

**MINUTES
DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY
ADVISORY BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING
November 17, 2020 (via Blackboard Collaborate)**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Debra Krukowski at 4:30 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Krukowski welcomed the attendees to the advisory meeting and members introduce themselves and identified their affiliates.

In attendance:

Debra Krukowski, Program Coordinator

Krysti Reece, Clinical Coordinator and Instructional Area
Coordinator for the Vascular Program

Pamela Harmon, Dean of Health Careers and Public Service
Programs

Natalie Anzaldi, Adjunct Faculty

Damaris Mejia, Mt. Sinai Hospital and Adjunct Faculty

Tiffany Irby, Health Careers Information Specialist

Lori Schalke, Loyola MFM

Dr. Dorothy Lam, Swedish Covenant Hospital

Ania Niski, Current student

Sela Sciullo, Current student

Alyssa Trefry, Current Student

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved.

STATUS OF PROGRAM

Enrollment-

Degree

217 applications were reviewed and presented to the admissions committee; 30 degree students were accepted, and orientation was held in the summer. The fall semester started with remote learning with exams on campus and students also got in a portion of their labs on campus.

Five freshman students were lost were due to issues related to the delivery method (preferred face-to-face learning) and personal reasons. Several students dropped from all classes and wanted to start fresh in the fall and have received their readmission information. A couple students will not be returning because the program was a little more time consuming than they expected.

In July, faculty explained the learning process and talked to students regarding the online technology aspect of doing courses remotely and offered resources to help students succeed:

- Faculty have conference hours to meet with students as well as meetings during virtual class.
- Advisors support and assist students with their academic plan.
- Tutor works approximately 13 hours a week.
- A retention specialist offers study and organizational skills.

There are 21 senior students. This group was affected most with the COVID changes. They were to start clinicals in the summer; however, this was not possible, so they started the first week in October. Clinicals and classes will extend into the summer and they will graduate in August instead of May.

Students will not be following the traditional schedule of classes. Faculty are front loading classes and then moving clinicals out a bit. Outside resources from SDMS and Sonoworld include free educational videos to supplement remote and online teaching.

All seniors took boards this summer after being out since March, doing remote learning, and taking their third physics class totally online: the class had a 100% pass rate on physics. Seniors expressed that the exam was tough but felt they were very well prepared, especially since the first two classes were done in school. Abdomen board will be taken in June, and ob-gyn board will be taken in August.

Certificate

Currently, there are no returning or new certificate students in the program. Due to low interest and limited number of clinical sites, faculty felt obligated to the students currently in the program so that there would be enough sites for them to finish by August.

As discussed in other meetings, retention has been very low with certificate students. Student's intentions are good; however, it is difficult for them because they want to work full time and cannot fully commit to the accelerated program. Student's time commitment and challenging times ahead make it difficult for people to make any life changes at this time.

Ms. Krukowski asked the committee for their input regarding the certificate program and its need in the community. Members agreed that incorporating certificates with the pool of degree students and stretching it out makes the most sense now because there is not enough interest to run a separate cohort. Dean Harmon stated that all candidates should be evaluated to find the most qualified students, whether considered degree or certificate. Ms. Krukowski questioned if there is a market for this and added that neighboring community colleges are not offering a separate certificate program.

Vascular Certificate

The vascular program was paused in the spring after two classes because it could not continue face-to-face due to COVID. Courses have begun again, and another cohort has enrolled and gotten through the same two classes. Currently there are 14 students and the 2 students from last spring will join this group for a total of 16 students: 75% of the students are new graduates and 25% are techs in the field who want another specialty.

The program is currently not accredited; however, accreditation may be sought after running a few more cohorts. The program is entirely based on an outline of accreditation standards. Every

student in the program must have passed SPI and also be specialized in either field of abdomen or ob/gyn or both. Because students are registered sonographers, the program does not need to be accredited. They just need the case load and pass the test. The program consists of lecture, lab, and clinical rotation. Students can also log in their cases from work. Ms. Reece personally sponsors the students who pass the program.

ARDMS Results

The students who graduated late were also delayed in taking the boards because ARDMS only allows you to take the abdomen and ob/gyn specialty exams 60 days prior to the graduation. There was a 100% pass rate on the specialty boards, which is a requirement for graduation. Students are especially stressed during this time; but they are happy to have the exams done and it offers them more job opportunities.

