Academic Health Sciences Center – Joint Strategic Planning

Education Workgroup

Interim Report

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Introduction

The charge of the Education Workgroup is three-fold: 1) Anticipate the size and structure of our educational programs across the continuum of education; 2) Identify common needs and opportunities for shared solutions; and 3) Identify opportunities for linkage to emerging internal and external initiatives. In response to this charge, the Education Workgroup (EWG) began its efforts by first developing a set of Guiding Principles, which serve as a mutually defined foundation for our strategic planning efforts. The EWG subsequently has defined six strategic initiatives founded upon a singular, unified commitment to “speak with one voice” across the continuum of education with the goal of meeting current and projected workforce needs in health science professions in medicine, nursing and the biomedical sciences through 2014.

Guiding Principles

The Education Workgroup represents the learners and teachers of the School of Medicine (SoM), Graduate School of Nursing (GSN), Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS), Graduate Medical Education (GME), Continuing Medical Education (CME), Continuing Nursing Education (CNE), and Pipeline Programs (K-16). Each school or program is an equal partner in our institutional mission to train outstanding physicians, nurses and biomedical research scientists. Our shared commitment is to provide the very best educational experience for our learners, and to serve the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond through exceptional clinical care, biomedical research, and education.

Our educational infrastructure is a network of interconnected and interdependent resources focused on serving learners, faculty and staff. We recognize that if we are to succeed in our institutional mission, the continuum of educational programs and schools across the graduate health sciences must be fully engaged in educational strategic planning and execution.

The anticipated increase in Medical School enrollment and the planned expansion and integration of institutional clinical sciences with ongoing efforts in the basic sciences demand that we review and identify opportunities for meaningful integration of educational resources and curricula and develop the additional infrastructure that will be necessary to sustain this growth.
Recommendations for Six Strategic Initiatives in Education

All projections indicate an undersupply of health care professionals in medicine and nursing, with particular areas of need in primary care specialties, underrepresented groups in the health professions, and service to underserved populations in the Commonwealth. Expected growth in the UMass clinical system will expand the opportunities for post graduate trainees in medicine and nursing, as well as the need for recruitment/retention of those trainees as professionals within UMMHC. Similarly, growth in the UMMS research mission will attract and require more predoctoral and postdoctoral learners in order to support the projected growth in clinical/translational research, sustain research productivity, and develop a pipeline of future UMMS research faculty in the basic and clinical sciences.

To strategically position our institution to meet these projected workforce needs, the time is right to join forces across the educational continuum to leverage common needs and shared interests and provide the foundation for growth, as projected enrollment surpasses our institutional capacity. In this strategic plan, the University of Massachusetts Medical School’s multi-faceted educational enterprise is defined as including: the School of Medicine (SoM), Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS), Post Doctoral Biomedical Sciences, Graduate School of Nursing (GSN), Graduate Medical Education (GME), Continuing Medical Education (CME), Continuing Nursing Education (CNE), and Pipeline Programs (K-16). This vision of a continuum of educational programs and schools across the graduate health sciences provides a platform for a fully integrated educational mission unique to UMMS and serves as the foundation for developing an enterprise-wide strategic plan for education.

We therefore recommend the establishment of an educational branch of the Office of the Provost as the first critical strategic initiative, and the foundation upon which all other proposed initiatives will be developed.

1. **Creation of an educational branch of the Provost Office**: to support the integrated missions of UMMS educational programs, including the three schools, by providing the critical infrastructure and guidance necessary to assure optimal efficiency and effectiveness, enabling all educational programs and schools to act in concert and enhancing opportunities for inter-professional development and collaboration. The educational branch would leverage common needs and shared resources of our growing educational programs in two major spheres of activity: 1) Educational Affairs (coordination, integration and development of educational programs and initiatives, including affiliations/partnerships; assessment and management of projected enrollment expansions; and advisory input/guidance regarding shared educational resources, e.g., capital investments and resource management; and 2) Common Student Services as a “School Co” model. Coordination of selected aspects of these activities (e.g., registrar, financial aid, student health) through a single entity will eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort, assisting each school and educational program to fully meet its constituents’ needs through integrated services for learners,
faculty and staff and will enhance institutional efforts to integrate academic missions in specific areas of strategic interest. This branch will receive guidance and feedback from a Provost’s Advisory Group, which will include representation from all constituent educational programs and schools.

By providing the infrastructure and guidance for shared resources and common needs, the educational branch of the Provost Office serves as the foundation for the remaining five strategic initiatives to manage the growth and assure the quality of our expanding educational programs.

