

# Final Assessment Report

Name of Program

Undergraduate Medical Education (UME)

Degrees Offered

Medical Doctor

External Consultants

Dr. David Musson, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education - Northern Ontario School of Medicine  
Dr. Kenneth Marshall, Professor Emeritus and Director of Accreditation, UME - University of Ottawa

Internal Reviewers

Dr. Susan Knabe, Associate Dean, Undergraduate - Faculty of Information and Media Studies

Date of Site Visit

May 16, 2016

Evaluation

Good Quality

Approved by SUPR-U

September 7, 2016

Approved by SCAPA

No date entered.

Executive Summary

The review of the Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) program at Schulich took place on May 16, 2016 and was attended by Dr. Musson, Dr. Marshall and Dr. Knabe. There was no student reviewer available on that day. The short timeframe of the visit (1 day) also curtailed the degree to which the reviewers were able to visit labs and teaching spaces, though there was an opportunity to examine the library resources in the Taylor Library and the reviewers had an opportunity to meet with students in both London and Windsor via Skype. The IQAP review for the UME program at Schulich took place a scant 15 months following the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) review and considerable discussion pertained to the nature and timing of the IQAP review in relation to the CACMS accreditation review, in particular, the way in which the IQAP review might productively contribute to continuous quality improvement (CQI) within the UME program development. This discussion led to a suggestion by the reviewers that Western explore ways to integrate the IQAP program with external accreditation processes for externally accredited programs and that this integration will make apparent the specific nature of the contribution the IQAP process makes to program development and quality (recommendation 5 of the External Reviewers' Report). One of the challenges for the reviewers was to avoid simply replicating the CACMS review. To that end they identified some areas which they considered beyond the scope of the IQAP review, namely a detailed review of the effectiveness of delivery for the UME curriculum in terms of meeting designated learning outcomes (based on the seven Can MEDS role competencies), though they did note that the competencies identified were both clearly defined and "highly appropriate" and concluded that "by all indications, these determinations are being made with appropriated consideration and expertise." They also identified one area, admission standards and procedures, which was not explicitly the mandate of the IQAP process, but which they felt it was necessary to address because of its complexity, investment in time and energy, and overall importance to the success of the program, leading to the suggestion that the UME program consider admitting some exceptional students after 3 years of undergraduate education (recommendation 2).

The overall tenor of the review was extremely positive and the reviewers indicated that, especially as was related to the mechanisms that were in place to ensure curriculum optimization, they "felt reassured that the ongoing review and optimization of the curriculum is in keeping with the highest standards of medical education" and that there was ample 'evidence of high quality curricular governance'. They commended, in particular, the Quality Committee, and the annual survey of graduating students, which they felt was "an excellent tool for continuous improvement". This continuous improvement was noted across the curriculum, and contributed to the careful and effective way in which students were assessed within the program and prepared for success following the program, both in terms of results on examinations and in terms of post-graduate clinical

placements. One notable example cited by the external examiners was the introduction of "Teaching OSCEs [Objective Structured Clinical Examinations]" that would enable students to gain experience in these exams. Program quality enhancement was reflected in significant improvements in student satisfaction over the past 3 years. Further, students were provided with opportunities to pursue experiential learning, and the UME Program as a whole was well resourced and supported, both in terms of faculty complement and institutional supports, including library and IT resources. The reviewers found that the UME program was well resourced in terms of faculty complement (relatively large by comparison with other Canadian medical schools) though they did note that the "small group size of 12 or more students is somewhat larger than what is considered optimal." Physical resources were not reviewed in detail as this was felt by the reviewers to have been a key focus of the recent CACMS accreditation reviews. Discussion of physical resources, and particularly the upcoming retrofit once Nursing is rehoused in 2017, with UME program staff and faculty indicated a potential lack of consultation around the nature of the renovations, with the reviewers stating that they "were not convinced adequate consultation had occurred to ensure that the forthcoming renovations will optimally meet the needs of the programs" and that this "had the potential to undermine sincere efforts to improve learning." The program response indicates that this is in the process of being remedied.

While the external reviewers were impressed with the continual process of curriculum renewal and innovation and satisfied with the resources available to support the UME program, the specific institutional challenges of fostering and sustaining interdisciplinary learning that came out in the meetings with faculty and administrators led the reviewers to make the suggestion, strongly seconded in the response by the UME program, that the university as a whole, through Senate, work to address these structural and procedural barriers (recommendation 3 of the External Examiners' Report). Finally, the reviewers indicated that they felt that the self-study document provided did not adequately address the relationship between the Western Strategic Plan and Schulich's own initiatives in this area, noting that a more robust document would be beneficial (recommendation 1). The program response notes that there are additional challenges posed, in part, by the need to also align with external accreditation bodies. The UME response indicates that it has taken some early steps to address the way that the alignment of the Western and Schulich Strategic Plans might be leveraged to recognize the way that ongoing initiatives, like the 2nd year Portfolio course, might be utilized to increase outreach into the community, or to facilitate new initiatives, such as revamping admission processes and support for Indigenous students. The long-term curricular changes, already anticipated for the 2019-20 academic year, will "require fiscal, staff and faculty resources to support success" in order to help meet the dual challenges posed by both institutional and accreditation body alignment.

#### Significant Strengths of Program

The significant strengths of the program identified by the external reviewers were as follows:

Schulich UME program objectives/competencies are clearly defined and highly appropriate

Ongoing review and optimization of the curriculum (including use of the curriculum mapping tool as part of the One45 software system and the work by the UME Quality Committee and the Centre for Research and Innovation in Medical Education) in keeping with the highest standards of medical education

Survey of graduating students, conducted annually, is an excellent tool for continuous curricular improvement

Introduction of formative "teaching OSCEs" in 2014-15 and re-design of Year 4 Integrations and Transitions course.

Opportunities for experiential learning

#### Suggestions for improvement & Enhancement

The external reviewers made the following key suggestions, two of which (3 and 5) are not the specific purview of the program being reviewed.

1. The program should develop a more extensive document demonstrating the alignment of the Schulich strategic plan with Western's strategic plan.
2. The program should consider the possibility of accepting some applicants who have only three years of university level expectations. A higher GPA, MCAT and/or perceived maturity during the interview process could be applied to ensure suitability of these candidates.
3. The Senate should review and address as needed the factors that enable interfaculty collaborative efforts to support academic programs that would benefit from inter-faculty collaborations. This includes both existing/future joint degree programs as well as the ability of faculty members to receive appropriate credit and recognition for teaching in educational programs even when such teaching falls outside of their home Faculty.
4. Planning for the renovation and retro-fitting of the Health Sciences Addition and the Medical and Dental building should be informed through a process of consultation and review by the educational programs that will be housed in these programs, including the UME program.
5. Western's IQAP program should integrate the IQAP process with the accreditation process as it relates to accredited programs that are also subject to IQAP.
  - a) Ideally this should include utilizing IQAP for its intended process as a continuous quality improvement (CQI) enabler as distinct from the current high stakes accreditation process, which is often seen as stifling improvement. IQAP should be used in a non-jeopardy manner to identify areas in need of improvement and the resources needed to achieve those improvements.
  - b) Consideration should be given to optimize IQAP with the external accreditation timeline, which would likely mean integrating IQAP with the interim internal review process.

Recommendations required for Program sustainability:

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
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No recommendations required for program sustainability			
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