveness: Student evaluation of teaching ratings and student learning are not related, *Studies in Educational Evaluation* (2016), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2016.08.007>