Minutes: Meeting of July 19, 1999

Present
Drs. Bruce Chernof, Janice Contini, Kenneth Dorshkind, Thomas Drake, Ronald Edelstein, Dohn Glitz, Theodore Hall, Carol Hodgson, Earl Homsher, Stewart Shankel (UCR), Stuart Slavin (Co-Chair), Ronald Tompkins, John Tormey (Co-Chair) and LuAnn Wilkerson
Guests: Ellen Clymer, Kim Crooks, Gary Diener, Carol Hodgson, and Gezelle Miller.
Student: Todd Drasin.

Dr. Tormey welcomed the two attendees from Riverside, Dr. Ellen Clymer, education specialist for the UCR/UCLA Biomedical Science Program and Dr. Stewart Shankel, Chairman, UCR BMSP Education Policy Committee. He also introduced Dr. Crooks, who is an education specialist and joined ED&R and the Department of Family Medicine in June.

The minutes from the May meeting were approved as written. The document was made available via the Web. Members concurred that this is the preferred method of distribution.

Pilot Fourth Year Student Questionnaire, Dr. LuAnn Wilkerson

A pilot questionnaire will be administered to the Classes of 2000 and 2001 as fourth year students to provide baseline data on the current clinical curriculum for evaluating the new curriculum. The results will be shared with the MEC. A few example questions include:

1. How much direct instruction in the following areas did you receive in each of the clerkships? (a list of objectives will be provided).
2. How many times were you observed performing physical examination skills?
3. Did you receive feedback?
4. How much continuity of care experience did you have in an outpatient setting?
5. How prepared do you feel in various parts of the physical examination?

New Operating procedures for the MEC, Dr. John Tormey

Leadership Group. With the goal of making MEC meetings more effective, Drs. Tormey and Slavin requested a few MEC members (Drs. Drake, Homsher, Stuber and Usatine) to serve as an advisory body to the MEC Executive Committee, the Leadership Group. The Group will participate in developing agenda and exploring ideas in advance of full meetings of the MEC. Minutes of the Summaries Leadership Group will be posted on the MEC website. To review its first meeting, click here.

It is anticipated that MEC meetings will not be required every month; they will be scheduled monthly but held as needed with at least two weeks advance notice of cancellation. The Leadership Committee will meet on the dates not used by the full MEC.
Recommendations from the first Leadership Group meeting are as follows:

1. The agenda should be clearly defined and members notified in advance of each meeting.
2. The co-chairs will run the meetings more efficiently and control the length of discussion.
3. The MEC website should be better utilized. It will be kept up to date and the membership will be encouraged to use this resource on a regular and frequent basis for current information.
4. Meeting minutes will be available two weeks before the next meeting.
5. There will be no standing subcommittees of the MEC.
6. Carefully crafted charges will be given to MEC subcommittees with specified deadline(s), as needed.

Some MEC members have indicated that the current meeting day and time are not ideal. Therefore, a survey will be taken at the end of this meeting to select the day/time most convenient for the majority.

Bylaws. The Faculty Bylaws define the role of the MEC: "(It) shall formulate and periodically review the mission statement for undergraduate medical education; shall review and recommend revisions of the Medical School curricula, including scheduling of courses; and shall evaluate existing courses and clerkships." However, the Bylaws do not address the size of or exact composition of the MEC. Revising the Bylaws and changing the composition of the Committee will be addressed in the future. To review a copy of the Faculty Bylaws, click here. You are also encouraged to browse the new FEC website.

Beginning the 3rd Year in late June, 2000, Dr. LuAnn Wilkerson

The third year must accommodate the two 24-week blocks of the revised curriculum. Depending on when the schedule begins, the first 24 week period would end (1) before the holiday season, (2) end with one-week after the winter break, or (3) with two weeks of instruction after the winter break. Clerkship Directors do not want to have one week after the holidays, but could work with two weeks in the new calendar year.

In order for the first 24-week block to end before the holidays, the start date of the Clinical Principles course would have to start June 24 in 2000. The MEC has already approved a two-week Clinical Principles introductory course which would only be about eight days in actual length because of the July 4th holiday. Examinations skills will be incorporated. (See attached 2000-2001 Academic Year Schedule for more details).

The second year curriculum in year 2000 will end May 15th. There will be a hiatus before the start of the third year during which students will need to take Step I and have some free time. USMLE Step I is now computer-based and can be taken at anytime, within parameters set by the School. The Computer-based exam was first administered this summer. The NB notified schools that test results will not be sent for about 2-3 weeks. Dr. Parker feels that the late June start date is administratively feasible.
By starting in late June each year, the core clerkships will be completed by early July of the following year. Students can begin electives and subinternships the following week, making most of July plus August available. As a bonus, they should have more complete skills and knowledge from having completed all clerkships. Another option is to begin Clinical Principles July 10th, with two weeks of instruction after the winter break. The downside of this is that the year would end two weeks later, taking away from students’ subinternship time.

