

Curriculum office

Improve the health of the communities we serve through education, biomedical research and health care.

<http://www.upstate.edu/com/curriculum/>

Letter from Dean Christner

The Curriculum Office is responsible for managing, coordinating and evaluating the medical school curriculum. In addition, we provide support to the students, faculty, and administration.

Welcome to the Inaugural Issue of the Curriculum Office Newsletter!

We want to ensure that all faculty, staff and students are familiar with what we do and so are pleased to bring you these updates on the happenings in our office. We also want to hear from you! If you have a question or concern, or would like an update or regular report on an issue, please let us know!

The learning environment is very important to me, the dean, our staff and faculty. We have put several processes in place in order to provide a variety of ways for you to provide feedback so we can be aware of any of your concerns. In addition, we are always happy to hear your feedback when you feel we are doing things right.

The following are some of the ways you can voice your opinions to me:

- ◆ Student Open Hours: On September 3, I will again be available to you on Wednesdays from 12:30 –2 p.m. in the Student Lounge area on the 1st floor of Weiskotten near the vending machines.

- ◆ MedHub Course, Clerkship, Faculty, and Site evaluations are administered periodically throughout the year. This is a good place to provide confidential feedback.
- ◆ For anonymous reports of mistreatment, you can go to the Curriculum Office website and click on the link. Reports are forwarded directly to me only.
- ◆ The dean, the dean of Student Affairs and I meet monthly with student leadership from both campuses to solicit feedback.
- ◆ I have organized quarterly meetings with a different cohort of Syracuse MS-3/MS-4 students in order to have a more intimate way for students to express any concerns directly to leadership.

It is important to me that you feel that I am accessible to you. If one of the above options for communication with me are not convenient, stop by the Curriculum Office and make an appointment to meet with me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Jennifer Christner



LCME Update

In July, Dean Duggan was informed by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) that accreditation of the medical education at Upstate Medical University would be continued through 2018. The next full survey visit will take place during the 2018-19 academic year. Thank you to all of the students, faculty and staff who work so diligently to ensure we are in compliance with the LCME accreditation standards.

New Assistant Dean Positions

Paul Ko, MD

Assistant Dean...



It is my pleasure to announce that Dr. Paul Ko has accepted the position of Assistant Dean for the Clinical Curriculum. Dr. Ko completed his MD at Boston University School of Medicine and then completed his residency in Emergency Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia where he also served as Chief Resident during his last year of residency. After spending 2 years at Thomas Jefferson University Medical School, where he served as the Assistant Director of Medical Student Education he then joined Upstate Medical University in 2008. During his short time here he has been appointed as director of Student Clerkships in Emergency Medicine and the Director of Undergraduate Medical Education in Emergency Medicine. In 2013 he was appointed as the Phase 2 Director and was also inducted as a member of the Academy of Upstate Educators. Paul has numerous publications and presentations spanning both emergency medicine and medical education topics. Impressively, he was recognized by the National Clerkship Directors of Emergency Medicine with the 2013 Young Educator of the Year Award.

In his new role, Dr. Ko will be responsible for ensuring the integration of the Clinical Sciences throughout all 4 years of the curriculum. He will continue to lead the Phase 2 Committee and represent Phase 2 at the Curriculum Committee. Dr. Ko will initially work on Interprofessional Education as well as enriching the 4th year of medical school. Of note, Dr. Ko is currently pursuing his Master of Education in the Health Professions at John Hopkins University. This will serve him well as we look to him to be a leader in both educational innovation and educational scholarship. Dr. Ko is extremely enthusiastic and already has a record of implementing innovation in his clerkship. He is easy to work with and is a strong advocate for students. I hope you will all join me in welcoming Dr. Ko to his new role.

Tom Poole, PhD

Assistant Dean...



It is my pleasure to announce that Dr. Thomas J. Poole has accepted the position of Assistant Dean for the Foundational Sciences. Dr. Poole received his Ph.D. in Biology at Princeton University followed by 2 post doctoral fellowships at Chil-

children's Hospital Medical Center in Boston, MA and then at the Institut d'Embryologie du CNRS in Nogent-sur-Marne, France. Dr. Poole joined the faculty at Upstate Medical University in 1985. He has served as Course Director for Microscopic Anatomy for 13 years. He has also served as the Chair of the Phase 1 Committee and its predecessor, the Curriculum Coordinating Committee, since 2006. Dr. Poole is the recipient of numerous awards for Research Excellence, Excellence in Teaching and the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2010.

In his new role, Dr. Poole will be responsible for ensuring the integration of the Foundational Sciences throughout all 4 years of the curriculum. He will continue to lead the Phase 1 Committee and represent Phase 1 at the Curriculum Committee. He will also promote curricular development, educational innovation and educational scholarship. I have found Dr. Poole to be extremely committed to medical student education and a fun colleague to work with. He is already approaching his new position with zest and vigor!!! I hope you will all join me in welcoming Dr. Poole to his new role.

