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RE: Charge Letter to Working Group on Data-Driven Guiding Principles for Foundations Phase Structure

As you know, the US Department of Education recently changed their definition of allowable lengths of quarters and semesters for medical school. The new guidance requires that quarters are between 9 and 13 weeks of instruction. Because terms one and three in the current UWSOM Foundations phase schedule are 15 weeks long, the UWSOM Foundations phase is out of compliance with the new US Department of Education Guidelines. We need to come into compliance by fall of 2022, as a lack of compliance on the UWSOM threatens all UW students' financial aid. There are many steps involved in making a schedule change in the WWAMI program, and therefore the timeline to determine and implement a modified curriculum is relatively short.

The curriculum that began in 2015 has worked well, with incremental adjustments each year. This new, larger need to change quarter lengths is an opportunity to consider ways to improve the curriculum further in terms of overall length of Foundations phase, order of content, optimal combinations of content in blocks, depth and adequacy of coverage of specific topics, the potential need for more study time, more time for final examinations in all blocks, the desire for more comprehensive assessment approaches, and student wellness, are among some of the areas to be considered. Several possible approaches to changing the structure have been discussed.

Early in the process, Michael Ryan assembled a set of guiding principles that identified some key areas in which improvements could potentially be made to the Foundations curriculum. Before we move forward in selecting a curricular structure and modifications to meet US Department of Education standards, it is important to ensure that these principles are data-driven, and fully represent the areas in need of change. If so, we can utilize them effectively in building the new structure. It is also important to keep in mind that the current curriculum is working well and this is an opportunity to make an excellent curriculum even better.

I write to ask you to participate in a short-term work group to examine and modify the guiding principles to assure that they are accurate and complete, and should guide the development of the new Foundations phase structure. This process should consist of obtaining and reviewing data from a limited number of

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available sources, such as the AAMC Graduation Survey, end of phase survey reports, performance on USMLE, and student feedback to determine if the data support the guiding principles.

I would like to receive your data-based reactions to the enclosed guiding principles and any resulting recommendations by June 15. I have asked Edith Wang and Meghan Kiefer to lead the work group. Jack Darrell will provide administrative support for the group's work, and Linda Ho will provide and analyze data as needed. Your work will serve as the basis for discussion at the Curriculum Committee level to determine the optimal structure and curricular contents.

Thank you for being willing to work on this very important, short-term work group.

Sincerely,



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