Lab/Equipment

A change for the vascular lab is the Park Flo machine, which can be utilized in the general program as well as in Intro to Vascular Imaging class. All the other traditional equipment (GE and Siemens) are also being used in all the vascular labs. The instructors feel the equipment is fitting the needs of the lab.

The lab has 4-5 working stations and lab size is managed according to the equipment. Normally there is never more than 10-11 students, and eight students can be scanning even if a piece of equipment is down. In addition to scanning, there are simulators, a phantom for ob/gyn and abdomen, and computer programs so students should not be stagnant during the lab.

Labs are a bit smaller as some adjustments are made due to COVID. In the spring, a four-hour lab will be split into two separate days to allow for more hands-on and lab size will be back to 8 students.

Any donation of equipment is always welcomed.

Curriculum

There were a few small changes in curriculum due to COVID. The students who started in the fall are on track but will not start their clinicals until August or the beginning of the fall semester. After the graduates of 2022 complete, we should be back on track with the normal curriculum schedule.

Faculty attended SDMS webinars and found they are following the norm during this time (front loading classes and working in clinicals later) and they also learned some programs did not have enough sites for their students. Faculty is very happy that the students were able to get in their clinicals and that they are doing well.

To get more hands on in vascular studies, students will have vascular lectures and 2-hour lab each week. This is in response to student disconnect from lecture and allows for students get hands on experience with the lecture material in the Introduction to

Vascular course. DMS 144 was reduced to a 1 credit hour course and the lab activities and skills related to that course will be spread throughout the program.

JRCDMS Accreditation

The self-study is due at the end of the semester. Then an accreditation site visit will be scheduled to review program documentation. Information submitted in the annual reports such as retention data, graduate information, and employment facts are also reviewed. It was noted that some site visits during COVID were virtual. Ms. Krukowski thanked the clinical sites for providing information when asked. Re-accreditation proves that the program is adhering to the standards set by our organization and we are producing qualified graduates.

JRCDMS recently came out with new standards where they are separating the specialties. A program can be just abdomen or just ob-gyn or both and have a vascular program as well. Triton will continue with the old standards having both specialties.

Ms. Reece stated that it would be a disadvantage to the students to silo them into one specialty considering the number of general departments there are in the area for the students to work in. It gives students the possibility for growth, a better advantage when they graduate, and the ability to make an informed decision on what area they want to work in. Students voiced that they would be at a disadvantage or feel less qualified to handle any patient if they were limited to one specialty.

Ms. Schalke expressed that she prefers and enjoys ob-gyn, but she is glad she had the opportunity to learn abdomen as well. Ms. Anzaldi said that having both specialties are extremely important and makes you more versatile if something changes in your personal life and you need to make a career change. Ms. Krukowski added that having both specialties and adding vascular will make people well-rounded.

Clinical Affiliates

Some clinical affiliates have elected not to take students due to institution restrictions and current rise of COVID. Faculty will re-visit this in January and are constantly monitoring the situation.

JRCDMS has not allowed using lab simulation. The skill set and case load showing proficiency are required; however, they did not mandate the number of days required.

There is an ongoing search for new clinical sites and any referrals are appreciated.

Students reported that they are not allowed to be near or interact with COVID patients at any of the sites. Students got some great insight from software in infectious disease processes and how to handle COVID as well as Ms. Reece sharing safety measures with them. The engineering program provided shields for the students if they wanted to use them in lab. Freshmen also went through an

hour-long training through the World Health Organization on COVID, expectations and proper PPE. Seniors will also get this training.

**EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK/
OPPORTUNITIES**

There are some job opportunities, but openings are limited due to COVID mainly because people are staying where they are. Ms. Krukowski does get calls and emails for job opportunities, which she forwards to students and graduates. All the graduates who were looking for jobs this summer have found employment. Salary and hiring trends are stable right now.

Northwestern lost 8 people at the early onset of COVID but hired a couple since then. There may be two multi-modality positions still open.

Mt. Sinai will possibly have openings for two new ob/gyn positions.

ADJOURNMENT

The committee was thanked for their participation during the meeting and for all that they do for the students. The meeting concluded at 5:30 p.m.

Debra Krukowski retired December 31, 2020 and these minutes were reviewed and respectfully submitted by,



Krysti Reece
Program Coordinator
Diagnostic Medical Sonography

KR/db