Welcome

Curriculum Office Staff Changes

It is with a heavy heart that we say goodbye to **Suzanne Kraus** who has left the Curriculum Office to explore new adventures in Seattle Washington.

Colleen Denniston will be assuming the role of Testing Coordinator on September 3rd. She comes to the Curriculum office from her most recent position as an EPIC Credentialed Trainer at Upstate. Please stop by the Curriculum Office and introduce yourself.

Graduation Competencies and Educational Program Objectives (EPOs) are used as the basis for all courses and clerkships. These objectives for the medical education program serve as statements of what students are expected to learn or accomplish during the course of medical school at Upstate.

<http://www.upstate.edu/com/curriculum/objectives.php>

From the Office of Evaluation, Assessment and Research

It was very exciting to participate in orientation for new students and students starting their clerkships. I hope you enjoyed our little video about the number of people and groups that use student feedback and can see the importance of student voices in decision-making and QI at Upstate.

A few notes, some congratulations and a trivia question (with a prize):

- **MS1 and MS2 evaluations:** At the request of students last year, all MS1 and MS2 evaluations are now being sent to students in MedHub at the beginning of each unit so that you can evaluate lectures in real-time as the unit progresses rather than relying on recall. When a faculty member lectures more than once in a unit, you can start an evaluation and click "Save answers—I will finish later." Your evaluation will then be saved and not submitted until you return and complete it. Evals will still close one week after your unit exam, so please fill them out and submit them before the window closes.
- **New faculty resource for assessment tools and info:** All COM faculty members should now have access to a new resource on blackboard. CUR101: Assessment Research and Resources was created this summer by our wonderful MS2 Work Study Julienne Abad and includes information on assessment methods that might be of use to you. Check it out and please email me (germainl@upstate.edu) if you have resources that you would like to share on the site.
- **Research study seeks MS4 participants:** Fourth-year medical students are invited to participate in an exploratory research study to assess peer learning environments. Please email Lisa Oliver (OliverL@upstate.edu) if you're interested in participating. There is free food involved.
- **BIG congratulations:** The RMed/RPA Research team including Carrie Roseamelia, Emily Mader, Sheila Singleton-Best, Melissa Arthur and Sarah Lewis had a poster accepted to the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine Conference. The poster is about how 3rd year Medical and PA Students from rural training programs describe the interactions between rural settings and clinical training using the PhotoVoice research method. We are very grateful to the RMed students that participated in the project.

- Follow **evaluate_upstate** on Instagram 
- **Trivia:** What member of the Curriculum Office staff was born on Halloween? Prizes to the first student, staff* and faculty member who comment with the correct answer on the evaluate_upstate Instagram photo of this newsletter.

*If you are on, or have access to the staff B-day list, you are totally not eligible...c'mon now.

Lauren J. Germain, Ph.D., M.Ed.
Director of Evaluation, Assessment, and Research



**You said...
We did...**

MS1 & MS2

- ⇒ Students said the video of lecturers' PowerPoint's in the Alumni Auditorium were not clear.
- ⇒ A new videocamera was installed and the camera was zoomed so that the pointer of the instructor became clear during teaching.
- ⇒ The GEMS exam software's dependency on the wireless network lead to frustrating delays for students.
- ⇒ We switched to Exam-Soft that allows the exam to be downloaded ahead of time and has better analytics to provide more useful data to both students and faculty.

MS3&MS4

- ⇒ Students frustrated with not being directly observed by an attending.
- ⇒ A policy was put in place to require at least two direct observations by a faculty member per 5 week clerkship. Feedback must be given to the student at the time of the direct observation.
- ⇒ Students did not feel it was appropriate to receive a conditional for not completing clinical logging on time
- ⇒ The policy was changed so that the students will receive an Incomplete if clinical logging is not completed on time. Logging must then be completed within 7 days or the grade will change to a conditional.

Committee Updates

The Curriculum Committee shall be responsible for recommending curriculum coordination, development, objectives, content and methods of evaluation to the Dean.



Curriculum Committee— Jenny Christner, MD

Over the summer, the Curriculum Committee has been busy evaluating program effectiveness by conducting annual reviews of each course and clerkship. This involves reviewing objectives, content, pedagogy, assessment and student evaluations. Recommendations have been made and will be implemented. Many changes have been made based on student feedback on end-of-course and end-of-clerkship evaluations. Please continue to complete the evaluations; it is important to the committees to hear what students have to say.

In August, the Dean met with the Curriculum Committee to review their recommendation for continued curricular improvement for 2015 and beyond. He was pleased with the recommendations and is looking forward to working with chairs and faculty, and students to implement the suggested changes. We will be reaching out to you for your input regarding these changes. Look for regular updates in this newsletters and in your e-mails.

Phase 1—Tom Poole, PhD

The Phase 1 Committee is working on several exciting changes to assessment and the curriculum in the MS1 and 2 years this fall. We are implementing new exam software from ExamSoft that allows students to download the exam ahead of time, has nice bells and whistles for students during the exam such as a built-in calculator and multiple ways to include images, and provides excellent student and faculty feedback after the exams. We are also implementing an end of year exam in the style of Step 1 using the NBME Custom Assessment Service (CAS). This exam will be taken during finals week and its content will be all Step 1 retired questions chosen to reflect the unique Upstate MS1 curriculum. MS2 will end with NBME Subject exams in all courses including Pharmacology.

