

# EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES COMMITTEE MEETING

## MINUTES

**JUNE 18, 2004**

Present: Drs. Liller, Sanchez, Osman, and Ms. Judy Plazarin

The meeting began at 2:15PM.

1. Dr. Liller welcomed the group and announced that since she will be serving as interim associate dean for academics she will need to resign as chair of the Educational Outcomes committee. She asked Drs. Sanchez and Osman to serve as temporary co-chairs until the new committee will be formed in September. Dr. Liller will remain as an ex-officio member. Dr. Sanchez agreed and Dr. Osman, although not wanting to co-chair due to other responsibilities, agreed to help Dr. Sanchez. Dr. Liller requested that all members presently on the committee continue next year to provide continuity.

2. The results of the Spring, 2004 comprehensive exam were distributed in addition to the outcomes assessment forms Dr. Liller uses to transmit information to main campus. Much discussion took place as to poor pass rate (53%) in biostatistics and epidemiology (61%--a decline of 20% from Fall, 03) for the MPH students and the decline in the biostatistics core pass rate (from 85.7% (Fall, 03) to 57%) for the MSPH students. The online review materials for the biostatistics exam were prepared by Dr. Blair who has retired. Dr. Blair did not write the questions for the Spring, 04 exam so some students may not have been properly prepared. This online review has since been removed from the website. As for epidemiology, the department decided to enhance the difficulty of the items for the Spring exam and this may have contributed to the lower pass rates. However, nearly 90% of the MSPH passed this portion of the exam. It was decided by the committee to continue to monitor both the epidemiology and biostatistics core portions of the exam since students are very far away from the 90% pass rate used for the outcome indicator.

The concentration portion of the exam was passed by nearly 90% of MPH students but only by 71% of the MSPH students. We will continue to monitor this finding to learn of difficulties with this section of the exam.

3. The committee reviewed those questions that were failed by 75% or more of the students and removed from the exam. These items will be sent to the particular departments that prepared them for further review. Most likely these questions should not be included as is on future exams.

4. Written comments prepared by the students pertaining to the comprehensive exam were reviewed by the committee. Dr. Liller requested that these comments be sent to department chairs for distribution to their faculty. Comments largely focused on

difficulty of items, poor review sessions, and computer difficulties. The students clearly expressed that they did not prefer to take computerized versions of the exam.

5. Dr. Liller discussed the concept of eliminating the comprehensive exam in the future and in its place having a final capstone course that all students would take. She envisioned this course could have modular components for each core area. MPH students would need to take all modules but MSPH students would only need to take the biostatistics, epidemiology, and one other core class module. Students would need to pass each module by achieving at least a score of 80%. Dr. Liller plans to discuss these concepts with the new Dean.

6. There were no results available related to the alumni survey. Dr. Liller will request this information from Dr. Gulitz.

7. The committee decided to continue monitoring the epidemiology and biostatistics core portions of the exam and the concentration section in the future. They also decided to review the SBS core section for the Summer, 2004 exam.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45PM.

Dr. Liller would like to thank all committee members for their service over the years. It has been a pleasure serving as chair of this committee.