



The
University
of Sydney

CURRICULUM MATTERS

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ISSUE 1

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE OFFICE OF
MEDICAL EDUCATION



IN THIS ISSUE

Page 2

Deans' welcome

Page 2

OME staff spotlight

Page 4

Student Services staff
spotlight

Page 5

Student spotlight

Page 6

OME update

Page 6

Caption corner winner

Page 7

Caption corner

Page 7

Faculty news

Page 8

Important dates &
OME contacts

Chancellor's welcome message

It is a great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all who are about to commence their studies in Dentistry and Medicine at this renowned University.



HER EXCELLENCY
PROFESSOR MARIE
BASHIR AC CVO

The University of Sydney, Australia's first, was established in 1850 by visionary individuals who were determined that this University would be open to all who aspired to higher education, regardless of economic, social, religious or ethnic background, and that the highest standards of scholarship should be provided.

These noble aspirations are reflected 158 years later in the considerable diversity within our student population — a diversity of which we can all be proud, together with the fine academic standing of the University in Australia and the world.

I recall with a sense of joy and gratitude, my own experience as a medical student at this University, many years ago. Opportunities for new pathways of learning, of sharing values and camaraderie,

and with the hope of "making a difference", are all as relevant today as then. You will be challenged and uplifted daily by the vastness of new scientific knowledge, and by the exhilaration as well as intelligent professionalism inherent in humane and good patient care. And you will contemplate the associations between mind, body and spirit. There will be countless rewarding experiences across the years of your studies, and beyond, interaction with skilled and generous teachers, and the awareness that you are joining a world wide community dedicated to the common good.

Over many years the University community has established strong links with medical and dental colleagues around the world, not only in the realm of higher academia or through collaborative research studies, but also through the shared experiences of our students who have undertaken overseas placements, particularly in developing countries.

Certainly this has been one of the most enlightening and fulfilling experiences of my professional life.

In conclusion, I want to wish each of you a happy, and successful experience at University. I look forward to meeting you at some time across the years of your study.

Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO
Chancellor

Deans' welcome

Professor Bruce Robinson: 'It is a real pleasure for me to welcome you to the University of Sydney Medical Program, to the Faculty of Medicine and, for many of you, to the University of Sydney. You come from many backgrounds: your previous studies, your University experience, your employment experience, your own personal life adventure to this point bring to us a richness and diversity which we in the Faculty treasure. You will find that these

qualities will be a wonderful resource in your PBL group discussions and other learning as you explore your way through the Medical Program. It will, at times, be a challenging experience but I hope an inspiring and rewarding one.

You are fortunate to be joining us at a time when we have just completed a major review of the medical curriculum. The implementation of the review will bring many improvements including a completely revised

Block 1. We have also established a new Office of Medical Education led by Tessa Ho and colleagues. I can assure you that they are totally committed to delivering medical education that is unrivalled anywhere.

There will be many opportunities during your stay with us to follow your personal interests. I hope that many, if not all of you, will develop research interests and pursue Options or Honours and become passionate about your own personal (cont'd overleaf...)



Deans' welcome (cont'd)

pursuit of further in depth knowledge. Similarly, I also hope that many of you will take advantage of our international links and have the opportunity of taking an Elective overseas.

Whatever you choose there are many members of the Faculty in OME, the Faculty Office and our Schools who are committed to assist you. All you need to do is ask.'

Professor Eli Schwarz: 'A very sincere welcome to the Faculty of Dentistry. I trust that your years with us will be interesting and challenging.

You are arriving from many corners of this country and many corners of the world. You arrive with a variety of backgrounds and for some, the studies into high level biological sciences and dentistry will be more challenging than for others. But everyone one of you has strengths in specific areas that will give you an opportunity to excel. Seek out your strength and focus on this even when the going gets

the toughest. Our problem based and clinical programs are designed so that everyone can contribute, and each of you will slowly but surely attain new knowledge and skills that will bring you closer to your goal, to graduate as a dental professional.

We are constantly looking at our curriculum and the study environment to make your experience with us a positive one. For instance, you will be the first class to experience our newly constructed dental simulation clinics. Also, new developments in the medical curriculum that you will follow in part in the first two years are being implemented in 2008.

