



**UMass Chan Medical School
MSTP Student Council (MSC)
End of Year Report
AY 2020-2021**

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A Message from the Director

At this time last year we were all reeling from the first three months of the sudden, intense pressure brought by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, and by stark revelations of the disgraceful state of racial justice in our country. Faced with these unanticipated circumstances, our program elected to put our collective best foot forward. We recognized the privilege of our education and our positions, and pulled together to make difficult circumstances better for all. Throughout the year, MD/PhD students were overrepresented in our institutional efforts to combat COVID-19, from presence at the DCU field hospitals, work in basic science laboratories and participation in information efforts. We were also overrepresented in numerous activities aimed at understanding and mitigating barriers to equity and justice. We made an impact at the national level, participating in efforts to re-design the process of admission into MD/PhD programs, and the competencies that define a physician scientist. Thanks to your mettle and discipline, we are stronger than we were before.

All our achievements as a program would not have been possible without the MSC. You accepted responsibilities that others didn't. You gave beyond your obligation, and sometimes beyond your capacity. You understood that sometimes you have to take risks...build the plane as it is flying, so to speak. This may not be ideal, but at times there are no other options. Your actions were grounded in humanistic values, with an eye towards a better future not only for you individually, but for us all. That is true leadership. And I can only hope that you can see, from your vantage point, what I see from mine; your development as individuals who understand true leadership, and in whom medicine and in society can entrust their futures.

What have we accomplished, in concrete terms? We have a website that reflects our program in a way that attracts others— we had the largest, most qualified group of applicants this past year than ever before, many of whom mentioned information in their applications that came from our website. Thank you to the Communications Committee for their important contributions to this effort. Our applicants had the opportunity to witness the unique elements of our program through active participation in the Physician Scientist Forum. And speaking about the PSF, we have witnessed a remarkable process of continuous refinement based on painstaking requests for feedback, responsive modifications, and a laser-focus on clearly defined objectives. Thank you to the Curriculum Committee for their commitment to this key strength of our program. Our PSF has been supplemented with truly outstanding sessions that have helped us all reflect on how race impacts the practice of medicine and medical research, and each of our science consults now considers the pillar of justice as one needed to truly understand and mitigate disease; the more we build justice into our conceptualization of disease, the more we will enhance our impact as physicians and scientists. Thank you to the Action for Equity and Inclusion Committee for their tireless efforts to transform our vision. We filled our class with 11 new outstanding new class members, without reaching into our equally outstanding waitlisted applicants. Thank you to the Community Development Committee and all of you who reached out as ambassadors, reiterating our values and the value of our training opportunities. July 1 will mark the first year of our new mentorship structure. Thank you to the Mentorship Committee for their careful work to identify the dedicated faculty who are pioneering this new structure.

During this year, we have witnessed and participated in the deployment of new vaccines, miracles of medicine that have (hopefully) marked the end of this pandemic. Do we go back to where we were? To who we were? To the way we did things before? These are the questions that we are all now contemplating. How do we selectively maintain the beneficial aspects of approaches we've developed? Are our efforts sustainable? One year ago, the only certainty we had as we entered the second year of the MSC was that there would continue to be uncertainty. We continue to have uncertainty, but we have learned that the openness, respect, optimism, and hard work embraced by the MSC enable us to adapt and achieve our individual and shared goals. We will continue to have frequent, constructive conversations, and hopefully have a chance to enjoy ourselves more as we are able to gather in person. I am incredibly proud of your accomplishments and look forward to your individual and our shared successes with excitement and optimism!

Silvia Corvera, 2021
UMass Chan Medical School
MSTP Director

Overview

With the start of September 2021 just around the corner, we will be celebrating the first two years of the newly revamped **MSTP Student Council (MSC)**. In such a brief period of time, it is incredible what we have achieved as a community.

For the majority of AY 2020-2021, many of us found ourselves bouncing between virtual classrooms and seminars. It was not until the Annual Summer Barbeque that many students met in person for the first time since the start of the pandemic. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruptions to our medical and research training, we came together as a community, met the moment with resolve and worked to make everlasting improvements for our MD/PhD student body. The following End of Year Report highlights the work of many dedicated MD/PhD students on the **MSTP Student Council (MSC)** and a roadmap to continuing this work in the next academic year. The MSC values the opinions of all students in the MD/PhD program and strives to be inclusive, transparent, and solution oriented.

