Minutes: Meeting of March 12, 2003

Present:
Drs. Thomas Drake, Ronald Edelstein, Theodore Hall, Earl Homsher, Mark Noah, Neil Parker, Stuart Slavin, Michael Sofroniew, Margaret Stuber (Co-Chair), Susan Stangl, Randolph Steadman, Jan Tillisch, John Tormey (Co-Chair) and LuAnn Wilkerson, and Janice Contini,
Students: Emily Dossett, Karin Jacobson, Dawn Ogawa, Amy Olin, and Jason Tarpley

Minutes

The minutes were approved as written.

Selectives and Electives in New Human Biology & Disease Curriculum

The School has had a number of opportunities for first year students that were not part of the regularly required curriculum. When these opportunities were first devised, they were meant to remediate a certain part that seemed to be missing from the overall curriculum. Therefore, there were electives that students opted to take if they desired to do so, and there were also selectives, which were a group of electives from which students were required to choose one. With the new curriculum, the MEC will need to decide if the School will continue offering electives, keeping them completely optional or selectives, requiring students to take a certain number of electives (in the past, this number was one). Dr. Stangl, who currently directs the selectives program, preferred not requiring them.

Dr. Parker thought it would be good to require students to take a course that has to do with service learning. Service learning is a combination of classroom work and some kind of community activity with required reflection. The upper campus defines service learning courses as having a certain number of hours in service learning activities. However, most of the current electives/selectives we have do not meet the service-learning requirement. Charlotte did not think that we had enough service learning opportunities to make it a requirement for the entire class. Dr. Slavin felt that students should be strongly encouraged to be involved in service learning courses but not be required to take them.

Dr. Wilkerson suggested requiring students to take the course over a two-year period. Dr. Parker informed that there are some students who do not complete the course once they have signed up for it. Students can drop a course at any time without any consequences. Dr. Parker wondered if there should be some professionalism policies built in. Dr. Stangl agreed and felt that students should follow through on completing these courses and that there should be some consequences if they do not complete them. Dawn Ogawa felt that making some electives required would actually give students the freedom to choose one of them. She felt that making them required or making sure that students complete them would be needed to make them successful. Jason Tarpley liked the idea of holding
students accountable once they take a course. He thought that the School should be
vigilant about quality control on these selectives. Karin Jacobson commented that the
selectives being required is not cumbersome. She liked the idea of offering it over the
two-year period.

Dr. Tormey relayed that Dr. Howard felt that the electives should not be made mandatory
at least for next year. He felt that students might feel overwhelmed with the amount of
work that they need to do with the new curriculum. Making it mandatory could be
reconsidered after seeing how the first year of implementation goes.

Dr. Stuber read Donna Zulman’s email regarding this matter since she was not able to
attend. She felt that the selectives are extremely valuable and have participated in several
of them. She stated that the Women’s Health selective in particular provides opportunity
to students to focus on an area of medicine that needs to be supplemented beyond what is
taught in the current curriculum. Other students have found Eastern Medicine,
Cardiovascular, and Health Policy selective very valuable as well. Many of the selectives
are student initiated and coordinated. She felt that this is a unique opportunity for
students to be actively involved in shaping the curriculum and to educate their peers
about certain issues. She thought that selectives are ways to formally support students
taking the initiative to educate one another, and these courses contribute significantly to
their first year experience. She hoped that UCLA would continue to provide
administrative support for the selectives even if they are not required.

Emily Dossett did not feel that these should be required. She requested that more service
learning experiences be added as well as the mechanism for students to create something
on their own. These should be formalized more.

Dr. Slavin commented that the original vision of the colleges was to have some faculty
who would be available to support students who have an interest in a certain field or topic.
Dr. Tillisch added that the colleges should play a part in supporting or advising students
at this level. Dr. Parker suggested organizing a smaller group to look into this matter in
greater detail. He also felt that credit should not be given for every experience.

Dr. Tormey moved that the MEC continue with the current selectives program for
another year in its current form with the exception that students be allowed to meet
the requirement over two years instead of one. The motion was seconded.

Discussion:

Dr. Slavin wondered if the issue of credit should be included in this motion. He thought
maybe there should be two categories (4 week electives vs. 8 week electives). Dr.
Wilkerson felt that having the kind of flexibility we have had in the past is a value. She
did not want to attach particular time lengths or credits to this motion. Dr. Slavin
suggested that a separate committee be organized to look at the development of electives
and how colleges can be involved. Dr. Wilkerson felt that this committee should be the
college chairs. Student input should be solicited by this committee.
It was moved and seconded to retain the selectives program as it currently exists for the coming year, except that the requirement can be fulfilled in either the first or the second year. This motion was approved (14 in favor, 1 objection).

Clinical Performance Exam (CPX)

The School is producing an incredible amount of rich performance data about the students, but only a subset of the students is reviewing this data with a faculty. Only the students who failed and are required remediation review this data. Dr. Wilkerson had previously suggested putting some teeth into the review process and would like to come to a decision since the third year class will be doing the CPX soon.

Two years ago, the colleges were asked to review tapes with their students, and there was some variability in how this was done. It takes about 45 minutes to an hour to review the tape with the student, reviewing one or two cases. It was suggested putting this on CDs; however, it is too expensive to do it this way.

Dr. Steadman explained how his colleges did the review. He felt that it did not really fit into their Foundations Weeks and was inconsistent with the goals of the week. Dr. Metten commented that the timing of the review was a critical factor. Dr. Tillisch thought that this was an extraordinary opportunity and should not be wasted. Dr. Drake suggested having the students look at it over a period of time in groups with a faculty member. This would be more time efficient for the faculty.

Karin Jacobson informed that she reviewed the tape with Dr. Slavin in the Primary Care College and found it very useful. She suggested asking students to volunteer for the group review. The members liked this idea.

It was moved that the CPX tape review become a requirement and that it would be done in one of three ways: 1) small group review, 2) one-on-one review, 3) required remediation review with Dr. Parker. The colleges will be asked to take on this task and report back to the MEC in about a month of their implementation plans. This motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Dr. Slavin felt that the colleges should get a group of faculty who will commit to this review and also offer faculty development. Dr. Tillisch felt that our emeritus faculty should be tapped into as valuable resources for this activity. At the next meeting, the MEC will discuss what the passing level would be and hear implementation reports by the colleges.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.