

August Student Curriculum Meeting Minutes **8/19/21 – 12:10-1:10**

Updates on COVID Policies & Numbers

- Dr. Steiner reiterated that COVID will be here to stay, and we must continue to be flexible. Please be assured that faculty and staff are monitoring the situation and have our safety as their top priority.
- Total numbers since the start of the school year: 12-13. About 7 of those cases were in the first few days of the semester. All but 1 student is out of quarantine.
- Dr. Steiner thanks the students for helping slow the spread and keep the numbers low.
- Dr. Gilliland provided helpful contextualization that the number of students with excused absences (including for reasons like illness, weddings, funerals, other personal reasons) this year is still lower than those in academic years prior to COVID. He noted that strict masking has likely kept students safe from the flu and other illnesses which require students to stay home.
- Faculty asked that Student Gov reps remind and encourage the remaining students who have not yet uploaded their vaccine status to ConnectCarolina to do so sooner rather than later.

White Coat Update for the Class of 2024

- In person white coat with up to four guests per student is still planned. PCC tutors will serve as the coaters for students to minimize the number of people on stage.
- There will be no printed programs, but they will be accessible online and may be shared with others via email.
- Faculty reiterated that if the main campus shuts down buildings due to high caseloads, then it is out of the School of Medicine's control to use Memorial Hall. If this happens, the potential back-up plan will be to have a white coat ceremony in MBRB with only the MS2 class and our coaters. No outside guests will be allowed.
- In both circumstances, a virtual option will be available for both students and their guests.

Feedback from Quarantined Students

- Big thanks to all faculty and staff who helped students during this time and will continue to help those who need administrative excuses for potential COVID symptoms and positive cases.
- Students shared that hybrid PCC and quiz options were fairly successful during quarantine.
- Students still desire a method to engage with patient presentations and panels.
 - All Zoom is now HIPAA compliant, so this may be an option in the future as long as patient presenters are given permission to have livestreaming be an option.

Transition to In-Person

- Small Groups & Quizzes:
 - Dr. Hobbs will ensure 10-minute buffers get reinserted on Sakai to help maintain time blocks for lectures and small groups.
 - Some facilitators were asking if students were finished with their quiz before the designated quiz time was up, which was distracting. All block leaders and small group leaders will be reminded of the 15-minute hard time period for quizzes.
- General Student Wellness

- Student Gov leaders and MS2 representatives emphasized the emotional and psychological challenges they have experienced in the first few weeks of transitioning to in-person classes.
 - The challenge of hybrid small group, histology in the large auditorium, and patient presentations where patients may not yet be comfortable with in-person engagement, were raised as potential points of improvement.
 - It was discussed that virtual formats may be more conducive to these learning experiences and offer more direct faculty-student engagement.
 - Monday exams were included as a wellness issue in this discussion and will be evaluated in calendar development for future classes.
 - Group wellness strategies were also raised as potential programming opportunities for MS2s because current wellness options can be siloed and less collaborative.
- Dr. Steiner raised the goal of making curricular decisions based on data and not making abrupt changes without knowing the efficacy of an intervention (i.e., sticking with the full in-person mode long enough to know whether it should be changed).
 - Student Gov leaders and MS2 representatives suggested collecting this “data” from students to gauge current perspectives on learning and wellbeing, similar to the fall break to wellness day transition, and selection of those wellness days, were made based on student polls administered in fall 2020.
- Dr. Hobbs will look into improving the learning environment on the faculty development side to make sure this transition runs more smoothly.
- Dr. Barnhosue emphasized that this is helpful feedback and will be incorporated carefully into the Transition to Application Phase course.
- Faculty emphasized that hybrid models of education can be challenging to administer due to staff capabilities, but will continue to be flexible and evaluate which modes of learning work best; however, this process will take time.
- Faculty and Student Gov leaders want to focus on re-centering student wellness during this time.