Outcome Based Education: Development of a Curricular Governance Structure to Facilitate Change

• Joseph P Grande

Workshop

In the past year, we have implemented a major reform of our curriculum. Like many medical schools in the United States, we have gone from a course-based curriculum to a block structure which integrates normal structure, function, and pathophysiology of organ systems. Early in this process, we identified several themes which need to be integrated throughout the curriculum:

1. scientific foundations of medical practice;
2. clinical experiences;
3. leadership;
4. physician and society; and
5. pharmacology and principles of therapeutics.

For each theme, we organized a committee which has responsibility for ensuring that the themes are represented throughout the curriculum and for bringing recommendations to the curriculum committee, which is responsible for oversight of the entire curriculum. Each theme committee was charged with the responsibility of defining those outcomes that our students must achieve prior to graduation. This process initially led to the identification of 67 outcomes. When these outcomes were carefully scrutinized for overlap and redundancy, we identified 26 outcomes that could be mapped to basic competencies, including medical knowledge, patient care, professionalism, interpersonal and communication skills, practice based learning and improvement, and systems based practice. We believe that this committee structure will facilitate the implementation of further changes that will be needed to optimize the basic science and clinical training of our medical students.

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