

Staff Student Liaison Group – Years 1 and 2

Wednesday 5th December 2007

3.00pm

128, SAFB

South Kensington Campus

Minutes

Present: Mr T Wills (Chair), Dr R Aspinall, Dr M Barrett, Mr A Chopra, Dr M Croucher, Dr N Curtin, Mr S Dubb, Professor M Ferenczi, Professor T Firth, Dr S Gentleman, Ms G Going, Professor J Higham, Dr C John, Ms K Khan, Professor J Laycock, Mr O Nehikhare, Ms G Rajasooriar, Mr O Shariq, Mr D Smith, Dr M Toledano,

In attendance: Ms J Williams (secretary), Ms J Shiel, Mr P Ratcliffe

Apologies: Mr R Barnard, Dr L Lightstone, Dr E Muir, Dr K Meeran,

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

2. Terms of Reference

AGREED: a) that the Terms of Reference (SSLG1,20708-01) be approved

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

AGREED: a) that the Minutes of the meeting on 23rd May 2007 (SSLG1,20708-02) be approved

4. Year 1 Autumn term teaching

4.1 Molecules, Cells and Disease (MCD)

REPORTED: a) that the course had generally been enjoyed with many excellent lecturers
b) that some students felt there was at times a mismatch of learning objectives with information given in the lectures eg in the Metabolism course
c) that they found the swapping of sessions in the Genetics topic confusing and felt there was not enough explanation regarding the practical
d) that some slides were hard to read because of their background colour
e) that some of the diagrams within the course guide required additional explanatory text
f) that the practicals and tutorials were greatly appreciated

AGREED: g) that the Theme Leader would feed comments back to the topic leaders
h) that the students should ensure specific comments are also fed back through SOLE

Action: Student Year Reps and Theme Leader

- 4.2 **Problem Based Learning (PBL)**
REPORTED: a) that most students did not like the double sessions, scheduled to ease the recruitment problem
- 4.3 **Sociology**
REPORTED: a) that this was a popular course and the videos were particularly enjoyed
- 4.4 **Epidemiology in Practice**
REPORTED: a) that students found the course interesting
b) that some felt more specific learning objectives would be useful and that some of the graphs required more annotation
c) that they felt the first tutorial was better than the second
AGREED: d) that the students would feed the specific issues back to the course leader
e) that the course leader would review the learning objectives
Action: Student Year Reps and Course Leader
- 4.5 **Patient Contact Course (PCC)**
REPORTED: a) that students enjoyed this course and felt the link between this and the communication programme was useful and timely
b) that there were occasional difficulties in contacting the patients
- 4.6 **Library**
REPORTED: a) that students felt that the number of sessions could be reduced, although the plagiarism and referencing sessions were considered very useful
b) that the timing meant that students did not always see the relevance of what they were learning, although it was pointed out that both PBL and PCC made use of the skills taught in the first term
AGREED: c) that the Library would emphasise the importance and relevance of their course to the rest of the curriculum more clearly
c) that the Student Reps would encourage those who had not completed the library quizzes to do so
Action: Library staff and Student Year Reps
- 4.7 **Communication Programme**
REPORTED: a) that students had enjoyed the course, particularly the simulated patient session
b) that they found session 3 rather too long
c) that the tutors were all excellent
- 5
5.1 **Year 2 Autumn term teaching**
Neuroscience and Mental Health (NMH)
REPORTED: a) that students would appreciate tutorial take home notes as in Year 1
b) that they would also welcome additional T/F questions in the guides
c) that the session on the review of histories had some problems.
d) that ideally smaller groups would be welcome, although recruitment of sufficient tutors was a problem
e) that some lectures were very slow being uploaded onto the intranet
f) that students appreciated the use of multi media in the course
g) that the interface on the NMH intranet page was not as useful as that of MCD

