

Foundations Phase Subcommittee:

Charter

Purpose

The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPSOM) engages in ongoing strategic planning and continuous quality improvement processes that establish its short and long-term programmatic goals, result in the achievement of measurable outcomes that are used to improve educational program quality, and ensure effective monitoring of the medical education program's compliance with accreditation standards (LCME 1.1). UPSOM's Curriculum Committee has responsibility for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of a coherent and coordinated medical curriculum (LCME 8.1). UPSOM's faculty, through the Curriculum Committee, ensures that the medical curriculum uses formally adopted medical education program objectives to guide the selection of curriculum content, and to review and revise the curriculum (LCME 8.2). UPSOM's Curriculum Committee is responsible for the detailed development, design, and implementation of all components of the medical education program, including the medical education program objectives, the learning objectives for each required curricular segment, instructional and assessment methods appropriate for the achievement of those objectives, content and content sequencing, ongoing review and updating of content, and evaluation of course, clerkship, and teacher quality. These medical education program objectives, learning objectives, content, and instructional and assessment methods are subject to ongoing monitoring, review, and revision by the responsible committee (LCME 8.3) and its standing subcommittees. For the first phase of our curriculum, that design, implementation, and oversight is provided by the Foundations Phase Subcommittee, which collaborates with course directors and faculty on continuous quality improvement of the curriculum, as well as teaching and assessment of this phase, and coordination/integration within and across courses.

The key responsibilities of the Foundations Phase Subcommittee are to provide guidance on pre-clerkship course strengths and growth/realignment opportunities with attention to: Lead/Director vision, course evaluations/feedback, student learning, course objectives, pedagogical philosophy, global architecture of the Foundations phase (MS1/MS2), and how the Foundations phase complements the curriculum (MS1-4) as a whole. The areas of responsibility span pre-clerkship courses as well as integration of basic sciences content across the curriculum.

Composition/Reporting

The subcommittee will be chaired by the Assistant Dean for Foundations, who will organize its activities and take responsibility for its work. A co-chair may be designated in consultation with the Chair of the Curriculum, subject to a vote by the full Curriculum Committee.

Membership will include at least **seven** faculty members recruited from among Curriculum Committee members and other active and experienced educators in the School of Medicine, at least **one** OMED staff member, and at least **three** medical students. Representatives from the three Foundations blocks (Keystone Fundamentals, Organ Systems, and Patient Centered Care) should be included, and a liaison to the clerkships phase of the curriculum should be identified. Members will be selected according to the Curriculum Committee's Procedure on Membership for Subcommittees and Task Forces; that procedure also outlines their terms of service.

This subcommittee will annually report to the full Curriculum Committee, to present an overview of the year's activity, with additional intervals reports at least twice annually.

The subcommittee will prepare yearly summary reviews of each course and related segments (e.g., Threads, Visual Human Atlas) in the Foundations phase of the curriculum. The subcommittee will provide consultations to individual course leads/directors and block directors to gain insight into the overall functioning of pre-clerkship courses and their synthetic interaction horizontally and vertically.

Responsibilities

1. Each standing member of the Foundations Phase Subcommittee will be responsible for overseeing and actively participating in the review of a subset of courses; shaping the continually evolving vision of the Foundations curriculum as a whole; and fostering curricular connections between the pre-clerkship and clerkship years. Such reviews will be done as soon as possible after the course is completed, and after UPSOM receives feedback from students (e.g., course evaluations), Longitudinal Educators (surveys) and other vested educators. Tasks will include:
 - a. Review by the subcommittee member of prior year's course learning objectives, student evaluations/feedback, educator surveys, etc.
 - b. Meeting with block directors, leads and course director(s) to discuss course/Thread outcomes and plans for the following year. The chairs of the subcommittee or an additional member may choose to participate in this meeting, depending on subcommittee members' expertise or interest.
 - c. Preparation of course review reports with the leads/course director(s). This report will briefly describe how the course is performing, opportunities for improvement, and identification of resources that would support improvement.

2. Ad hoc committee members may be invited to bring specialty expertise and insights into particular critical elements.
3. The subcommittee will present reports to the Curriculum Committee:
 - Brief updates at least twice annually
 - Annually through a formal phase review

The Curriculum Committee will review and approve all individual course review reports.

Subcommittee Logistics and Voting

The Foundations Phase Subcommittee will meet regularly (at least monthly).

Minutes are kept and shared with the Curriculum Committee and other bodies. Materials related to curricular performance are made available to subcommittee members but their circulation to others is prohibited without approval by CC leadership.

A quorum is at least 51% of the voting members. A simple majority of the quorum is needed for a motion or vote to be approved. Subcommittee leaders only vote in the case of a tie.

Approved by the Curriculum Committee, 03/18/2024. Revised 6/16/2025.