During your time with us, we will offer you additional opportunities to do research or you will have an opportunity to expand your experience in elective studies and in extramural programs. Hopefully, you will appreciate these opportunities and make use of them.

We wish you good luck and a productive time. If you wish to seek our advice or assistance,

please don't hesitate to approach us. We are all here to support you.'



FROM LEFT: PROFESSOR BRUCE ROBINSON (DEAN, FACULTY OF MEDICINE), PROFESSOR ELI SCHWARZ (DEAN, FACULTY OF DENTISTRY)



OME staff spotlight

Behind the scenes at OME

ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE – OME TEAM EFFORT

The newly established Office of Medical Education (OME) is proud of its enthusiastic and experienced academic and administrative team. In this edition, we would like to introduce OME academic on secondment, Dr Wendy Hu who looks after the development of the core curriculum and the learning objectives for the Medical Program. Furthermore, we would like to introduce our dedicated administrative team: the executive team, the learning and teaching support team and the assessment and evaluation team. Together, these three teams provide the administrative support to our staff and students in order to deliver a high quality medical program.

Associate Professor Tessa Ho



Dr Wendy Hu

SENIOR LECTURER, CORE CURRICULUM

Wendy graduated with the University Medal from Sydney University in 1986 and went on to train as a general practitioner with special interests in child health. Since 1988 she has been associated with the Children's Hospital at Westmead, as a clinician, a manager and then as a researcher, completing her doctorate on uncertainty and decision making in medical practice. Wendy is a Fellow of the Australian College of General Practitioners and has a Masters in Health Administration

from UNSW. She has taught general practice, ethics, health law, evidence based practice and community medicine to medical and postgraduate students, and published a textbook on problem based paediatrics. Wendy's student experiences have ranged from a gap year as a backpacker, to combining a full time PhD with being the parent of teens. In 2008, she will be based at the OME on secondment from Westmead Clinical School until October 2008 to assist

with the development of core curriculum and learning objectives for the Medical Program. Having worked in settings ranging from emergency helicopter retrievals to home visits in public housing estates, Wendy hopes to bring to this role an understanding of the diversity and exciting possibilities in medicine, as well as a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.



OME staff spotlight



OME administration team

The Executive Team

KAREN SCOTT – EXECUTIVE OFFICER

JUTTA JOHANNA VON DINCKLAGE – ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS)

The executive team is primarily responsible for the administrative and operational support of the Office of Medical Education.

- Student reception for general course enquiries
- Management of executive diaries (contact Jutta for appointments with Associate Professor Tessa Ho and Karen Scott)
- Secretarial support for OME Committees
- Administrative support of OME academic staff
- Hiring, management and support of general staff
- Supporting the implementation of the new medical curriculum
- Liaising with all clinical schools
- Management of OME budget
- Event Management incl. Orientation Week
- Organising and managing OME meetings
- OME newsletter (curriculummatters@med.usyd.edu.au)
- Maintenance of staff and PBL rooms

Karen Scott email:
kscott@med.usyd.edu.au,
Jutta von Dincklage email:
juttavd@med.usyd.edu.au.

Learning and Teaching Support Unit

CELINA ASPINALL – MANAGER

CHRISTIANA KATALINIC – STAGE 1 SUPPORT OFFICER

HEATHER GILBERT – STAGE 2 SUPPORT OFFICER

JAIME COMBER - STAGE 3 SUPPORT OFFICER

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit looks after the following for Stages 1-3 and Preparation for Internship:

- Timetable
- USydMP website updates
- Student website access
- Tutor recruitment
- Posting bulletins, sms alerts
- Student and tutor handbooks
- Block reviews

Learning and Teaching Support Unit
email ome-support@med.usyd.edu.au.

