

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES COMMITTEE MEETING

SEPTEMBER 19, 2003

MINUTES

Present: Drs. Liller, Gulitz, Dagne, Sanchez, Osman, Onkst, and Abbott

The meeting began at 1:15 PM.

1. Dr. Liller welcomed the new members of the committee and reviewed the outcomes assessment process that has taken place over the last several years. The outcome indicators that are now being used are those that have been approved by prior committee members, the university, and SACS consultants. However, these indicators need to be continually reviewed and updated. Indicators were reviewed for the MPH, MSPH, MHA, and PhD programs. Dr. Gulitz reported results are being obtained from the alumni survey and these results will be used to assess how well many of the outcomes have been met. The majority of the members who comprise the Educational Outcomes committee also comprise the Core Comprehensive Exam committee. It was discussed that their meetings should be close together in the future.
2. Much discussion took place in regards to the Comprehensive Exam process this summer. Dr. Liller reviewed the overall results of the exam in terms of the core and concentration areas. Overall, 86.9% of MPH students passed the core portion of the exam and 94.6% of MPH students passed the concentration portion of the exam. One-hundred percent of MSPH students passed the core and concentration portions of the exam. However, for outcomes assessment purposes we are interested in the epidemiology and biostatistics portions (and their related determinants) of the core exam. For the epidemiology section, 60.87% of the MPH students passed. For the biostatistics section, 50% of the MPH students passed. For MSPH students, 100% of the students passed the epidemiology section and 50% of the students passed the biostatistics section.
3. Discussion took place as to the timing of when the comprehensive exam should be given. Various options were discussed. One of these options is to offer the exam late in the semester so students who are enrolled in their last core class can take the exam and not have to wait another semester. Another option is to offer the exam very early in the next semester after the students have completed all core classes. Dr. Gulitz said that she is considering a policy change in the college whereby all students must complete all core classes before they can sit for the core portion of the comprehensive exam. Another option is to separate the core and concentration portions of the exam so that faculty have greater flexibility in grading the concentration section. Dr.

Gulitz is presently considering all of these options. This committee and the core examination committee will continue to discuss this issue.

4. Dr. Onkst requested that everyone on the committee send her information as soon as possible as to what outputs they would like to have in terms of the results of the comprehensive examination. Dr. Liller will craft an email to Dr. Onkst pertaining to necessary information for outcomes assessment purposes. However, all committee members should send their department needs to Dr. Onkst as well. Some of the outputs suggested were frequencies and percentages for each item and the overall exam pass/fail rate for each department, indication as to whether someone is a first-time test-taker, information as to how long ago a student completed the core courses, etc.
5. Review sessions for the comprehensive exam were discussed at length. Dr. Dagne and Sanchez were concerned that students were not preparing ahead of time for the exam and students should be better prepared during review sessions. Dr. Onkst reported that her review session was more didactic for students. Everyone agreed that students need to be informed as to exactly how review sessions will be run. It was decided by the committee that the exam that was used in the Summer, 2003 semester will be used for review purposes and Dr. Onkst will create a practice exam from this information that students can readily access.
6. It was decided that the Fall, 2003 comprehensive exam will have 20 questions per core class. Students must answer 70% of the questions correctly to pass (N=14). Questions still may be thrown out if a substantial number of students answer incorrectly. Eventually a bank of questions will be developed and questions on the exam will be randomly chosen from the bank. However, for the time being, all students will receive the same questions.
7. All committee members are to send their fall comprehensive exam questions to Dr. Liller as soon as possible. She will review each question for structure and format and provide feedback to the question developer. Each department should review the questions from their core class that will be on the exam before these are sent to Dr. Liller. Dr. Liller will then send all questions to Dr. Onkst by October 10th so she can finalize the computer program. Dr. Onkst recommended that each department develop a concept review list for their core class to be distributed to students for use in preparation for the exam.
8. Comprehensive exam review sessions will be the week of October 13th from 4-6PM each day. Committee members tentatively scheduled their review sessions as follows: Biostatistics/Epi-Monday; HPM-Tuesday; CFH-Wednesday; EOH, Friday. However, Dr. Abbott has to consult with Dr. Orban about the day for HPM. Dr. Sanchez needed to change her day from Thursday to either Monday or Tuesday due to her travel schedule.

9. It was decided that the outcomes committee will continue to monitor the epidemiology and biostatistics sections of the core exam due to the relatively new exam format, structure of review sessions, and pass rates.
10. The committee decided that meeting on Fridays accommodated everyone's schedule fairly well. Dr. Liller will announce the next meeting after the next comprehensive exam. The meeting may be sooner if the results of the alumni survey are available.
11. The meeting adjourned at 3:30PM.