In order to organize student initiatives and maintain longitudinal momentum, the MSC adopted a committee structure and established Standing Committees that encompass areas that benefit from student feedback and commentary: Curriculum, Community Development, Mentorship, Communications/Public Relations. In light of the institutionalized racism that came to national attention this past year, a new committee was created to foster conversations and facilitate change in our community: Action for Equity and Inclusion Committee. Each committee is chaired by two members of the MSC. Any student in the program, regardless of year, may take part in any of these committees – and we strongly welcome all to participate!

As a whole, each committee set the framework to allow for further growth and improvement in the upcoming years. Among the successes of this year's committees include the inauguration of the new Physician Scientist Forums (PSF), the implementation of a central MSTP archive in OneDrive, the development of a new MD/PhD-specific mentoring system, this year's 15th MD/PhD Research Retreat, and community-building social events. The summaries of each committee's goals, achievements, and future plans are documented herein. These are a testament to the incredible efforts already put forth by many of our colleagues.

On behalf of the MSC, we look forward to this next academic year to further support our ever-growing and vibrant MD/PhD community.

Sammy Tse, GS4 and Jillian Belgrad, GS1, 2021
Co-chairs of the MSTP Student Council

Curriculum Committee

Co-chairs: Philip Feinberg, Carly Herbert

Curriculum Committee Members:

Philip Feinberg (Co-Chair AY19-20, AY20-21)

Carly Herbert (Co-Chair)

Nicholas Peterson (Co-Chair AY19-20, AY20-21),

Jan Czerminski, Jordan Smith,
Grace Masters, Amy Cheung,

Noah Silverstein, Eric Ding,

Samantha Tse, Julianna

Buchwald, Claire Tocheny,

Vincent Azzolino, Jillian Belgrad
& Jason Freedman

The **Curriculum Committee** is responsible for representing the MD/PhD student body in all matters relating to academic coursework and physician scientist training. As outlined in the bylaws passed in September 2019, there are four primary areas that the Curriculum Committee serves. 1) Formulating and updating a list of PhD thesis mentors that have mentored previous MD/PhD candidates 2) Formulating and updating a list of recommended clinical preceptors for completing clinical hour requirements during the PhD thesis years 3) Serving as the main point of contact for students with concerns or issues pertaining to MD/PhD-specific coursework 4) Assessing student feedback on courses and formulating recommendations to program administrators for quality improvement. Over the 2019-2020 academic year, the Curriculum Committee began work in each of these areas, focusing the greatest efforts towards developing a physician scientist curriculum and making improvements to existing MD/PhD courses. The success of this committee would not be possible without the tremendous contributions from the committee members. Special thanks for all the hard work and commitment to improving the MD/PhD curricular experience.

Initiatives for AY 2020-2021:

Physician Scientist Curriculum Development

The Curriculum Committee is focused on introducing more physician scientist curricular content to give students more focused training for the future careers. Over the academic year, the curriculum committee continued to work on several initiatives aimed to fill certain gaps in the existing MD/PhD curriculum. The major initiatives are outlined below:

1) **Physician Scientist Forum (PSF) & Thematic Case Files (TCF):** The Curriculum Committee worked closely with the MD/PhD program leadership to develop the PSF into a useful element of the program. Thematic Case Files (TCF) is a three part monthly series designed to enhance Physician Scientist training. In brief, each month focuses on a Monthly Clinical Theme and, over the three TCF weeks, attendees interactively solve clinical cases (week 1), learn about current research being done by students in the program (week 2), and examine a specific disease comprehensively utilizing the Five PSF Pillars (week 3). Each of the three TCF weeks in a series has a specific format with its own learning objectives. During AY20-21 the committee implemented eight months of TCF covering the following topics: dermatology, endocrinology, neurology, cardiology, psychiatry, surgery, gastroenterology, and heme/onc. Surveys were sent out after each session and feedback was used to refine the TCF formats to maximize student satisfaction. In response to feedback we modified session formats for quality improvement including developing the TCF worksheets, which contain all relevant clinical information for solving cases and are posted for use by students during and after PSF sessions.

2) **Physician Scientist Clinical Skills (PSCS):** The Curriculum Committee is in the early stages of assessing a need for more standardization of clinical experiences during the PhD years and improving the documentation of clinical skills used during clinical hours. The committee is looking into arrangements with certain clinical preceptors to provide reliable clinical experiences to MD/PhD students and making it easier for students to schedule these sessions. This work will continue in the next academic year and will be a priority for the committee.

Summary of Curriculum Committee Working Groups:

1) **Professionalism and Research Conduct (PARC).** In March 2020, the Curriculum Committee established the PARC Working Group with the goals of 1) identify where in the PARC class there is a need for improvement to make the class relevant to MD/PhD students 2) generate a report that outlines the current course format, opinions of current students and recommendations for how to modify the course. The working group met with the course director, Cynthia Fuhrmann, and discussed ways to improve the course for MD/PhD students. Some of these changes were implemented during the fall 2020 semester. The working group held a focus group with the MD/PhD students taking PARC to discuss their experience in the class.

