PEER REVIEW OF TUTOR PROCESS

RATIONALE

Peer review is a professional responsibility. We owe it to our students and to ourselves to ensure that what we do as faculty members is of the highest quality. Peer review must go hand-in-hand with faculty development that includes individual tutor feedback within a formative process. Currently at MUSM students provide feedback for faculty to use in the review and advancement process. In addition to student feedback, an effective peer review system will afford faculty members additional information that can facilitate faculty improvement and also provide documentation for use in the promotion and/or tenure process.

DEFINITION

Peer review is a structured, formative process through which trained faculty voluntarily:

- perform focused teaching observations;
- provide specific suggestions to enhance an individual’s facilitation skills;
- assist individuals with development of goals for improvement;
- provide prompt feedback;
- encourage an atmosphere of collegial trust and candor.

PURPOSE

Peer review at MUSM is designed to:

- improve tutoring;
- affirm good teaching/tutoring skills;
- provide institutionally credible, faculty-level evaluations that may be used in faculty appointments, advancement, annual reviews, and academic portfolios (at the discretion of the faculty member).

PLAN

Every tutor actively involved in tutoring in a PBL format will be evaluated by a peer reviewer during one phase, once every three academic years. Any tutor may request a review of his/herself more often; the Program Director may also request additional reviews of a tutor. The process will be coordinated through the Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) in consultation with the BMP and the Community Medicine Programs.

PEER REVIEWERS

Potential reviewers will be identified by the BMP Director and Co-Director, Community Medicine Program Director, Deans of Academic Affairs and Office of Faculty Affairs. Volunteers and nominations from the faculty will be accepted. A faculty development session will be conducted to refresh previous reviewers and to orient new reviewers. During the session, the process will be reviewed and the
feedback forms that will be used for the review will be discussed. During successive years, orientation and approval of peer reviewers will be conducted on an as needed basis. Once orientation has occurred, a master list of reviewers will be compiled by the Dean of Faculty Affairs. These reviewers will be those who are recognized as being among the best tutors by means of student evaluations, colleagues, previous peer evaluations, and Phase Coordinator and Program Director evaluation. The OFA will maintain a master schedule of the faculty members who conduct the peer reviews.

TUTORS
At the beginning of each phase an appropriate schedule of reviews will be prepared by the Office of Faculty Affairs in consultation with the Program Directors. Less experienced tutors or those who have not been reviewed previously will be given priority for review.

The OFA and the Program Directors will decide which tutors in the phase will go through a peer review. This will be determined as much as possible at random from among the phases that each individual is scheduled to tutor during the year. Faculty members may also request that they be reviewed or ask that a certain phase may be chosen for their review. The individual to be reviewed will be given a list of three potential peer reviewers, from which he/she will pick one. The phase during which the mandatory review will occur will be chosen at random from among the phases being tutored by that individual during that academic year.

PROCESS
Once the peer reviewer is identified, the reviewer and the tutor make contact to determine the schedule the first and second observations. The reviewer will conduct reviews of the tutor during two different group sessions during the phase. Usually, the first review will occur early in the phase and will be conducted during the first half of the designated tutorial session, ending at the time of midmorning break (~1.5 hours), unless the tutor and peer reviewer decide the observation should be longer. Both written and verbal feedback should be provided. An informal, verbal feedback session can be scheduled for later that day (but within 2-3 days of the observation), followed by written assessment of the session with recommendations. The peer reviewer should conduct the second observation toward the end of the phase, again followed by verbal and written feedback. After the second observation, the reviewer completes the final formal, written feedback and discusses observations with the tutor within 2-3 days. The Tutor Peer Review Attributes Form should be included as part of the feedback. Use of the Interaction Analysis Diagram is strongly recommended but is not required. The review report is sent only to the individual tutor. This information can be used by the tutor for faculty development, documentation of excellence, and/or promotion and tenure. The tutor and reviewer will determine the review schedule.

EVALUATION
At the end of the academic year, all tutors and peer reviewers who participated in the process will complete a survey.

- **Tutor:** all tutors who were reviewed will be asked to provide feedback regarding their experiences and assess the value of the tutor review process to their professional development and provide suggestions for the improvement of the process (Tutor Evaluation of Process).
• Peer Reviewer: each peer reviewer will complete a survey on the value of the experience as well as impressions/experiences during the peer review process and provide suggestions for the improvement of the process (Peer Reviewer Evaluation of Process).

• Compiled Results: at the end of the academic year, a report outlining the number of reviews and compiled results of the evaluations of the process provided by the tutors and the peer reviewers will be posted for faculty to review.