

September 17-18, 2014

INFORMATION ITEM

Changes to the WWAMI Medical Education Program at Montana State University

THAT

The Board of Regents of Higher Education is informed of the following proposed structure for the WWAMI Medical Education Program at Montana State University (MSU).

EXPLANATION

Beginning with the cohort of students in Fall 2015, the WWAMI Medical Education Program will include 18 months at MSU as opposed to the current 2 semesters; the remainder of the program will continue to take place at the University of Washington (UW) and other regional sites, as before. Students will pay the current MSU graduate tuition while at MSU, which will include 6 credits in the summer of the first year and 12 credits in the summer between 1st and 2nd year, in addition to 20+ credits for 3 semesters (Fall, Spring, Fall).

In addition to the students spending more time on the MSU campus, the entire curriculum will change dramatically in order to help students complete and graduate from the program in four years.

1. All the subjects currently provided by UW in Seattle during the 2nd year (not just half) will be integrated with the first year material and taught during the 18-month phase in Bozeman. This will be followed by the students taking Step 1 of their national board exams, which they currently take in the summer after year two. Everything covered on this first set of boards will be taught in the 18-month phase in Bozeman.
 2. In the new curriculum, the 1st year will run from late-July through mid-June, and the 2nd year will start the 3rd week of August. This means instructional time includes summer sessions in addition to Fall and Spring semesters, and MSU will need to pay faculty additional salaries outside of their 9-month MUS contracts. In the first 2 years of the program, students currently take about 24 credits per semester or approximately 96 credit hours total (48 credits on the MSU campus). Under the new model, students will do similar work in 18 months entirely at MSU. Most of the instruction will be small group active learning, which requires more faculty than the current lecture format, therefore, total WWAMI faculty hours will more than double from what they are now.
 3. The current second year curriculum is much more clinical than the first, and all this clinical content will now be included in the 18-month Bozeman phase. There will be a three-week clinical immersion at the start of the first year and at least 8 hours per week for the rest of the 18 months. In addition, the “basic science” subjects will also be taught from a more clinical perspective. MSU will need physicians involved in teaching these clinical courses which will have a higher expense than using the MSU faculty that currently teach in the first year.
 4. In the new curriculum there will be two cohorts of WWAMI students on the Bozeman campus every Fall. We are working to identify suitable space for the WWAMI program to accommodate the expansion to 30 students per cohort, the changes to the curriculum, and the expansion to a second year in Bozeman.
 5. These program changes will help our students graduate on time and will provide them the opportunity to remain in Montana for a longer portion of their WWAMI medical education. No changes will result in costs to our students or the overall WWAMI program budget.
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1-Comparison of University of Washington School of Medicine (UWSOM) current and new curricula.

Attachment 2- Foundations Phase of new curriculum (18 months at MSU)