2) **Clinical and Population Health Research Integration (CPHR).** The CPHR integration working group was established in September 2020 with the charge of 1) performing a comprehensive evaluation of the CPHR curriculum from the MD/PhD perspective; 2) Identify the greatest challenges faced by CPHR students in the MD/PhD Program; 3) Provide recommendations for curricular development and refinement. Based on the discussions of the working group, it was decided that more epidemiology and biostatistics was needed in the longitudinal MD/PhD program curriculum, as most students only encounter this material 1st year of medical school. Therefore, the CPHR working group spent the 2020-2021 academic year developing Clinical Research and Basic Competency around Key Epidemiological Skills (CRAB-CAKES), a 4-week curriculum to be conducted during PSF sessions in July 2021. The CPHRi working group has also been working closely with Dr. Tjia, the CPHR MD/PhD mentor.

Plans for AY 2021-2022

The Curriculum Committee will continue to focus on developing physician scientist curricula in the next academic year. Priorities for the upcoming academic year include:

- 1) CRAB CAKES in July '21
- 2) Sustainability of PSF and TCF sessions
- 3) Develop clinical skill standards for PhD year students

Mentorship Committee

Co-chairs: Vinny Azzolino and Eli Min

Mentorship Committee members:

Vinny Azzolino (co-chair)	Eli Min (co-chair)	Philip	Claire Tocheny (chair AY20-
Ben Sallis	Feinberg		21)
Bethany Berry	Aurian Garcia-Gonzalez		Abiola Ogunsola
Julianna Buchwald	Carly Herbert		Thomas Reimonn
Jane Chuprin	Samson Jolly		Michela Oster
Jan Czerminski	Ethan Loew		

The MSC **Mentorship Committee** believes that faculty and peer mentorship is a vital component to UMass MSTP student success. Our overarching goal is to ensure that each student receives outstanding mentorship throughout all stages of the program. We aim to help establish a mentoring system through the School of Medicine (SOM) to guarantee mentorship by trained, motivated physician scientists. Additionally, our goal is to create an environment that fosters peer mentorship throughout the MSTP community.

Initiatives for 2020-2021:

The MSTP is establishing a new mentoring system through the SOM's Learning Communities (LC) to begin in the 2020-2021 academic year. Our goals have been, in conjunction with MSTP administration, to:

1. Define the ideal LC mentor who suits student needs
2. Select candidates in the UMass community who fulfill needs identified by students
3. Train LC mentors in accordance with guidelines created by the MSTP

Successes:

- Defining the ideal LC mentor
The committee polled students, created a set of student guidelines for mentors and sent guidelines to administration for use in the application process.
- Identifying LC mentor candidates
The committee collected student nominations for the LC mentor position and ranked candidates by student preference. Discussion is in progress with administration regarding final mentor selection.
- Initiated new LC mentors
New LC mentors were officially inaugurated into the MD/PhD community.
- Drafted MD/PhD-specific Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues:

Training new LC mentors

LC mentors have not yet been selected, but selection and training will be completed by the start of the 2020-2021 academic year. Challenges include:

- a) Identifying students most suited and available to help train mentors
The committee will poll the program to identify those interested and will select students via an application process
- b) Creating an MD/PhD-specific training format for new mentors
The committee will coordinate with MSTP administration, LC faculty, and students to develop an adapted training program

Plans for AY 2021-2022:

- 1) Formulate a “Mentor-Mentee” code of standards for students and mentors

We believe that accountability is key to guaranteeing that students receive the best mentoring possible. Our goal is to create a core set of standards for mentors and students that will look to address mentoring during historically difficult transitions in the MSTP. We want to make sure that mentors understand baseline needs of all students during these times in addition to individualized support.

- 2) Coordinate with the peer mentoring committee to establish a mentoring program for the Wachusett Learning Space

Peer mentoring can foster a community that supports students throughout the MSTP. Our students gain so much knowledge during their time in the program that can help fellow students flourish. Together with the peer mentoring committee, we will design a system that makes it easy for students to seek advice and support from fellow students regarding topics such as choosing a lab, faculty shadowing, grant writing, and networking.

- 3) Formalize the use of MD/PhD-specific IDPs in annual LC mentor meetings.

