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Enhancing Student Engagement in Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSUSOM) Curriculum Design, Development, Evaluation, and Implementation

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Student Engagement in Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSUSOM) Curriculum Design, Development, Evaluation, and Implementation

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Purpose

There are a variety of ways in which the 1200 medical students at Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSUSOM) can formally participate in curricular efforts. To date, a formal inventory and evaluation of these programs has not been reported.

Methods

We compiled a list of students involved in courses, committees, and formal activities related to the medical school curriculum. We then developed and delivered a survey to measure student perceptions utilizing the following constructs: 1) Guidance/Support for Student Role, 2) Project Successes and Challenges, 3) Curricular Project Measurement and Monitoring, 4) Curriculum Management Committee Engagement and Accessibility, 5) Frequency of Engagement with other Students in these Roles, and 6) Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement: Curriculum Management Infrastructure.

Results

With a response rate of 57.7% from 123 students, participants reported that they receive sufficient support/guidance for their roles (74%), but more than half were unaware of a process to monitor progress. Students remained siloed, communicating with other groups less than monthly, and 72% reported lacking sufficient knowledge of other groups' curricular projects. Thematic qualitative analysis of suggestions for improving the curriculum management infrastructure yielded the following priorities: communication/feedback; transparency; and organizational efficiency. Similar analysis of suggestions for improving medical student roles showed: defining roles; increasing support, training, and guidance; and communication.

Discussion

Our study represents the first inventory of student engagement in curriculum design, development, evaluation and implementation at the nation's largest single-campus medical school. There is a clear need for greater collaboration and communication, systems to track curricular projects, and improved training/definition of roles. As primary stakeholders in their own educational environment, students involved in curricular projects are uniquely placed to make such observations and pleas for improvement. Development of a comprehensive roster specifying roles and responsibilities, an accompanying work-flow model for interacting roles, and a central hub to track projects would each greatly improve the efficacy of curricular planning.