Assessment and Evaluation

PIETA JOY – MANAGER

RACHEL TYNE – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION ASSISTANT

TBA – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION ASSISTANT

The Assessment and Evaluation Unit looks after the following for Stages 1 – 3:

- Reformative Assessment, Barrier, OSCE and Long Case examinations
- Marking of examinations
- Notification of results to students
- USydMP Assessment and Evaluation website information
- Assessment and Evaluation bulletins
- PBL student feedback
- End of Block evaluation
- Rural placement evaluation
- Assessment and Evaluation Committees

Assessment and Evaluation Unit
email ome-assessment@med.usyd.edu.au.



FRONT ROW FROM LEFT: PIETA JOY, HEATHER GILBERT, JUTTA VON DINCKLAGE, RACHEL TYNE, BACK ROW FROM LEFT: CHRISTIANA KATALINIC, JAIME COMBER, CELINA ASPINALL, KAREN SCOTT

Office of Medical
Education (OME)

Passionate
Committed
Supportive
Pro-active



Student services staff spotlight

Student services @ medicine

Medical Program Administration Unit (MPAU)

HELEN TRIANTAFYLLOU – DIRECTOR, STUDENT SERVICES
KEN CHOW – ACTING MANAGER
MICHELLE TERAN – STUDENT ADVISOR, STAGES 1 AND 2
PAULINE KENNEDY – STUDENT ADVISOR, STAGE 3

The Medical Program Administration Unit is a division of Student Services in the Faculty of Medicine. It is primarily responsible for administration of enrolment, operational matters and progress of students in the University of Sydney Medical Program.

- Candidature variation
- Suspension/Withdrawal
- PBL room access and allocations
- General student administration
- Special consideration
- Enrolment and pre-enrolment
- Options, Honours and Elective Graduation administration
- Overseas student elective administration
- Graduate verification form/letters
- Co-ordination of internship applications
- Examination appeals
- Development and maintenance of MPAU student database
- General enquiries
- PBL stationery supplies

MPAU Team email
student.admin@med.usyd.edu.au.



FROM LEFT: HELEN TRIANTAFYLLOU, PAULINE KENNEDY, KEN CHOW, MICHELLE TERAN

Student services @ dentistry

Dentistry Student Services

CURRICULUM MATTERS

would like to continue featuring staff members of the Medical and Dental Faculties in each issue.

We appreciate your contributions!

Submissions can be emailed to:
curriculummatters@med.usyd.edu.au

The undergraduate Dentistry Student Administration Team consists of: Tiffany Courville (Yr administration BDent1), Leonie Cooke (Yr administration BDent 2), Eileen Nio (Exams, Yr1 & 2), Anne Quinlan (Student Administration), Nicole Taylor (Student Affairs), Patrick Ryan (e-resources & communications; timetable), William Thevapalan (audiovisual support).

The Dentistry Student Services Team is responsible for the following:

- student information

- student administration, student admissions
- assessments/exams
- administrative services
- curriculum planning
- lecture note availability on web
- timetable
- posting of bulletins, e-mail alerts, SMS announcements
- technical support

Dentistry Student Services
email support@sdp.usyd.edu.au.



FROM LEFT: PATRICK RYAN, NICOLE TAYLOR, LEONIE COOKE, ANNE QUINLAN, WILLIAM THEVAPALAN

Student spotlight



Featured student profile

Donna Lau

YEAR 3, USYDMP



Donna is a science graduate, finishing honours in 2003. After working in a pathology lab for several years and feeling growing dissatisfaction in the science field, Donna travelled overseas which included undertaking volunteer work in health-related projects in South America. By combining the satisfaction of volunteer work and helping people with a disturbing love of pathology and diseases, Donna decided to pursue a career in medicine.

As well as managing her studies, Donna finds fulfilment by being involved with issues she is interested in outside of medicine. In 2006, she was the Uganda Project manager for the not-for-profit volunteer group Hands of Help,

and led a team of 35 volunteers, mostly medical students, on a 2 months health and education project in rural Uganda. In 2007, as well as being involved with Global HOME, the USyDMP international health group, as publicity officer, Donna was involved with the Human Rights Arts and Film Festival (NSW) (HRAFF). HRAFF aims to educate and develop greater awareness about human rights through arts and film as well as initiating local community projects.