AGREED: h) that students would feedback specific issues to the course leader
i) that a Faculty wide database of teachers and the recent merger with the Trust might potentially ease recruitment
j) that in the shorter time, more questions could be submitted on webCT with answers provided at a later date
k) that suggestions to include neuro rotations on firms should be fed back to the Head of Year 3
l) that students should email lecturers and then follow up with the course leader if intranet slides were not forthcoming
m) that webmaster was reviewing the intranet pages interface
Action: Student Year Reps, Course Leader and Webmaster

5.2
REPORTED: **Pharmacology**
a) that students appreciated having all the material uploaded on the intranet
b) that they found the order of the guide rather confusing
c) that they would welcome additional T/F questions in guide and more case studies
d) that they felt some of the lecturers could have been more interactive
AGREED: e) that the course leader would look at the organisation of the guide and feedback to lecturers
Action: Course Leader

5.3
REPORTED: **Molecules, Cells and Disease**
a) that the course had been enjoyed, particularly the haematology
b) that the diagnostics course could be improved with T/F questions and tutorials
AGREED: d) that the course leader would consider these suggestions
Action: Course Leader

5.4
REPORTED: **Endocrinology**
a) that the course had been enjoyed and the tutorials felt to be particularly useful
b) that students appreciated the many T/F questions provided
c) that students would welcome take home messages after tutorials, like Year 1 MCD
AGREED: d) that these comments would be considered, although it was felt that take home messages at this stage in the course might diminish attendance and discourage note taking skills
Action: Course Leader

5.5
REPORTED: **Anatomy**
a) that the course was received positively and the demonstrators considered excellent
b) that the diagrams in the guide could be larger to help clarity
AGREED: c) that the course leader would ensure diagrams were larger for next year
Action: Course Leader

5.6
REPORTED: **Problem Based Learning**
a) that students felt that the tutors were of variable quality and not all appeared confident with the process

- b) that a limit of a maximum of 10 slides per presentation was suggested
c) that formats other than powerpoint presentations should be encouraged
d) that a prize for the best presentation (in the absence of any assessment), might help motivate students
e) that these comments would be fed back to the Academic Lead for PBL to consider and report back to this group
- AGREED: **Action: Academic Lead for PBL**

5.7

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

- a) that students found the course very useful and enjoyed the interactive nature of the sessions

5.8

- REPORTED: **Communication Programme**
a) that students enjoyed the course particularly the feedback in the simulated interview session
b) that the timing prior to the first attachment was excellent

6

- NOTED: **Formative Feedback**
a) that currently all students received individual feedback, including word descriptors on their performance in the formative exams
b) that in addition the Theme Leader held a session outlining common problems made in the exam
c) that MCQs with answers were already provided as computerised self-tests
- REPORTED: d) that students would welcome additional specific feedback on badly answered questions, although it was pointed out that this would then eliminate these questions from the question bank
- AGREED: e) that the Sub Board Chair and Academic Officer for Years 1 and 2 would consider further options in more detail and report back to this committee
Action: Sub Board Chair (Year 1) and Education Rep (Years 1 and 2)

7.

7.1

- AGREED: **Learning Resources**
webCT
a) that students should be encouraged to use the Discussion boards
Action: Course Leaders and Year Reps

8.

- REPORTED: **Library**
a) that students were reminded about the drop in sessions held by the Library within their Learning and Research Programme
b) that work was on-going at the South Kensington Library but that the Library facilities were now operative at the Hammersmith Campus
c) that building work was underway in the Charing Cross Library and alternative quiet spaces were being sought, although access was still available

9.

