



**Student Education Group**  
**12/2/14**  
**Minutes**

**Members unable to attend:** Ben Clements, Bryan Brown

**Members in attendance:** Will Manning, Brian Till, Dylan Hershkowitz, Sarah Johnson, Caleb Seufert, Reiko Sakai, Emily Schloff, Liz Carson, Nicholas Field, Jenna Arruda, Rachel Carlson, Pete Seymour, Karl Kristiansen, Charlotte Hastings

**Minutes by:** Brian Till

**Chairperson:** Jenna Arruda

**Guests:** Laurey Burris

**Step 1 issues (Laurey Burris)**

- Laurey has been talking to the Wellness committee since last spring about ideas for improving Step 1 prep and atmosphere. She mentioned that she would like to be working more closely with SEG about this issue and raised the idea of whether a joint subcommittee should be formed with Wellness and SEG members to meet regularly with her.
- She noted that historically her office has 1:1 counselling as the primary vehicle for board prep intervention. That will continue, but she is adding large group sessions, as well. There is a new event this week, on Thursday evening, about how to make prep schedules. Laurey noted that she is concerned at that so few students have signed up so far, roughly 35.
- SEG broadly agreed this was a reasonable turnout.
- Laurey said that she primarily has two groups of people coming to see her regarding Step 1, those who want more services offered earlier and those who already feel stressed out by the number of students talking about Step 1 studying and would prefer a tamped down sort of program.
- Caleb asked how much advertising has gone on surrounding the Thursday event.
- Laurey said the event has been advertised in the Weekly Wire and that she hoped someone from SEG would be willing to announce it to the class.
- Laurey is also hoping to do a session on how to make a Step 2 schedules, and a “how to answer questions” session. She also said that she is working in conjunction with CAPS a session focused on wellbeing during Step 1 study. If there are other ideas for workshops, she is completely open to them.
- Karl asked Laurey had considered using the big sib program.
- Laurey said she’s been thinking of doing a letter writing program where fourth years would write letters to their little sibs as they go to clerkship, for instance. Or for third years writing to second years as they prepare for Step1.
- Jenna said that this sounded great in theory, but she worried not every member of the class would want to participate. She suggested that maybe a class letter, from ’14 to ’15, for instance, might work.

- Emily and Dylan said they were interested to get involved broadly with Laurey's work.
- Laurey said that letters would be going out soon to students that the administration is concerned about for Step 1 given their performance in Foundation. She asked that some SEG members help edit the letter.
- Reiko asked what happens after "the letter" goes out.
- Laurey said the student is paired with a mentor, a schedule is established, and that she meets regularly with those students during the lead up to the exam.
- Reiko said she would handle this, and plans to be in touch.
- Laurey said that she is trying to create a new language whereby students, when confronted by someone asking about their Step 1 studying, can say, "I'm trying not to talk about that," as to prevent collective anxiety.
- Liz said that she really thinks the College of Medicine needs to focus on this earlier in the curriculum. The issue, she said, is palpable in her first year class, and she wondered if the issue of collective anxiety might be better handled during first year.
- Caleb asked if there are any other schools that handle issues around environment really well that Laurey is looking to.
- Laurey said that most schools are focused on institutionalizing mindfulness and meditation into their curriculums. She noted that Department of Defense is widely adopting this now. She noted that the literature now is significant, and that mindfulness mediation has been shown to elevate test scores.
- Winooski, she noted, has gotten grant from the Vermont Community Foundation to train the entire town in mindfulness. They have preschoolers starting in the training, Laurey said.

#### **Step1 / Study space (Dylan):**

- Dylan said he's been talking with Wellness about trying to get better communication with student success. He also said they're talking about creating a document that talks about what all the various commercial study tools are, based on similar models from other school. He said they've been collecting study schedules to send out to people in conjunction with Laurey's event Thursday.
- He also said that he and Alison Howe are considering doing a survey to look at study time, tools, etc. and performance, so that recommendations might be made.
- Dean Jeffries noted that, in the last two years, only four students have failed the exam. Foundations prepares students exceedingly well for the exam, he said. He said it's important that the narrative get out there that, if you do need help, you should take it. The administration has a very good idea of the few students that they're worried about, and that they have a great interest in making sure everyone passes.

#### **Quick annotations (Nick):**

- Nick said that the proposal to have all weekly quiz questions annotated met resistance at Foundations committee. The flash point was related to the issue of them being mandatory for course directors.
- Kara said she thinks all the faculty are open to the idea of annotating. She thinks it's possible, and she noted that the faculty didn't like the specific policy put forward. She said they're all really

busy who have other “full time” jobs. She said she thought that having things be 100% required was a major issue.

- Jenna said the reason the policy was put forward was because one specific course director said, in the past, that if there was a policy stating they must do annotations then they would. She noted there are no points for second place.
- Nick said he’s met with Alison and Eileen last year and Eileen was excited about the prospect of using TA’s.
- Kara is planning to go into neuro and she approached Dr. Forehand after Foundations last week. She’s planning to annotate the neuro questions during a reading month this year. Kara said both Dr. Tracy and Dr. Forehand want to meet weekly with the students annotating their course’s respective quizzes to review their work.
- Jenna suggested we pair course directors with fourth years going into the respective field, and that they spend reading months working on annotations. This would provide a foundation that TA’s could subsequently work on top of.
- Kara thought that would work well, and would work a lot better than a broad policy.
- Jenna said a policy would be necessary at some point to try to keep course directors compliant.
- Nick will push ahead with a survey to gauge student interest. Nick said he will also reach out to each of the course directors and see what needs to happen for their respective courses.

#### **Course evaluations (Jenna):**

- Survey development is underway. The hope is to go to out to faculty and students in January.

#### **Honor code (Jenna):**

- A Poster will be presented on the honor code at the stick season retreat.

#### **Student exam accommodations (Brian):**

- Brian said the Foundations exams have been moved back to Meded. The Clerkship exams will remain at the UVM exam proctoring center. He also noted that the new process would demand that Clerkship students schedule their exams themselves at the beginning of the course.
- It was suggested that the clerkship course coordinators perform this role, as they schedule exams for everyone else, and it just seems they’ve lost that loving feeling when it comes to students requiring exam accommodations with this system.
- Brian said he will reach out to Laurey and Dean Zehle on the issue and see if that’s a possibility.

#### **HSF improvements (Elizabeth):**

- Elizabeth asked why there isn’t TA in the lecture portion of HSF. She noted that there’s a shift from having an exam every 2 weeks and every 4 weeks, and that having TA’s to help with some of the less well-organized lectures would be particularly useful.
- Emily said there is a histo TA, as well as TA’s for the anatomy portion. She also just started TA’ing in the course and agreed to look into it.

#### **Clerkship selection guide (Will):**

- Will reached out to Jill Jemison about finding out how the algorithm works for the clerkship lottery. He's drawn up a document that the second year reps have all provided feedback on. The plan is for the document to go out to the class of '18 in the lead up to next year's lottery.

The SEG adjourned.