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Evidence-Based Medicine in Integrative Medical School Curricula: A Tale of Two Libraries*



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☞ The Best of Times ☞

Instruction Today

UMMS

- EBM taught in 3rd year Family Medicine, Psychiatry and Pediatric Clerkships.
- Started in 1999 to address LCME requirements.
- Three librarians participate with clinical faculty - 32 hours of instruction per academic year.
- Librarians assist in grading assignments.
- Involvement in 3rd year curriculum committee.

HMS:

- EBM incorporated into 1st year courses required Human Body, a required first year course which covers anatomy, histology and embryology.
- Instruction delivered online via 5 short video tutorials, readings and a student assignment.

Both libraries have discovered that when EBM instruction reflects current clinical cases in the curriculum, students report a more positive learning experience. At UMMS, this was demonstrated by a 5.6 increase (84.1 to 89.7) in the average grade of the Family Medicine EBM Assignment from AY 06-07 to AY 07-08.

☞ Hard Times ☞

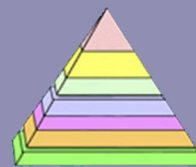
Current Challenges

UMMS:

- Library has little contact with students in traditional 1st and 2nd year basic science courses.
- 3rd year student searching skills poor with informal remediation often necessary prior to EBM instruction.
- Looking to explore opportunities to reach out in basic sciences through presence in Learning Management System.

HMS:

- Library wishes to introduce more robust content but is up against heavily scheduled curriculum.
- Current course involvement only 6 weeks long.
- Desire to provide greater outreach versus limitations on staff availability.



☞ Our Mutual Friends ☞

The Curricula

UMMS:

U Mass Medical currently follows a traditional curriculum. Students engage in two years of basic sciences followed by two years of clinical sciences. While students in the science years do indeed receive some exposure to the clinical setting through courses such as Patient and Physician in Society, there is still a pronounced divide between the content of the first two science years and the last two clinical years.

HMS:

HMS has just finished two rounds of curriculum reform. The latest, completed in 2008, seeks to increase integration of the basic sciences, population studies and clinical medicine through longitudinal exposure to a multidisciplinary curriculum that develops in content and expectations with the students over four years. Course tutorials have adopted this model and provide the venue for library instruction.

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☞ Great Expectations ☞

What the Future May Hold

UMMS:

With a new integrated curriculum expected to begin in AY 2012, the library looks forward to the possibility of expanding its role as instructors of EBM across the four years. Multiple members of the library staff are participating in curriculum redesign initiatives with this target as one goal.

HMS:

With the newly revised integrated curriculum in place, the library is expanding its current offerings. Additional collaborators include the Clinical Epidemiology, Patient/Doctor II, and Core Clerkship courses. The library would like to work with students in the classroom particularly with direct hands-on EBM and information literacy instruction.

☞ The “Librarian” on the Hearth ☞

To effectively practice evidence-based medicine, physicians must have the knowledge and skills to find the highest quality information available. Academic health sciences librarians are uniquely suited to teach these skills and thus assist in the instruction of future clinicians. Librarians can make a valuable contribution to their institution's educational mission regardless of the current structure of the curriculum.

* With apologies to Charles Dickens