9.1

- REPORTED: **Quality**
SOLE
a) that the Year 1 and 2 response rate was currently unacceptably low
b) that students were reminded that their feedback did result in

changes to the course and these changes were recorded on the intranet

AGREED: c) that the use of SOLE should be made more obvious to students next year and that presentations prior to its opening should be made by Year Reps and Head of Quality, in addition to emails.
d) that the ICSM SU President should further encourage participation to boost the response

Action: ICSM SU President

10. Non Academic Issues

REPORTED: a) that Year 1 students were encouraged to attend the Christmas gathering with personal tutors and other key staff
b) that a briefing meeting would be held with all Year 2 personal tutors in the new Year on exam issues to help them deal with potential queries from their tutees
c) that there was a revised procedure for submitting Mitigating Circumstances on the intranet and feedback on this should be addressed to ICSM SU President

11. Any Other Business
11.1 First Aid Training

REPORTED: a) that students would welcome additional first aid training early in their course
AGREED: b) that this would be discussed further at the meeting planned to look at the Foundation Course and suggestions would be fed back to ICSM SU President

Action: Year Reps and ICSM SU President

11.2 Teaching and Learning

REPORTED: a) that useful discussions on how teaching and learning could be improved, held between the Pharmacology course leader and student body would continue
b) that the notes from this meeting would be re-circulated to those involved and fed into the on-going Curriculum Review process

Action: Pharmacology course leader and Education Rep (Years 1 and 2)

12. Dates of Next Meetings

5th March 2008 at 3pm in 128, SAFB
28th May 2008 at 3pm in 128, SAFB

Meeting Closed at: 5.10pm

Tim Wills/Jo Williams
Dec 2007

Yr1 Formative Exams and Feedback to Students

To ensure that the Formative exams are the same level of difficulty as Summative exams, the questions are drawn from the same bank. For this reason we do not release the Formative exams questions. Instead, each student receives:

1. Individual report form. Students received individualized feedback about their performance on the Jan 08 Formative exam: a report form, revised this year in consultation with students via Tim Wills. Each student's form sent by e-mail.

It included overall mark, SAQ mark, Objective question mark (T/F + SBA + EMQ), and word descriptor for each + word descriptor for MCD SAQs and for FCP SAQs.

In addition the Certainty-based marks for the Objective questions were included, along with word descriptor (under-confident, OK, over-confident) for each certainty level.

2. Additional individual feedback. Students can get additional information about his/her own performance on each type of Objective questions (T/F, SBA and EMQ separately) via the link in WebCT (click on "LAPT detailed feedback" icon).

3. Class feedback. On 19 Feb 08 the Dr. Cheryl Gregory-Evans gave a presentation to the class about its performance as a group, highlighting particular areas of weakness in terms of topics and question type. On the same occasion, Prof. Curtin gave a guided-tour of the Report form and Additional feedback. Our slides are on the Intranet (Yr1 Exams & Assessment)

Question-by-question feedback

1. Objective questions. Students have access to a large number of Objective questions in Self-tests and LAPT that mark each question immediately (instant question-by-question feedback).

2. Peer-marked SAQs (NEW), We (Theme Leaders and Yr1&2 Exam Sub-board Chairs) have devised a new scheme to give students instant feedback about performance on Short answer questions. This takes the form of a Peer-Marking session in which students will be given an SAQ and have 10 min (the standard time allocated on real exams) to write the answer. Students then exchange papers and mark another student's answer (peer-marking). An Academic expert will show the "model" answer as a slide and go through it step by step. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions and the question and answer will be posted on the Intranet after the session.

The first such session has been announced to the students and will be held on 13 March featuring a LSS Respiration question. Academic expert: Dr. Shakeeb Moosavi.

Depending on attendance and feedback from students & staff, more such sessions may happen next year.

Prof. N. Curtin
Yr1 Exam Sub-board Chair.
25 Feb 08

Year 1 course issues – SSLG1,2 meeting – 5th March 2008

LCRS

Neuroscience & Mental Health

- Excellent topic. All lecturers are very good.
- One of the practical answers 'Peripheral Nerve Motor Conduction Velocity In Man' not on intranet.
- PowerPoint much easier to use than pdf. Would it be possible to ask some lecturers to put their lectures up in PowerPoint form rather than pdf?
- Could the quiz at the end be segregated so that they come after the relevant lecture?

Human Life Cycle

- Short course very well taught
- Integrate Symbrio into lectures.
- The timetabling for the practicals was confusing. Nobody really figured out when to go where. Instead of E-H it was A-D and it wasn't clear when each subset was scheduled to do the practical.
- Is it possible to get the Embryonic Disk at home instead of having to come into SAF every time we want to use it.