2. **Enrollment Expansion and Management**: to effectively expand, right-size and diversify our learner pool in the following programs:
   - Pipeline programs, to support expansion of efforts to recruit a diverse population of students to meet projected workforce needs.
   - Predoctoral programs, MD, MD/PhD, GSN including new Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP), GSBS including new Master of Science in Clinical Investigation (MSCI) and MPH.
   - Postgraduate training in Graduate Medical Education and Post Doctoral Biomedical Sciences.
   - Continuing Professional Education for our workforce (e.g., CME, CNE).

3. **The Educational Home**: to provide the space, amenities, technology and communications infrastructure, and values to assure optimal teaching, learning, and well being for our learners within the UMMS campus and within our diverse training sites. Across our learner groups there is an ever-increasing alignment and synergy of learning resources, accreditation standards, and student and resident life needs/expectations. The “Educational Home” will establish a consistent model and standards for resourcing and supporting student and resident life and learning in the following key areas:
   - **Facilities “physical home”**: Academic (e.g., classrooms/amphitheaters, lab space, library, study space, precepting space in clinical setting, Center for Experiential Learning and Simulation (CELS), learning community space) and Non academic (e.g., call rooms, cafeteria, lounges, storage/lockers, student and resident life amenities and facilities such as transitional housing, health/fitness center).
   - **Technology-based “virtual home”**: Hardware and IT/telecommunications network linking learners across sites and to the educational resources at UMMS campus.
   - **“Learning Environment”**: To establish, support and assess “learning environment” core values that assure respect for individuals, valuing of diversity, a climate of inclusion, and modeling of professional standards of conduct in all teacher-learner interactions.

4. **Educational Program Innovation**: to prepare our learners for the “competencies of the future”, we will develop, diversify, innovate and evaluate our educational programs at several levels:
• Establishing new degrees and combined degree programs in areas of emerging need (e.g., MSCI, certificate in CSI, DNP, MPH, MD/MPH).
• Comprehensive curriculum renewal for the School of Medicine’s educational program by 2012 (Competency Implementation Project initiative).
• Innovation in curricular programs across our residencies and fellowships to enhance educational quality and outcomes.
• Establishing the Center for Experiential Learning and Simulation (CELS) as a UMMS-wide resource.
• Establishing educational research and evaluation as a core UMMS-wide resource supporting programmatic evaluation, learner assessment, and outcomes-based quality assurance in education.
• Developing administrative and operational strategies to facilitate inter-professional learning opportunities across schools and programs (e.g., cross-registration).

5. **Expansion and Enhancement of Educational Partnerships**: to develop and diversify educational partnerships and affiliations locally, across Massachusetts, nationally and internationally, in order to support growth of our educational programs and assure optimal choice, quality, diversity and “best-fit” for our learners in their educational, clinical and research experiences. Affiliations to be developed and diversified include:
   • Clinical affiliations within UMMMHC and its member hospitals.
   • Affiliations with UMMS programs/initiatives, including Commonwealth Medicine, Life Sciences Initiative, Clinical & Translational Science Awards (CTSA).
   • Affiliations with sister UMass campuses and other local universities and colleges
   • International educational affiliations.
   • Affiliations with K-16 partners for pipeline initiatives.

6. **Sustaining our Educational Workforce**: to sustain the quality, diversity (professions; expertise; inclusion of women/minorities), and depth of our educational workforce in order to keep pace with expanding enrollment, curriculum innovation, and professional educational development, through the following strategies:
   • Recruitment and retention of the best and brightest teaching faculty, with a focus on promoting diversity in the health sciences and inter-professional teaching to stimulate collaboration across schools and programs.
   • Support for ongoing development of basic and clinical science teachers, e.g., support for time, appropriate incentives/rewards, educational endowments, including collaboration with the key strategic initiatives of the Faculty and Leadership Development Workgroup.
   • Continuing professional development of our health professions workforce.
Summary

The vision of our Education Workgroup is to establish an enterprise-wide educational framework for UMMS that unifies our diverse schools and programs and promotes excellence, innovation and collaboration across the continuum of educational programs and schools in the graduate and post graduate health sciences. Speaking with one voice and collaborating in areas of shared need and common interest, our strategic plan proposes the establishment of an educational branch of the Provost Office as the foundational initiative upon which we will build our strategic efforts to meet projected workforce needs in the health sciences in 2014 and beyond through enrollment expansion and management; establishment of an “Educational Home” supporting all our learners; educational program innovation; expansion and enhancement of educational partnerships; and sustaining our educational workforce.