As a budding third year medical student, Donna is looking forward to being educated in the clinical setting as well as the rural experience of studying in Dubbo.

Student spotlight

Contributions welcome

Curriculum Matters would like to feature a student profile in each issue. We also welcome any other contributions from our students. Please contact us under curriculummatters@med.usyd.edu.au or 02 9036 6529.

New MedSoc and SUDUA presidents

Paula Conroy

YEAR 4, USYDMP, PRESIDENT OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SOCIETY



Paula Conroy grew up in Canberra, ACT, and moved to Sydney after completing a gap year in Oxford England. She attended the University of Sydney in 2003 where she completed a Bachelor of Science with majors in Anatomy and Psychology. She commenced the MBBS course at the University of Sydney in 2005. Paula has a keen interest in rural

medicine and as such, is a student of the school of rural health in Orange, NSW. She is also a John Flynn Scholarship recipient, which enables her to travel to Albany in rural WA every year to experience rural medicine first hand. Paula is currently in Vietnam on her overseas elective term as a Hoc Mai Foundation scholar, working at both the TuDu

Maternity hospital in Saigon and the Viet Duc University hospital in Hanoi. In 2007 she was elected as President of MedSoc for 2008. She is looking forward to returning to Australia to complete her studies and represent the Sydney University Medical Society.

Michael Munro Lines

YEAR 2, BA OF DENTISTRY PROGRAM
PRESIDENT OF SYDNEY UNIVERSITY DENTAL UNDERGRADUATES ASSOCIATION (SUDUA)



Michael Lines was born in Ipswich in Queensland, and is a proud Queenslander to his bootstraps. He completed a Bachelor of Science Degree at the University of Queensland with Honours in Psychology in 1990 and subsequently worked as a management consultant with Andersen Consulting and as a research officer with the Queensland Department of Health. He joined the Australian Army in 1991,

and served as a Psychology Officer for 13 years, reaching the rank of Major. Across postings to a wide variety of military units around Australia, he gained experience in psychological assessments for recruiting purposes, clinical psychology, research and organizational psychology. He was deployed operationally with the Army to Bougainville, East Timor and the Solomon Islands. In 2005, he commenced the Bachelor of

Dentistry course at Sydney University as an Army sponsored student. In 2007 he was elected as President of the Sydney University Dental Undergraduates Association. He is a keen runner and SCUBA diver and simply cannot wait to graduate so that he can spend more time on these passions and his much neglected motorcycling habit.



OME update

Assessment Activity Report

The assessment unit is in the process of implementing the changes mandated under the Curriculum Review. These changes include the introduction of new assessments, in particular barrier exams in Stage I and Stage III, changes to the format of written and clinical examinations, and changes to the processes used to generate and mark assessment tasks.

The first new assessments to be introduced are those for Stage I; they will make their debut in 2008. There will now be a written barrier exam at the end of Stage I with a substantial emphasis on the basic science components of the course. Two formative assessments will take place prior to the barrier. The first of these will be at the conclusion of the Foundation Block and the second at the end of Block 3. The initial formative assessment will be an integral part of the substantial changes that have been made in the Foundation Block. The test items will be tightly linked to the delivered material and should help us decide whether or not the cohort is uniformly coping with the course content. The results of this first assessment will be used to identify students who may be struggling with the demands of the USydMP at a point where they can be offered useful support. The second formative examination will be at the end of Block 3 and will provide students with a revision point for the early portions of Stage I.

The delivery of these first two formative Assessments will be via the Exambank. This web based database is designed to allow secure submission of assessment items from faculty members and a more straightforward process for exam construction. The early formative exams will permit testing of this process prior to the delivery of the Barrier Examinations at the end of the year. The

performance of individual test items will be assessed to allow their retention or modification for further use. We hope to provide useful feedback, not only to students about their learning performance, but also to faculty members about the performance of their assessment items. This should lead to a gradual improvement of the quality of question writing across the faculty members. In 2008 the Exambank will only permit multiple choice format test items. In 2009 we will pilot "extended matching" and "key feature" style questions.

