

August 2019 Newsletter

Following a very successful LCME site visit in early 2017, Dean Reilly charged the educational team at CUSOM to plan and launch a comprehensive new curriculum for the MD program. After a retreat of almost 200 people in late October 2017, more than 25 committees have worked tirelessly to plan an innovative new curriculum focusing on the pillars of Leadership, Curiosity and Commitment. Faculty throughout the SOM led these committees with membership of students, staff, clinicians, scientists and community members who worked diligently over the last few years to build the Trek curriculum; Trek integrates basic science elements longitudinally throughout the academic careers of our students to prepare them and to enhance their personal and professional development as clinicians. The figure above outlines the longitudinal structure of the new curriculum and includes a short description of each phase.

The Plains is comprised of foundational experiences that take students through preclerkship integrated basic science curriculum, clinical skills training, preceptorship and coaching. After completing their summer discovery period, students transition to the Foothills where they will participate in Longitudinal Integrated Clerkships (LICs). In the Treeline portion of the curriculum, students will work through advanced science courses and USMLE 2 and 1. Students will then find more individualized paths, called trails, which include electives, dedicated research and discovery, acting internships, critical care experiences and preceptorship in the Alpine Ascent. Lastly, our students will reach the Summit of their undergraduate medical education where they transition to residency preparation and the match process.

The Trek curriculum revision team is excited to transition work from big picture components of the curriculum to working with stakeholders to implement specific details of each phase. We are visiting departments, divisions and educational groups to describe the plans in detail and hear important feedback around potential challenges along the way. In order to do this as productively and inclusively as possible, new committees will be created focusing on base camps, electives and student organizations, individualized curriculum (Trails and Pathways). The curriculum reform team is also working together to integrate the basic science, health and society and clinical components of the Plains phase.

Additionally, to open the lines of communication directly with the stakeholders in this Trek curriculum, the SOM is going to be launching a new feedback form on the Curriculum Reform website. This form will allow for the submission of questions from anyone who is curious about an aspect of the curriculum reform process. We hope that this resource will provide an opportunity for anyone, including faculty, staff and students, to ask their questions and be heard. Each month, the submissions will be reviewed and Shanta Zimmer (Senior Associate Dean for Education) will address a few questions in a new monthly update. We welcome questions and input from students, faculty and staff as we begin the process of transitioning from our Legacy to Trek Curriculum.