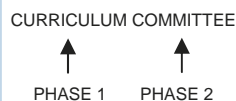
On a lighter note, we are very excited about proposed changes to the 2015-16 and 2016-17 pre-clerkship curriculum and have begun to explore multiple options to bring problem-based learning and other forms of self-directed learning into multiple courses. We welcome student input into what you think will work for you and welcome back the MS2 class

officers to the committee and encourage the participation of current MS1 students and their elected representatives. I am the Basic Science Advisor in the Cayuga Learning Community so UGA-UGA!!

Phase 2—Paul Ko, MD

For this new clinical year, Phase 2 has been busy with its various activities in its oversight of the clerkships and clinical curriculum. At the Fall Phase 2 Retreat, and into the new year, each clerkship has put a special focus on increasing our Direct Observation rates of students by Faculty on their rotations.

Along with this, we have been focused on providing better feedback to our students via their mid-rotation sessions, through the MedHub evaluation system, as well as through direct student and faculty development sessions. At the MS3 Orientation this year, we had a special session on how to solicit and obtain better feedback throughout a student's clinical years. This past year also saw the inaugural March into Residency course for 4th year medical students. It was met with great reviews, and we will continue to refine that course, as well as the various 4th-year 'Acting Internships' and Electives to round out our students clinical years at SUNY Upstate.



Student Government

It is an honor for me to address you on behalf of Upstate Student Government (USG), and to share with you a little of what we do! I am a third year medical student in the MD/MPH program and currently serve as the president of USG.

USG involves all four of the colleges at Upstate. We oversee clubs and organizations, and serve as student representatives for countless committees and task forces. We have enjoyed collaborating with the College of Medicine Curriculum Office through being involved with Phases 1 & 2, participating in accreditation site visits, and providing student input for the new academic building.

If anyone, students or faculty, has an idea for a project or initiative you would like to see happen, please don't hesitate to contact me. We look forward to hearing from you!

Nicole M. Cifra
MD/MPH Candidate, Upstate Medical University
President, Upstate Student Government

Upstate Student Government Website:
http://www.upstate.edu/currentstudents/campuslife/activities/so_usg.php

Student Spotlight: Eric Wohlford & Arthur Zak



During the surgery clerkship orientation students have an introduction to the OR that includes gloving, a tour through the OR, and a PP on several things that students need to know about the Upstate ORs. It is a good presentation, but unfortunately it

does not work for any other OR location other than Upstate and it does not provide students any real world exposure to the actual OR rooms. During last period's "end of clerkship meeting," it was mentioned that a video explaining the real world of the OR would help students immensely.

At the end of the meeting, students Eric Wohlford and Arthur Zak approached me to ask if I would be interested in them putting together an introduction to the OR video. I reiterated that a video would be a great idea, but a big undertaking, but if they actually had a chance to do it, I would love to see what they had. Yesterday they sent

me the video that they put together over the last two weeks.

It exceeded my expectations!

Their video is so wonderful! It is extremely professional, well written, and produced. It is very informative while still being interesting and fun. It will be perfect for every student that needs to enter the OR, and students will have the ability to refer back to the video at any time if they have questions.

The following link will bring you directly to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9-7S9ugMeU&feature=youtu.be>

Submitted by,
Rebecca Bellini
Surgery Clerkship Coordinator

Reminder about Commendation/Concern Notes:

Dear Faculty,

Please remember that you can fill out a Commendation Note or a Concern Note on any student. All faculty have access to this form in MedHub.

The Commendation Note is for when a student goes above and beyond the call of duty. This form is different from the standard Clerkship Clinical Evaluation Form, which is used to evaluate third year students and write narrative comments on their strengths and weaknesses.

If you have a student about whom you are concerned, you should first discuss this concern with the student and the clerkship director, if applicable. Feel free to contact me as well. I meet with most students for whom I receive a concern note. One concern note does NOT impact a student's file or future (unless of severe gravity – e.g. cheating, drug abuse etc.). Students, like us, do not wake up in the morning with the intent to be unprofessional. I often find that these students have

other issues going in their lives. The concern note often prompts a discussion that then allows for important interventions and connecting students with needed services. I'd also like to direct you to an article by Maxine Papadakis who has published extensively in the field of medical student professionalism. It highlights the importance of acting on unprofessional behaviors early.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. **Jenny Christner**

Steps to create a Commendation/Concern Note:

- Log into MedHub:
<https://upstate.medhub.com>
- Click on Evaluations Tab
- Click on Initiate Performance Evaluation of a Student
- Select the course or clerkship
- Select the student
- Select Professionalism Commendation/Concern Report



For questions regarding this publication, please contact Lisa at PhelanLA@upstate.edu or 464-7004