



HMS/HSDM Faculty Council

Faculty Council Minutes
December 8, 2021

Present: Adelman, Becker, Caradonna, Chang, Chen, Daley, D’Amico, Da Silva, Desrosiers, Gauferg, Giannobile, Goldstein, Haigis, Hatfield, Huang, Ingelfinger, Irani, Klig, Lee, Molina, Mullen, Murray, Nayak, Okereke, Park, Patel, Rodriguez, Silver, Solomon, Spring, Stone, Wagers, Weinstock

Guests: Drs. Bates, Greenberg, Hundert, Kuritzkes Mermelstein, Muto, Novina, Reede, Rodrigue, Schwartzstein, Westlund; Messrs. Boku, Fleishman; Mss. Bittinger, Gonzalez, Lewis

Staff: Mss. Carter, Hecht, Ryan, Williams; Messrs. Shacar, Wells-Bogue

This Faculty Council meeting was held virtually, via Zoom, due the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dean Daley welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their time. Dr. Rose Molina called the meeting to order at 4:04pm and asked for and received approval for the November 10, 2021 meeting minutes. Next, she called upon Dr. Richard Schwartzstein, Ellen and Melvin Gordon Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Medical Education and chair of the Learning Environment Committee (LEC) to give an annual update.

The LEC is charged with monitoring the quality of the learning environment for students in the classroom, laboratories and clinical setting. Dr. Schwartzstein went over some data as well as wellness and burnout and what they are doing to address these issues.

Reviewing clerkship data at all sites from 2020 and 2021, many clerkships are still scoring low in “providing direction and constructive feedback” and Dr. Schwartzstein noted that while surgery is improving, they are still having issues in this area. Some discussion with the Council took place regarding the surgical culture, interaction of the team, OR hierarchy and how surgical specialties aren’t broken down to see where issues truly lie. Dr. Schwartzstein discussed some of the ways hospitals and departments are addressing the issues. It was noted that this trend is fairly common across US medical schools. Overall, looking at four years of data (2018-2021), at all sites, and all clerkships, the data shows improvement and progress across the four years.

Dr. Schwartzstein then spent some time on wellness and well-being, areas the LEC are diving into this year. He noted the LEC will continue to focus on student evaluations of the learning environment, faculty and student stresses with the ongoing COVID pandemic, and doing a deeper dive on the issue of feedback.

Dr. Molina thanked Dr. Schwartzstein.

Before moving on to the next presentation, Deans Daley and Reede presented the Program Award for a Culture of Excellence in Mentoring (PACEM). This mentoring award was established to recognize the efforts of a department, division, office or program to foster innovation and sustainability in mentoring while building a culture of mentoring. The following programs were recognized: the FIRST Program at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center led by Dr. James Rodrigue, Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry and Vice-Chair of Surgery and Mr. Aaron Fleishman, Associate in Surgery; the MGH Neurology program in Faculty Development and Promotions lead by Dr. Steven M. Greenberg, John J. Conway Endowed Chair, Department of Neurology and Vice-Chair, Faculty Development and Promotions; and The GSAS Harvard Biotechnology Club's Incubator Program at Harvard Medical School and Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences led by Dr. Carl Novina, Associate Professor of Medicine and Dr. Fred Mermelstein, Lecturer on Neurobiology.

Next, Dr. Molina called upon Dr. Dan Kuritzkes, Harriet Ryan Albee Professor of Medicine and chair of the HMS Student Promotion and Review Board (PRB) to give an annual update.

Dr. Kuritzkes' primary focus of PRB is to address and understand why particular students have trouble and what can be done to help students through those difficulties, including what modifications could help them complete the curriculum. Dr. Kuritzkes noted that the past 6 months have been quieter. He spent time discussing two items with respect to the work of the PRB. With disruptions from the COVID pandemic and students spending some time learning remotely, they did see an increase in the number of fails on shelf and comprehensive exams. Very rarely did they see fails in the past, and students needed mediation to graduate and go into. Dr. Kuritzkes also noted that the timing of MLE has changed and students felt less prepared taking these exams.

The second item he discussed was due to the external audit, which no longer allows the PRB to interact with academic deans. As a result, when a student comes to the committee, Dean Saldaña gathers info from the academic deans and presents to the committee. Dr. Kuritzkes feels this is one dimensional and may be a disservice to the student who comes before the committee. There was some discussion on this topic with the Council.

Next, Dr. Molina introduced Dr. Edward Hundert, Dean for Medical Education to give a brief overview of the Educational Policy and Curriculum committee (EPCC).