Musculoskeletal

- Very short course but very useful
- A lot of people didn't really grasp muscles before the course
- Movie was well enjoyed
- Action potential quiz on WebCT was appreciated by students very much

Endocrinology

- Enjoyable course.
- Fill-in-gap system **incredibly effective**- students feel that they concentrate more and learn more in lectures. It also encourages them to attend all lectures, regardless of whether or not the answers for the gaps will appear on the intranet later.
- Tutorials are **extremely** well organised- they cement any concepts introduced during the lecture. Tutorials should always be after the lectures.
- Diagrams sometimes require accompanying text to explain the concepts more clearly.

LSS

Cardiovascular System

- Good tie in with anatomy of the thorax
- Generally everyone enjoyed the course very much. Especially the practicals.
- Is it possible to have more practicals or hands on interactive sessions?
- The lecture notes were very hard to use as for some lectures all we received were blocks of text. It would be useful to have bullet points or lecture slides instead.

- There was a period of time when none of the Cardiovascular system lectures were available on the intranet. The second year's 'version' of their first year lectures were also missing.
- Everybody found the self tests very useful and appreciated them very much, they thought they were really really good! More frequent self tests in the second half like the first half of CVS would be helpful.
- Some of the lecturers assumed we knew more than we actually did at that point in time. This made some lectures very hard to grasp. If the lecturers were informed beforehand that we are first year students and have not studied CVS before, it would be beneficial to the learning experience.

Respiratory

- Only a few sessions into the course, therefore, not a lot of feedback.
- Practicals have so far been found useful.
- The introductory lecture on the anatomy perhaps required more text on the slides.
- It is very difficult to hop between the course guide and lectures- especially when the lectures put up on the intranet are in a different order. Last term's point- lecturers should put up the same lecture that they used.
- P8 Lung Histology 2 practical- not enough explanation given.
- P1 Respiratory Muscles practical- poorly organised.

Anatomy

- Popular, well taught, topic.
- Model answers to some of the questions on a few weeks later after if necessary?

FOCP

Communication Skills

- Good to see playback of self and see what you could improve
- Some people would like the opportunity to do this activity more than once?
- Other sessions for Communication Skills should be like this, the general opinion from the first year is that the interactive and role-play aspects of the course are excellent and there should be more!

PCC

- Again a huge variation in the quality of the tutors. Some v. involved, others not really sure of whole process.
- Could the deadlines be rethought? Module 2 clashes with PBL summative.
- Some problems with GP sessions at specific surgeries where students were not expected by staff.

PBL

- Variation in the quality and experience of the tutors. While some are experienced and offer detailed feedback, others have never done it before. Would it be possible for less experienced ones to take groups who had done PBL before (ie second year) or for all to go through the same rigorous training process?
- Case 6 done for many after summative released, and some have tutorials before relevant lecture.

Year 2 course issues – SSLG1,2 meeting – 5th March 2008

Neuroscience

- Lots of lecture notes were missing from the course guides. Many students use this as pre-reading material, and revision material, it is very important that they are put in.

Human Life Cycle

- No notes for HLC 1 – very difficult as need for pre-reading material.

Molecules Cells and Disease:

- Well-taught course- complex topics were explained well.
- Majority of the year found tutorials beneficial- esp. the Cell Cycle tutorial which was introduced this year.
- However, the content of the tutorial did not correlate with what was being taught lecture-wise at the time. For example, the tutorial *Exploration of the actin cytoskeleton by Listeria* was given weeks before the relevant lecture took place. This appeared to be the case with the other tutorials as well and confused a few students. Perhaps if the dates were swapped, the effectiveness of these tutorials would be improved as students would find the content more relevant and applicable to current lectures.
- The intranet layout of the MCD lecture slides in a timetable form on the intranet is very much appreciated. Students would like to see a similar arrangement applied to other courses.

