

Title: Internship assessment: Understanding to change

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Context and setting: UNAERP School of Medicine was founded in 1997 and had a traditional 6-year undergraduate medical curriculum till 2002. In 2003, the curriculum was changed to a student centered, problem-based (PBL), integrated and community based model. In 2006, we were discussing about the 2 year internship practices and assessment to the new curriculum.

Why the idea/change was necessary: During the first 4 year of new curriculum we have formative and summative assessment in all modules, including one OSCE at the end of each semester. We had many difficulties with our clinical faculties to review internship. They believe that during internship students must work as doctors, and that's enough. Students usually complain about the subjectivity of the assessment, especially because 40% of the final grade depends on a global rating, based on vague criteria, which must be scored from 0 to 10. The other 60% was based on written assessment (MCQs and short essay). The aims of this project is to understand faculty and students' perception about internship practices/assessment and use this information to review internship curriculum and assessment methods.

What was done: Students and teachers perceptions were assessed by a structured and self-administered questionnaire scored with a likert scale: strongly disagree(SD) to strongly agree(SA). The survey was undertaken during four workshops with internship faculty. A similar questionnaire was undertaken with interns who graduated at the end of 2006. Approximately 75% (56/75) of all internship teachers responded the survey and 83% (50/60) of interns did it.

Evaluation of the results/Impact: Almost 70% of all respondent faculties agreed (A) or (SA) that theoretical content and clinical practices during the traditional internship were adequate.

When we stated: "In your rotation, internship's written assessments are adequate" we have 53% (A or SA) among faculties and 42% (A or SA) among students. When the statement was: "Internship's global rating assessment method is adequate", 20% of the faculties disagree (D) or (SD) while among students it was 62%. Stating that "Global rating is too subjective and hard to be defined", 55% among faculties (A or TA) and it was 86% for interns.

There was a scenario where an assiduous and extroverted student, who have good relationship with faculties and colleges clearly are not prepared to procedure history taking and physical examination. We asked them to score the "global rating" from 0 to 10. At the end of the questionnaire the same scenario was presented again but they have only two choices: "sufficient" or "not sufficient". We observed that, respectively 52% and 62% of faculties and students gave grade 6 or more to this student, and only 7% and 8% of them considered him as "sufficient".

Finally, we stated that: “students know the assessment rules (how to compose the final grade) better than faculties”. 64% among faculties and 30% among students (D or TD). When we asked them to explain how the final grade is composed, we found out that only 23% among faculties were right , and 98% among students did it correctly.

These results were extremely important to start the revision of new internship’s curriculum and assessment methods.