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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.

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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Actions (post block)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| CQI students | - Document formative feedback  
- Respond to previous CC recommendations |
| Block Chair | - Write Block Chair Report  
- Respond to prev. CC recommendations |
| Evaluation Team (3 reviewers) | - Analyze data and write recommendations  
- Consult with Block Chair  
- Present to CC |
| CC Chair & members | - CC has more pivotal role  
- 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

Table 3. Three WGEA schools’ course review processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>How do you engage stakeholders in reviewing preclinical courses?</th>
<th>How does your school address LCME standards for faculty oversight?</th>
<th>Solutions/Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CU Den</td>
<td>Eval. office writes block report with Block Chair and CQI students.</td>
<td>Eval. office presents report to CC for yes/no vote.</td>
<td>Subcommittees present reports to CC for yes/no vote.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| UC Davis | - Block advisory group & CQI - Student creates feedback.  
- Eval. office:  
  - Conducts focus groups.  
  - Writes a report with recs.  
  - Block Chair responds to recs.  
  - CC Chair responds to the class.  
  - Standing subcommittee reviews data on detailed review every 3 years. |
| UA Tucson | Block advisory group, CQI & students give feedback.  
- Eval. office:  
  - Conducts focus groups.  
  - Facilitates mgmt. with Block Chair and another Block Chair.  
- Writes block report. |

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

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.

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

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?