The "Modified Essay Question" format will disappear from the assessment process in 2008. These questions have long been the focus of the majority of student and staff complaints about the assessment process. The major criticism of the withdrawal of this assessment format is that it tests the ability of students to produce written output and that this is an important facet of practitioner performance. To address this issue various assessment tasks will be set as written assignments. These will contribute to a student portfolio that will move to an electronic format in the near future. The portfolio has traditionally been used for assessment of Professional and Personal Development but will be expanded across the other themes. In 2008 the assessment of Evidence Based Medicine in Stage 2, previously examined by MEQ, will be assessed by a portfolio essay. As the new and transitional Stage 3 programs are developed additional assessments will be assigned to the portfolio.

The introduction of ward based assessment of clinical skills was one of the key recommendations of the Curriculum Review. The review nominated Mini-Clinical Exercises (Mini CEx) as a possible format

TIPS & TRAPS In Exams

1) When sitting for exams, ensure your SID is completed correctly on the answer sheet – that means writing the number and colouring in all 9 digits.

2) Regularly check the assessment website for assessment details and updates, ie. exam dates, times and content.

Please share your hints to help your fellow students and email your tips and traps to curriculummatters@med.usyd.edu.au.

for this. The Mini CEx is a format developed by the American Board of Examinations in Medicine for postgraduate assessment and was designed to replace the long case. Students need to undergo about 10 MiniCEx assessments to achieve a statistically valid result. The early trials of MiniCEx within the USydMP were met with some resistance by the clinicians implementing them. The problematic issues related to the time taken to complete the exercises, their appropriateness for medical students, the logistics of completing 10 of them for each student each year and the complexity of the reporting requirements. With this in mind we will be piloting simpler "Clinical Exercises" in Stages 1 and 2 in 2008 which look at focused areas of clinical skills. These exercises are currently being developed by the relevant craft groups and will appear in the first clinical terms next year. Samples of them can be found at <http://dropbox.medfac.usyd.edu.au/archives/24195258>.

The exercises will be validated against student performance in the OSCE assessments in Stages 1 and 2.

The changes to the assessment process will produce additional workload for faculty members in 2008 and this will continue over a 3 year period as the first students enter the new Stage 3 in 2009 and 2010. We hope that the effort put into these changes will produce benefits for both students and faculty members. The OME and the Assessment Unit seek your input and support to make these changes as painless as possible.

Associate Professor Leo Davies



caption corner winner

Our caption corner winner from last issue is Andrew Fulton from Royal North Shore Hospital. Andrew won a \$50 book voucher for his caption "The "Old Boy Network" in Action."

The "Old Boy Network" in Action.

OME update



Block 1 Progress

* Block 1 Progress: The lectures are timetabled and their learning objectives have been locked in. Theme sessions are being organised currently, as are the PBL cases. The clinical days are also being organised and revamped. Graham Mann and his team are doing a wonderful job and all seems on course for a successful inaugural year.

* Other Stage 1 Blocks: The new Anatomy lectures and theme sessions throughout Stage 1 have been timetabled and will be presented to Block Chairs during 2008. The timetable grid is looking rather full at present. The review of the Tutor Guides and the generation of learning objectives for all of Stage 1 teaching activities will occur progressively, as the year unfolds.

* The Dissection Option: Is going ahead as planned in January, amid a frenzy of excitement among students and staff. Even other universities are talking about it!

Professor John Mitrofanis

caption corner



WIN \$50 book voucher!

This is Professor John Mitrofanis with his best friend Elvis. Can you think of a suitable caption? To enter this competition, please email your caption by 15 April to curriculummatters@med.usyd.edu.au. The winner will be announced in the next issue.

Faculty News



A Centre for Indigenous Health

The Faculty of Medicine has been very fortunate in that we have just received a donation of \$10 million to help us establish a Centre for Indigenous Health. An extract from the proposal we developed which led to us securing this funding contains the three aims for the Centre:

- to establish "outreach" clinics which members of the University of Sydney from a range of health professions (specialist doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, dieticians, diabetes educators, podiatrists, etc.) would attend to deliver direct healthcare to indigenous communities;

- to provide opportunities for students to experience the challenge of indigenous health care and hopefully be inspired to make a career in this field;

- to conduct vigorous research into indigenous health care issues the outcomes of which will be available to guide future government policy.