Social/Community Committee

Co-chairs: Jenny Powers, Abiola Ogunsola

Social/Community Committee Members:

Jenny Powers (co-chair)	21)	Jordan Smith
Abiola Ogunsola (co-chair)	Abiola Ogunsola	Philip Feinberg
Chantal Ferguson (co-chair AY20-21)	Abigail Hiller	Sammy Tse
Jillian Belgrad (co-chair AY20-	Benjamin Sallis	
	Jason Freedman	

The goal of the MSC **Social/Community Committee** is to bring our program members together across class years to engage in social and mentorship based events. The social/community committee organizes and facilitates events on and off campus, welcomes incoming students, and designs program swag. The overall goal is to create programming that encourages MD/PhD students to feel continually connected with the MSTP community even across different stages of their time in the program. As a part of the committee you will have the opportunity to plan social events and organize outings that bring our community together, celebrate each other in both small and big ways, and play a role in shaping our community on and off campus!

Initiatives for AY 2020-2021:

Successes:

- Established Wolfpacks
- Held inaugural Wachusett pinning ceremony
- Events: Virtual Game Night
- Graduation event for 2021 Graduates
- Overseeing program wide MD/PhD Logo and Wachusett swag order
- Community and recruitment events during MSTP retreat
- Established and oversaw MD/PhD Program Ambassador Program and helx 2x monthly Q&A session for applicants

Problems succeeding/forseeable issues:

- Attendance could be improved. We will start keeping track of event attendance more purposefully to continue to write event exit surveys (make a standard report with prompts), standardize invites via outlook (customize reminders via outlook or via slack)
- Funding: how can we solidify/streamline a funding process for group events, graduation or welcome gifts (Apply for SBC group approval + APSA recognition)
- Secure a budget and work with Anne/Alicia to spend
- Coordination/integration: Improve our coordination with the Second Look Day committee to plan social events for prospective students

Plans for AY 2021-2022:

- Wachusett Community Wolf Pack dinners.
- Establishing traditions for milestones (new student welcome; qualifying; defending; graduation)
- Establishing web-based community calendar
- Plan MSTP community social events once per semester
- Continue swag orders
- Develop Wolfpack community building events
- Plan program-wide community service events

Committee Goals:

- *Meeting schedule:* as needed or set time? MSC Council-wide meeting organization

- *Engagement*: keeping members and greater community involved even when their other commitments are large
- Attendance and better tracking of committee members and participation

Communications Committee

Co-Chairs: Amy Cheung & Yen Anh Nguyen

Communications Committee Members

Yen Anh Nguyen (co-chair)
Amy Cheung (co-chair)

Oghomwen Igiesuorobo
Ayush Kumar

Laël Ngangmeni
Philip Feinberg

This past year the **Communications Committee** focused on highlighting information on the program that targets prospective students. We have added entries to the Student Section of the MD/PhD website that showcases our graduates' success and the peer mentor program.

We are working to launch social media accounts for the program that focuses on our community, to introduce each other and provide a chance to celebrate each other's successes in an informal and more accessible way. We have started to collect personal profiles from each member of the program, from students to faculty and staff. This is the main focus for our committee in the upcoming school year.

Overall, our goal is to provide another means through which we can enhance our sense of community through more engaging forms of communication.

Initiatives for AY 2020-2021

Successes:

- Addition of a "Day in the Life" section to the Student section of the MD/PhD Website
- Addition of the "Peer Mentoring" and "Residency Placements"
- Established the groundwork and vision for our social media presence

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues:

- Design changes to the website. The information on the home page is overwhelming and lacks focus, which can hinder user experience. Suggestions for changes to be made were put on pause because of expected changes to the whole school's website.
- Limited number of committee members. We would like to have members from different years to ensure continuous momentum for the committee.
- Student's willingness to provide information to be published on the website.

Plans for AY 2021-2022:

- 1) Add missing student profiles and add profiles for Matriculating Class of 2021
- 2) Launch social media accounts – Instagram and Twitter
- 3) Establish a sustainable workflow so these social media accounts can be manageable
- 4) Collaborate with other committees like the Social/Community committee to highlight their events
- 5) Streamline helpful resources for the program to one location, to promote transparency and accessibility

We have looked closely at comments for the committee in the End-of-Year survey and will make the typo edits to the website as suggested. We welcome anyone who wishes to join us and share their ideas on our current projects or even new ones.