Anatomy

- It is incredibly difficult to go through a prosection without a demonstrator. No amount of preparation is good enough for a prosection because the books are different.
- Also consider natural variation – things are not going to be in the same place in all specimens.
- The lectures do not go through everything in the dissection session, they tend to concentrate more on the clinical aspects of anatomy.
- Students found the instructional videos prepared by Dr Gentleman for Anatomy of the Head, Neck and Spine very useful and were disappointed that videos were not made for the Limbs course.
- Want to nominate one member of staff who was excellent for teaching award.

Musculoskeletal

- Rheumatology lectures were well-taught.
- However many students felt the course guide was lacking in content. Most of the lecture handouts were simply printouts of selected lecture slides and many felt that a summary of each topic in prose (as employed by other modules) would have been more beneficial.
- The course guide itself is missing many hand-outs (for example, the handouts for Session 9 immediately follow on from Session 5, with nothing in between.) This is important because students use it as pre

& post reading material.

- Students felt that the orthopaedics lectures were hard to follow. This can be attributed to the fact that there are no handouts in the course guide for any of the sessions. To work around this, many students used last year's lecture slides as a reference point. However, they were frustrated to discover that most of this year's orthopaedics lectures consisted of completely different slides.
- Could any lectures that have been significantly modified from last year kindly be uploaded onto the intranet before (or soon after) the lecture is delivered to avoid this confusion. Alternatively, could handouts please be included in the course guide to give students some indication of what to expect from the lecture.
- On more than one occasion there was some confusion amongst lecturers as to what time the lecture was supposed to start. For instance, the last lecture yesterday started half an hour after the scheduled starting time. By then, the majority of students had gone home assuming that the lecturer was not going to turn up, and consequently missed out on valuable information.
- However some individual lecturers praised.

Pharmacology:

- Well taught subject. Tutorials were found useful.
- Although one case study has been put up on WebCT, students expressed a desire to see practice MCQs (in a similar format to the Endocrinology ones) also uploaded onto the intranet.
- Students would like to thank the Course Leader for replying to Pharm questions that were posted on the discussion boards.

MEL:

- Practice questions and explained answers as well as last year's essay were liked by the majority of students.
- Many also appreciated the session in which a practice SAQ had to be answered under exam conditions.
- Some students felt that a summary of the lecture (for pre-reading purposes) in prose form explaining the various Laws and Acts would be beneficial as the handouts in the course guide are simply bullet points from the lecture slides.

PPD:

- It is evident that our year's uptake of the allocated PPD WebCT work was poor. From our own experience, and speaking to fellow students we believe that this was due to a few factors.
- The deadlines for the PPD course were set in the midst of the second term- arguably one of the most strenuous periods of time in the second year, if not the whole pre-clinical course. Many students felt they did not have enough time to read through all the articles and answer the questions properly as they were struggling to keep up with the sheer volume of lecture-based content that was being taught alongside.
- In order to overcome this problem, perhaps the allocated WebCT sessions should be rescheduled to take place during a less busy time of the year (i.e. the 4 week firms in the first term). As there are no lectures or new content being taught at that time it would be more

convenient for students. Furthermore, as some of the cases involve clinical scenario they may prove to be more relevant as students are in a similar setting themselves on the wards etc.

- A general consensus revealed that many students felt they were not told enough information about WebCT and what they were required to do. Perhaps a short introductory paragraph on the Undergraduate Intranet PPD and MEL page would address this issue?
- In addition to this, to stress the importance of the PPD modules and to encourage more students to complete them, perhaps more e-mails could be sent out to the year stating the deadlines for each assignment.
- Finally, after speaking to those students who managed to complete each session, the majority reported that it took them much longer to complete than the allocated time (2 hours per session) There is an exhaustive list of articles to make notes on, perhaps the number of articles could be reduced to include only the important ones?

Communication Programme:

- Could Session 4 (in which students were required to present a patient) be rescheduled to take place before the start of firms?
- Formative - Not enough people knew about it. More notifications.