Dean Hundert explained that the EPCC is responsible for the oversight and conduct of the four-year MD curriculum (including both pre-clerkship curricula – Pathways and HST) and educational policies for the MD program at HMS. Some other committees that intersect with EPCC include:

- Committee on Admissions

- Medical Student Promotion and Review Board
- Learning Environment Committee
- Financial Aid Committee
- Council of Academic Societies
- UME-Hospital Leadership Group
- PME Executive Committee

Dean Hundert reviewed the major curricular agenda; items that are coming up over the next few years include:

- HST curriculum reform (looking at best ways to train for the future)
- Potential Pathways pre-clerkship calendar change (re-introducing having the summer off after first year for research, wellness, clerkships and what that would mean for the whole calendar)
- PCE reform (shifting PCE from October to January, re-align with HST so both tracks would align again for 1.5 years, coordinate with hospitals on changing the block clerkship structure enhancing longitudinal relationships with patients and faculty)
- Anti-racism work at every level
- PROGRESS (Professional Growth and Educational Support System- early identification of students who need help in specific domains and to get them coaching. Dean Hundert mentioned that Faculty Council member, Jean Klig, has been a big part of the coaching)
- Enhancing curricular “themes” (including aging and end of life care, anti-racism, health equity)
- LCME “mid-cycle” full-curriculum review (2022-2023: HMS committed during the LCME reaccreditation that in the 4 year gaps of the 8-year cycle, the school would do their own review, and this is coming up in the next academic year)
- Rethinking support for clinician-educators at affiliates (related to wellness theme. Stress increases due to system changes, pressures of the pandemic, increase clinical demands, threatens groups who want to make medical education a really big part of their career. Need to identify core educator faculty and make sure resources HMS sends to hospitals are concentrated on those people who want to do this and do it well.)

Dr. Molina thanked Dean Hundert welcomed two HMS/HSDM Student Council members, Yoseph Boku, Class of 2025 Student Council President and Selena Gonzalez, Class of 2025 Student Council Vice President of Operations.

Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Boku introduced themselves and discussed the goals of the HMS/HSDM Student Council which include: foster a culture of student wellness; increase the student body’s

engagement with the communities of Roxbury, Mission Hill, and Jamaica Plain; build a vibrant community among the first-year class.

They went over the class of 2025 survey the Student Council put out, which provided insight on where classmates were on a range of topics. The survey was sent to 199 members of the HMS/HSDM class of 2025. 160 students responded (80% completion rate) and topics ranged from academics, wellness, financial aid, and more. With news of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, the Student Council wanted to know how many classmates were boosted. A survey was conducted the 3rd week of November asking if students got the booster, or plan to in the near future. Results showed that 65 (40%) already got the booster shot and 91 (56%) planned to in the near future. It was great for overall wellness to get the booster before the new variant came up. Anecdotally, classmates were lining up to get booster after exams, and being proactive allowed the student council to plan next few months.

On the topic of burnout, they discussed how 1 in 5 healthcare works left during the pandemic. One of the goals of the student council is to figure out how to prioritize wellness habits, starting in med school, to carry through residency and as physicians. Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Boku shared results of the overall student wellbeing survey they did and national data on medical student burnout, which they highlighted the first year typically has the least amount of burnout but starts to see an increase by November of year 2. They also performed interviews with a few PCE students and received the following feedback: Limited free time with clinic and studying for shelf exams, “surgery takes up my life”, “I’m fine now, but I don’t know if I could keep this up for the whole year”. When asked what could be done to help improve experience without diminishing the learning experience, responses included: expand MGH’s protected weekends to other affiliates, transition course- more case write-ups with residents during the transition source, more emphasis on patient presentation, Epic notes, handling difficult circumstances with team or patient, more clinical immersion sessions and simulations, didactic lectures not as helpful.

Mr. Boku stated that students and faculty are grateful to be in person and not remote. With respect to faculty burnout, there’s been no noticeable impact of on the learning environment. While masks make it harder to see facial cues and smiles, there has been no classroom transmission of COVID-19. With that said, the first year’s class have been able to socialize in ways to really bond with classmates. Ms. Gonzalez described new student groups like the Vandy Baking Club who provide baked good for students after each Pathways exam. Other social events students participated in were apple picking, a pumpkin carving contest, and society costume competitions. They were even able to partner with Yale graduate council and tailgated at the Harvard-Yale game.

For the student council's third goal, to increase engagement outside HMS with neighboring communities, some students have volunteered at a local women's basketball game to do blood pressure and blood sugar tests. From their survey, they learned that 89% of first-year students seek to incorporate community engagement into their future careers and 85% of the first-year students indicated that incorporating community engagement into their medical education would enhance their experience at HMS.

With a goal to increase long-term community partnerships, they held the second annual HMS/HSDM Holiday Fundraiser in support of Action for Boston Community Development's (ABCD) Winter Emergency Fund. Money raised helps provide money for housing, food, heating, clothes to families in need over the winter.

Mr. Boku highlighted an HMS-wide student panel series which explores topics of underserved communities and the importance of those experiences in medicine. A Black Men in Medicine panel was held in November 2021 to leverage the expertise that HMS students had on the topic of diversity in medicine. In the way of organizing this panel, they thought of creating a series of panels to highlight the research and advocacy of HMS students on issues of diversity and health equity. Instead of inviting outside speakers, they wanted to promote the work of HMS students. In this way, they hope to not only educate the HMS community about these important issues, but also provide first-year students access to mentorship by upperclassmen doing research and advocacy in areas that they are interested. The goal is to continue this series of panels in the spring semester. While they are not quite sure how frequent these panels will be held, they are hoping to do a future panel on Black Women's Maternal Health.

Mr. Boku and Ms. Gonzalez ended their presentation on financial aid and the importance of the REACH scholarship before taking questions from the Faculty Council.

Dr. Molina adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:32 pm.