

*Undergraduate Teaching Matters**James Warner*

Welcome to spring and the latest offering of the Undergraduate teaching newsletter. In this edition we have a compelling article from Dr Sarah Taha, underlining the importance of taking opportunities to develop teaching skills. The last in-house teaching development workshop in April was fully subscribed but there are plenty of opportunities for workshops held by Imperial (see later). Last year CNWL consultants topped the league in terms of attendance at teaching development workshops held by Imperial- something I hope we can replicate this year.

Now to other news....

The feedback from students who have started the new placement at **Hillingdon Hospital** is very positive. Well done to Jeffrey Fehler, Julia Palmer, Alison Conway and the rest of the crew there for making this happen.

Honorary Contracts

Many of you have applied for **Honorary Senior Lecturer contracts** with Imperial (see the last edition for an article on the benefits). Once I submit these I have no feedback whether your application was successful (or even processed). If you have submitted an application and have heard nothing after three months, please let me know and I will chase it for you. If you want access to Imperial intranet, but not have a formal contract you can be provided with a college login and password by completing a "c-form" You can access this through the following link: <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ict/registration/forms/registrationtermsandconditions>

Year Guides will no longer be printed. These are accessible electronically from the Imperial College intranet and are also on Trustnet. They are updated annually and next year's edition is being reviewed now. If you have any suggestions or comments on the content of the year guide please forward these to me

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Undergraduate Teaching Matters - continued.....

James Warner

Student Allocation 2008/2009 Expect more students next year. From August 2008 our student numbers will rise by about 5 per rotation. If you know of anyone who may wish to become a firm leader please pass on details to Sonia Lewis.

Work Experience The Trust gets several applications from school students for work experience placements. Getting into medical school without such experience is almost impossible now. We are in the process of writing a (brief) policy to coordinate these applications.

Essentially students will need

1. a formal letter from the school requesting placement
2. a timetable from the supervising consultant
3. a risk assessment (a short form available from Sonia)
4. a health and safety briefing relevant to the firm and clinical area (this could be amended from the site-specific Medical Student briefing)
5. occupational health clearance (form available from Sonia)
6. a confidentiality agreement signed by the student (also available from Sonia)
7. an appropriate induction on arrival (local fire procedures etc)

Work experience placements should last no more than three weeks and offer an interesting diversion for the consultant as well as helping someone get on the first rung of medical training. If you want to volunteer to take school students on work experience, or if you receive any applications, please contact Sonia Lewis.

Teaching Firm Timetables You may have noted that firm Timetables have been updated and are now on the Imperial College Intranet. Sonia will ask you at the beginning of each firm to update the information (names of Junior Doctors, changes to times etc) this is important as students get unduly upset if the timetable is wrong.

Finally, get some SOLE! The Student On Line Evaluation should be completed by each student at the end of each firm. Although we receive some feedback, many consultants get no SOLE returns. (if your student had completed SOLE you would automatically be sent the results.... eventually). SOLE feedback helps us identify good teachers, and really helps if we are providing citations for Clinical Excellence Awards. So, please remind your students to complete SOLE when they leave.

Happy teaching!
James Warner

Contact

Dr James Warner Director of Clinical Studies
Tel: 07970 849 818 Email: j.warner@imperial.ac.uk

Undergraduate Teaching Co-ordinator Sonia Lewis:
Tel: 020 3214 5884 Email: sonia.lewis@nhs.net

My experience of teaching undergraduate students and the teaching workshops at Imperial College



Once you've qualified and are working on the wards an expectation of your training at all levels is teaching and most of us muddle through with varying degrees of success and no training. As an SpR in Old Age Psychiatry at St

Charles hospital I had volunteered to take on one of the 5th year medical students psychiatry tutorials. I prepared a case, thought of areas of discussion and found some EMQ's, a recipe for a lively and interactive session I thought. On the day of the tutorial I found myself in front of blank faces, hearing the drone of my own voice and sensing dissatisfaction from the group and of myself. Where did it all go wrong? I was soon to find out.

I discussed my experience with my consultant who suggested attending some of the 1 day teaching workshops at Imperial and I promptly put my name down for the following - Teaching & Learning in the Faculty of Medicine, Approaches to Teaching in Clinical Settings and A Practical Introduction to Problem Based Learning.

When I arrived at the first workshop there were doctors from all disciplines and levels including quite a few consultants. A surprisingly common theme was that despite practicing for years and teaching many students the majority of the group had no formal training in educational theory and practices. Key problems raised by the group were making teaching sessions more interactive, how to assess students learning needs, how to deal with group dynamics 'the quiet student' vs. 'the dominant student' and how to balance clinical and teaching responsibilities. All problems to be answered during the course of the workshops.

The facilitator of the workshops used the methods being taught to teach the group. We were soon all actively engaged and contributing to the workshop, working together using a variety of teaching techniques and drawing on the wealth of experience of all the group members. We were encouraged to reflect on the students experience in busy clinical settings and given techniques to make all opportunities a learning experience. In the Problem Based Learning workshop students attended the session to help simulate a PBL session and their feedback was extremely valuable. I left the sessions armed with more confidence and an updated tool-kit of teaching techniques. I was now enthused by the idea of teaching 'quick find me some students so I can see if this works!'

My next tutorial (about two weeks after the first workshop) took some preparation; I crammed in as many new teaching methods as I could! Again it was based around a case but was much more tightly planned with the aim of achieving a defined set of learning outcomes. I was hopeful that my initial idea of a dynamic and interactive session would come to fruit.... and it did. I gave the students some material and direction and they did all the work, coming up with the expected answers and more. It was great to see them working together, I could sit back and listen and gain an understanding of the students strengths and weaknesses, areas I had missed and those that caught their interests. Overall a far more positive experience for all involved. I highly recommend the teaching workshops for all those involved in undergraduate teaching at Imperial College and the skills learnt easily translate into a variety of settings.

Dr Sarah Taha,
SpR Old Age Psychiatry, St Charles Hospital