Action for Equity & Inclusion (AEI) Committee

Co-Chairs: Laël Ngangmeni & Akshay Alaghata

AEI Committee members:

Akshay Alaghata (co-chair)	Laël Ngangmeni (co-chair)	Tomás Rodriguez
Kenley Preval	Philip Feinberg	Abiola Ogunsola
Yen Anh Nguyen	Pryce Michener	Nick Peterson
Jane Chuprin	Grace Masters	Chantal Ferguson
Jillian Belgrad	Webb Camille	Sammy Tse
Abbi Hiller	Carly Herbert	

The MSC **AEI Committee** was created last year in response to growing social unrest in our nation and the renewed campus-wide commitment to efforts for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Incorporating input from our MD/PhD community received at program-wide Listening Sessions, AEI Committee set out to focus and launch efforts centered on issues related to racism and injustice. We hope to impart on each member of our community the need, desire, and commitment to “Question. Act. Change.” Our aim is to normalize discussion and growth around these topics in such a way that results in life-long commitment to anti-racism and the fight for true justice and equity for all. To this end, we organize program- and campus-wide PSFs on various topics related to Racism & Injustice, hold Book Club meetings, work with program administration to support recruitment & retention of URiM applicants, and partner with others in efforts related to STEM mentorship.

Initiatives for 2020-2021:

Successes:

- MD/PhD program-wide listening sessions
- 4 Racism & Injustice PSFs
- 1 Book Club meeting
- Support of URiM student applicants
- Incorporation of Wolf Packs to strengthen community bonds
- STEM mentorship by AEI Committee members
- Establishment of a presence on campus across institutional levels – with our new Vice Provost for Health Equity, with different clubs, student bodies, and organizations across campus, with various faculty members, doctors, and residents, and with the Assistant Vice Provost for Outreach and Recruitment.

Problems succeeding/foreseeable issues:

- Engaging people in the planning process and recruiting speakers was, at times, difficult. Especially because some of the topics we’d like to address are so sensitive and specific.
 - We’ll work on setting a schedule for the year early and planning things much more in advance to ensure that there are no last-minute cancelations.
- Balancing having a set plan for the year with paying attention to on-going issues and helping our community be engaged and respond accordingly will be the goal (and challenge).
- Improving/increasing organization and productivity of AEI sub-committees
- Getting feedback after events and receiving program-wide input consistently to ensure that we’re meeting our community’s needs
- Next year will look different than this year in terms of how much in-person activity we will be able to do. We will need to be able to adapt to changes.
- Health equity is very broad, and it is a challenge to cover as much as possible while making sure we explore topics in depth.

Plans for AY 2021-2022:

- Improve the student experience – through institutional reform and education

- Increase the number of Book Club sessions and expand Racism & Injustice PSF topics – address disability and LGBTQ+ health
- Continue support of URiM recruitment & retention – expand to include faculty
- Increase community engagement – through community service, STEM mentoring, and establishment of our Wachusett Legacy Project
- Standardize our post-activity survey so that they're comparable across sessions and can be more easily used both to better our initiatives and to more easily/consistently update our community
- Intentionally set ways to measure growth and success so that we can track this across the years and continue to improve.
- Increase buy-in and participation of AEI-related work outside of PSFs

Grants Awarded AY 2020 - 2021

NIH F30:

Kevin Gao	NIAID GSBS3
Kevin O'Connor	NCI GSBS3
Samantha Tse	NIDDK GSBS3

NIH F31:

N/A

Previously Awarded/Still Active Grants:

Ameer Elaimy	F30 Graduated 2021
Amy Cheung	F30 MS3
Eric Ding	F30 MS3
Chantal Ferguson	F30 MS3
Alec Gramann	F31 GSBS5
Peter Lee	F30 Graduated 2020
Patrick Paul Lowe	F30 Graduated 2020
Nicholas Peterson	F30 GSBS4
Asia Matthew	F31 Graduated 2020
Ankur Sheel	F30 Graduated 2021
James Shen	F30 GSBS3
Noah Silverstein	F30 MS3
Jordan Leigh Smith	F30 GSBS3
Apurv Soni	F30 Graduated 2021
Rachel Stamateris	F30 GSBS4

Graduates of 2021

Jan Czerminski	Radiology-Diagnostic (Yale)
Ameer Elaimy	Radiation Oncology (U Michigan Hosps – Ann Arbor)
Aurian Garcia Gonzalez	General Surgery (Duke)
Barry Kriegsman	Otolaryngology (Hospital of the Univ of PA)
Asia Matthew-Onabanjo	Urology (UNC Medicine)
Zachary Milstone	Internal Medicine (Boston Univ Med Ctr)
Michael Purcaro	Radiology-Diagnostic (UMMS)
Jacob Schrum	Internal Medicine (Stanford Univ)
James (Jim) Strassner)	Dermatology (Penn State Hershey Med)
Ankur Sheel	Internal Medicine (Ohio State University Med)
Apurv Soni	Assistant Professor (UMMS)