## Information & Updates

**Disability Services Informational Presentation (Barbara Blacklock)**

Barbara Blacklock, Program Coordinator for Disability Services, encouraged faculty to refer students to Disability Services if disability suspected.

- Center does not diagnose, but has tools & resources to help students determine if they need accommodations.
- Saw approx. 45 med students last year; most have “invisible” disabilities (mental health, ADD, learning disabilities, systemic illnesses such as epilepsy).
- Challenge to get med students to recognize they need help.
- Confidential. Accommodations are not reported on any documents that follow students: not on transcript, not in MSPE.
- Provided preferred language on disability accommodations; link to statement will appear on each course’s Black Bag site.
- Contact info:
  - 612 626 1333
  - ds@umn.edu

Support slides in addendum.

## Black Bag Update (Leslie Anderson)

**What is working well**

- Calendar-driven access to session information/details/resources
- Announcements
- Grade postings for assessments and assignments that occur within Black Bag

**Areas still being fine-tuned**

- Score postings for assessments and assignments that occur outside Black Bag (Ex: written quiz administered in lab)

## Annual Course Reports

- **Microbiology & Immunology (Peter Southern)**

**Microbiology & Immunology**

- 2012 marked Peter Southern’s first year as course director.
- Overall student evaluation scores ranged from 4.0 to 4.6 (five point scale).
- Five students did not pass the course initially; all passed on retake of final exam.
- Eighteen students passed the course but by slim margins: they were very close to the 70% requirement on the final.

**New in 2012**

- 40% of the course was either presented by instructors new to the course or by veterans extending their topic range.
- Two of five instructors were new to the course.
- The lab components of the course remained essentially unchanged from prior...
years.
- Questions on final exam were intermingled rather than grouped by topic.
- Experimented with formal grading of lab reports; reports accounted for 8.7% of course grade. Proved to be too time consuming, too difficult to distinguish between levels of effort. Will revert to P/N score in 2013.

What worked well
- Instructors readily accessible
- Students provided with past exams/questions
- Labs contributed to solid foundation
- Students reported that course objectives and content were well aligned and that they acquired an understanding of the objectives.

Areas of concern
- Lab report grading pilot unproductive.
- Students not always arriving prepared.
- Would like better understanding of foundation students acquire in fall semester and foundation they need to be successful in MS 2.
- Working to find opportunities to make case-based discussions more clinically oriented.

Changes for 2013
- P/N grading of lab reports.
- Clearly set expectations for pre-class preparation.
- Will move scored quizzes to 8:00 AM Monday mornings to encourage preparation.
- Will add formative quizzes to lab sessions.

Summary notes in addendum.

Physiology (Steve Katz)
- Two students did not pass the course initially; both passed on retake of final exam.

What worked well
- Students reported that they acquired an understanding of the course objectives (mean: 4.5).
- Students give teaching faculty high marks.
- Achieved a good balance in number of summative exams: 2 quizzes, a midterm, final, 8 low-stakes online quizzes.
- Provided several formative/self-assessment options: study questions for each section, interactive notes in lecture.
- Integration with FCT cases.
- E-books versus hard copy texts.

Areas of concern
- Clickers and clicker support: technological challenges discourage use. (Action step: Discuss new technology options at upcoming SFC.)
- Would like feedback from year 2 faculty on their perception of student preparedness in physiology.
- GI: student perception that it is not covered well. Several faculty interested in examining/understanding where and how GI is addressed in the curriculum.
**Changes for 2013**
- Transition to Black Bag.
- Make additional final exam available to students as a self-assessment tool; needs be written.

**Summary notes in addendum.**

**Best Practices**
- Helpful to have course director at lectures and labs
  - Able to address questions, add to discussion, revisit areas of confusion
  - Augmented consistency of message
- Exploring strategies for gaining better understanding of what is taught where within the curriculum; expect Black Bag to be instrumental.
- Action step from discussion: A number of faculty would like to see focus groups conducted with MS 4 students to gain feedback on specific areas of the curriculum that were particularly useful – or not.
- Students should have completed Step 1; need to ensure student participants represent a wide range of abilities. For discussion at future SFC.

**Discussion: Impact of Year 1 and 2 Course Honors (Kathy Watson)**

Dr. Watson opened the discussion of honors grading by providing a brief overview:
- Honors grading was introduced in the Twin Cities for the 2011/2012 academic year; it had been used in Duluth for approximately 10 years.
- The change was made in the Twin Cities to ensure a common system across campuses prior to the LCME visit.
- Ed Steering Committee revisited the discussion of honors at its August meeting. Three students presented a summary report (see addendum) drafted in February 2012 ten student representatives, years 1 through 4. The report’s consensus statement:

  While there are potential benefits to a P-F-H grading system, these benefits are not substantiated and unlikely to benefit the vast majority of students. Meanwhile, the effect of a P-F-H system on students’ well-being and extracurricular involvement as well as the type of applicants that the medical school attracts are much more widespread. Therefore, we recommend changing to a P-F- grading system for the incoming class of 2016.

**Discussion**

Glenn Giesler: Honors grades encourage learning. Possibly 10% would be a good target (versus awarding honors to the top 15%).

Kevin Wickman: Has seen increase in student stress levels, improved attendance and engagement. Perhaps if honors were to be eliminated, the threshold for a passing score should be raised to 80% (from 70%).

Deb Powell: Dislikes honors. 15% is a meaningless benchmark; if we are going to have honors, we need to use more meaningful assessments to distinguish between levels of performance. Would prefer to see meaningful narrative comments from small groups.
David Satin: The top 15% methodology does not fit all courses, particularly ECM. Can courses set their own bar for honors?

Discussion ended because of time; topic of honors will be continue to be addressed at ESC in October.

Next Meeting – October 5, 2012