



Canadian Undergraduate Surgical
Education Committee

*Comité Canadien Education
Chirurgicale Prégradué*

CUSEC/CCECP Fall Newsletter 2016 | No.2

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SAVE

THE DATE

CUSEC 2017

November 16th, 17th & 18th

Vancouver, BC





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Communicating, Collaborating, Congregating & Championing



Oops! I made a mistake. I read the wrong calendar! In the last newsletter we announced that the CUSEC biennial symposium would be on November 17th, 18th & 19th of 2017. Actually, it will be on November 16th, 17th and 18th, 2017. As usual it will start on Thursday and finish up Saturday at noon.

So... SAVE THE DATES! **NOVEMBER 16, 17 & 18, 2017** in VANCOUVER for the biennial CUSEC Symposium.

Closer to those dates, we'll be sending out registration material including hotel, venue and agenda details, along with your invited submissions to make presentations.

Your CUSEC Executive members are:

	University
Geoff Blair CUSEC Chair	University of BC
Simon Bergman CUSEC Vice-Chair	McGill
Margaret Henri	U de M
George Christakis	U of T
Andreana Butter	Western
Erica Patocskai	U de M
Gary Ko Resident member of the CUSEC Executive	Queen's

We are still not sure if we are reaching everyone in the CUSEC membership. If you know of anyone we are leaving off our mailing list, or anyone whom you think wants to be connected to CUSEC, then please tell us:

Geoff Blair- gblair@cw.bc.ca

Denise Archibald- denise.archibald@vch.ca

Speaking of reaching out to interested people, our own Gary Ko, the resident member of CUSEC Executive, has established a CUSEC Facebook Group. As of the end of September the group has 270 members with resident representatives from across Canada and specialties. There are lots of links to interesting resources. Well done, Gary! Take a look at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1400976983262231/>.

To join you'll need a Facebook account.

Other dates to keep in mind are:

CCME- the Canadian Conference on Medical Education to be held in Winnipeg, April 29th to May 2nd, 2017
www.mededconference.ca.

We have applied to the CCME to have a scheduled CUSEC 'business' meeting at the CCME for any and all CUSEC members who are attending. More details as that date approaches.

ASE- The Association for Surgical Education meeting will be held in San Diego, April 18-22, 2017
www.surgicaleducation.com

Look for more information about both these fine meetings online.

"I'll show you mine, if you'll show me yours..."

In the last CUSEC newsletter, in the spirit of collaboration, I spoke of how we were interested in sharing undergraduate exam questions. I tried (believe me, I tried) to organize a national videoconference featuring Mark Gierl from the University of Alberta where we could hear about his question generation methods and talk about developing a national question bank. As it turns out, there were some snags, mainly of a technical nature, and I had to cancel the videoconference. Mark has kindly agreed to meet with us in the future sometime.

But I was thinking- Is it right for us to be talking about sharing questions right now, when we are still very much independent agents with regards to our students' Learning Objectives? If University of X is saying their students must learn about, say, the staging systems for lung cancer and University of Y is saying to their students that they don't need to know that amount of detail, should U of X and U of Y be sharing questions?

Well, you know that we have talked and talked about this before. Karen Joughin, a hall of fame member of CUSEC's recent past worked very, very hard to gather collective thoughts and composed a set of CUSEC Exit Competencies in 2013. Indeed other CUSEC members, also working hard, composed a set of objectives for students back in 2004.

So where are we now? Bluntly stated, we still have yet to ratify any national set of objectives to be used by our students.

Will we ever get there? I don't know. We have certainly tried. What is preventing this from happening? I suspect it is multi-factorial. We are all busy, busy people and the task is huge. I also know that what may be accepted nationally may not be acceptable to your faculty. They may say, "CUSEC objectives? Huh?" All of us first have to work within the rules and parameters of our own faculty. We are cautious people too. We know how the surgical and educational landscape changes rapidly and whatever we may agree upon today may be out-of-date tomorrow.

Does that leave us then in despair, doomed to never agree on anything?

Maybe one place to start (again) is to simply share what learning objectives we have with each other. We knew that one significant hurdle we faced with any thought of question banking were the security aspects. Thankfully that doesn't apply to learning objectives.

So in the spirit of 'doing something' rather than just talking about it, I have posted on Google Drive our current UBC Surgical Learning Objectives for our 3rd year Surgery clerks. Yes, they may change... err, they will change. And yes, the way your school schedules your Surgery Clerkship is different than how we do things. But the document is there, and it is the document that outlines for our students what knowledge and skills they must acquire. It is the document that our surgical teachers use to know what to teach. It is the document that we use to design our exams. You can read it, copy it, laugh at it, criticize it- whatever. But in the spirit of collaboration... ***I'll show you mine, if you'll show me yours...***

Here's the way we'll do this. We'll use Google Drive, which is a file sharing app. Through Google Drive I will make our UBC 3rd year Learning Objectives available to any of you who are Undergrad Surgical Education Directors, or 3rd Year Surgery Clerkship Directors, or Clerkship Directors. Please send me an email and your position and then I'll make my document, and all other Learning Objective documents that I receive, available for all of us to share.

Directorship positions change, so I actually do not know who is doing what at which university. That's why, if you're an Undergraduate Director and want to share then send me an email to: gblair@cw.bc.ca.

National Specialty Societies

I used to be the chair of the CMA's Specialist Forum, a confab of most of Canada's national specialty societies. There was lots of good discussion, sharing and action around common themes of concern; wait times, quality issues, etc. However, the CMA saw fit to 'extinguish' the Specialist Forum last year (after I became chair...Hmmm, was that a message?). I regret that the Forum never got a chance to discuss the concept of national specialty societies sharing their thoughts on what they thought medical students should learn about their specialty. I know of at least three national surgical specialty societies who have worked on, or are actively working on their desired and considered Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Surgery- the Canadian Association of Paediatric Surgeons, the Canadian Society Of Otolaryngology-Head And Neck Surgery, and the Canadian Urological Association- the latter two having their curriculum material very nicely posted publicly on their website. Some specialty surgery societies in the United States have developed and posted their undergraduate curricula as well.

I plan to discuss this with the new president of CAGS, Dr. Morad Hameed, who just happens to be here at UBC with me. Surely this is a good thing to pursue, and may go a long way towards the goal of nationally agreed upon Learning Objectives for students, not to mention the specialty-specific learning resources that could be forthcoming.

What can you do? This seems to be something we should discuss further. I am open to your ideas and opinions.