This is an exciting program that will no doubt have many challenges for the Faculty but we hope to work with other Faculties from across the University to see if we can make a real difference to the health of Indigenous Australians.

We wish to commence on a relatively small basis, learn from our experiences and then proceed to expand the program provided that we have adequate funding. Our initial plans are to use four sites in Western New South Wales (Dubbo, Brewarrina, Bourke and Broken Hill) where we already have good links with Indigenous communities and then review. By the time you read this I, together with colleagues from the Faculty, will already have visited all these locations to begin the process of having clinics established. We are keen for as many students as possible to join us in this important enterprise.

Professor Bruce Robinson, Dean



FROM LEFT: PROF MICHAEL KIDD, BETH QUINLIVAN, A/PROF TESSA HO, PROF BRUCE ROBINSON, DR LILON BANDLER, TOM RUBIN, RIA DEAMER



Important dates and contacts

Important dates

2008 ASSESSMENT DATES

Stage 1

Required Formative Assessment (RFA) 1 – written

Tuesday 29 April 2008

Required Formative Assessment (RFA) 2 – written

Tuesday 26 August 2008

Formative Observed Structure Clinical Examination (OSCE)

Week of 3 November 2008

Summative Assessment - written

Thursday 27 and Friday 28 November 2008

Stage 2

Required Formative Assessment (RFA) – written

Monday 7 July 2008

Summative Assessment - written

Monday 13 and Tuesday 14 October 2008

Summative Observed Structure Clinical Examination (OSCE)

Tuesday 25 & Wednesday 26 November 2008

Stage 3

Required Formative Assessment (RFA) – written

Friday 20 June 2008

Summative Assessment - written

Monday 22 & Tuesday 23 September 2008

2008 COMMENCEMENT DATES

Stage 1 Tuesday 12 February 2008

Stage 2 Friday 15 February 2008

Stage 3 Wednesday 23 January 2008

Stage 4 Monday 10 March 2008

2008 EASTER BREAK

Stage 1 Friday 21 - Monday 28 March

Stage 2 Monday 17 - Friday 28 March

Stage 3 & 4 Friday 21 - Monday 24 March

OME contacts

NAME	POSITION	ROOM	PHONE	FAX	EMAIL
ACADEMIC STAFF					
Tessa Ho	A/Professor & Associate Dean (USydMP Curriculum), Chair of USydMP	Room 108 Edward Ford	9036 6430	9351 8529	tessah@med.usyd.edu.au
Wendy Hu	Senior Lecturer (Core Curriculum)	Room 114 Edward Ford	9036 6431	9351 8529	wendyhu@med.usyd.edu.au
STAGE COORDINATORS					
John Mitrofanis	Professor & Associate Dean (USyd MP), Stage 1 Coordinator	Room 108 Edward Ford	9036 6428	9351 3196	zorba@med.usyd.edu.au
Michael Frommer	Professor & Associate Dean (USydMP), Stage 2 Coordinator	Room 322 Victor Coppleson	9351 4394	9351 7218	mfrommer@med.usyd.edu.au
Chris Dennis	A/Professor & Associate Dean (USydMP), Stage 3 Coordinator	Room 114 Edward Ford	9036 6439	9351 8529	cdennis@med.usyd.edu.au
HEADS OF ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION					
Leo Davies	A/Professor & Sub-Dean (Assessment), Head of Assessment	Room 108 Edward Ford	9515 7565	9515 7564	ldavies@med.usyd.edu.au
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ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF					
Karen Scott	Executive Officer	Room 130a Edward Ford	9036 6561	9351 8529	kscott@med.usyd.edu.au
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Jaime Comber	Learning and Teaching Support Officer – Stage 3	Room 129 Edward Ford	9036 7186	9351 8529	jaimec@med.usyd.edu.au
Pieta Joy	Assessment and Evaluation Coordinator	Room 129 Edward Ford	9351 2584	9351 8529	pietaj@med.usyd.edu.au
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