If, for good cause, some students are allowed to begin the third year late, they would still need to take Clinical Principles with the rest of the class, because it is only offered once each year and should precede the clerkships. Late starts will only be approved for compelling reasons.

Students will benefit from completion of all core rotations prior to electives and sub-Is. However, time to remediate exams or courses will be limited. Also, there will be more pressure on students. It was suggested that a couple of weeks be taken from the second year. The number of weeks of instruction in Year 2 varies from school of school; some schools have as few as 16 weeks of instruction. UCLA has 36 and UCSF has 33. Students have commented at various meetings that time to take subinternships prior to Dean’s Letters is very important.

**Motion:** It was moved and seconded to approve the June 24, 2000 start date for Year 3. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

**On-Line Evaluation, Dr. Carol Hodgson**

Over the last several years, Dr. Carol Hodgson has been involved in developing an on-line system for evaluation of faculty and courses. The new system allows students to remain anonymous, and yet enables the school to know which students have submitted evaluations. Currently, with the paper-based system, many students do not complete evaluations and the results may be skewed. Students are not *required* to evaluate their courses or faculty.

Evaluations are collected for continuous quality improvement and are weighted in decisions of promotion and tenure. Evaluation can measure the overall rating of teaching, delivery of instruction, faculty interactions, and student learning. A number of studies have been done to test the validity of teaching evaluations. Results indicated that 45% of variance in students’ outcomes on exams is attributed to their perceptions of teaching effectiveness.

Recommendations from various research on evaluation include (1) keep the rating forms short, (2) have global items and large numbers of heterogeneous items, (3) give evaluations prior to exams, and (4) standardize the evaluation forms.

The Evaluation Subcommittee made the recommendation in January of 1997 to start on-line evaluations with the first year class. Another suggestion was to randomly assign a group of students to evaluate each lecture course. For example, for the first semester in
the first year, students would be randomly assigned to evaluation one of the three courses (Gross Anatomy, Histology and Molecular and Membrane Biology). All students would evaluate small group teaching such as CABS and Doctoring.

Randomization means that 40 students would be randomly selected to evaluate only the lecturers in one assigned course. Biomathematics, Genetics and Psychopathology are only 8 weeks long and require further discussion of how students would be randomized.

In the past, first-year students received a total of about 34 pages of evaluation forms to complete, per course; not surprisingly, there is only a 30-40% response rate. There are separate pages for evaluation of courses, lecturers, contributing lecturers, lab personnel, etc.

Under the new system, students will complete all evaluations on their own time. Students wanting to comment on courses other than their assigned course may do so unsolicited. As is currently the case, all evaluations associated with a course will be given both to the course chair(s) and the chair(s) of each department having primary responsibility for the course. Evaluations of each faculty member will become part of his/her dossier.

Students have felt that being randomized to evaluate a specific course may help them be more responsible in attending all parts of the course.

Students may be resistant to required evaluations in the first year, but would become accustomed to the fact that this will be part of the curriculum. Most schools that have implemented this system are getting a 100% response rate. The higher response rate would increase the validity of the evaluations.

The new system will eliminate the process of photocopying comments. The University of Michigan and Duke have randomized their students and evaluations are required. They do not report problems getting students to complete evaluations. At UC Davis, students who complete their evaluations before the final exam get 1% extra credit. Penalties for not completing the evaluations include not recording a grade, not informing students of their grades, not allowing students to start a clerkship, etc.

The names of students evaluating are in no way linked to the data they submit and therefore, the evaluation is completely anonymous. Procedurally, students long in and select the course they are supposed to evaluate (only the courses they are eligible to evaluate will be available to them). Pictures of faculty members will be available for students to help them evaluate the correct person. An item should be included for students to indicate how often they attended the course or had contact with the faculty members they are evaluating.

A randomly selected group of students can be used to evaluate as well as to serve as consultants to the course chair. Regular meetings between these groups and faculty could be beneficial. The suggestion was made that faculty would appreciate receiving their evaluations before starting preparations for the next course, preferably right after the
course ends. Student MEC representatives have indicated that they favor requiring students to complete evaluations. They stated that this is a reasonable expectation.

The new evaluation system will be implemented progressively. Items to be included in the evaluation will be discussed at a later time.

The following recommendations were made. Randomization of groups should be done in advance. Paper copies of evaluations should be available for students who have not completed their evaluations and need to do so in order to take the exam. At the beginning of the year, a short presentation should be made to each student on how to give constructive critiques and to share some tips in becoming evaluators.

The following motions were made and voted on separately.

1. Every student should be required to evaluate faculty and courses in assigned randomized groups. This motion was approved by a unanimous vote.
2. Students will not be allowed to take their course final exam unless they have completed their assigned evaluations. This motion was approved with one abstention.
3. A short statement explaining the significance of constructive and objective evaluation should be posted on the first page of the Web-based evaluation or on the log-on page. This motion was approved by a unanimous vote.
4. Every student will evaluate on one global item and make comments. However, a randomized group of students will evaluate an assigned course rather than requiring all students to evaluate all courses. Dr. Hodgson will develop procedures for randomly assigning students to groups. This motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.