Reviewer's report

Title: Learner satisfaction and receptivity with a restructured pedagogic model case-based learning and practical activities parallel to the theoretical class programme

Version: 1 Date: 19 July 2004

Reviewer: Stefan Herzig

Reviewer’s report:

General
This is a technically well conducted study on the change in student’s perception of an obs-gyn course along with a major change in pedagogic concept. I recognize immediately that it is necessary to obtain and disseminate such data inside own faculty, for the sake of implementing and maintaining curricular change. The crucial question for publication however is, what can be learnt by the (inter-)national readership? This question must be answered rigorously by the Authors.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
There are several problems with such a longitudinal design:
1. Are there means to prove that the two cohorts of students are equivalent (i.e. sociodemographic data beyond age and gender, test achievement in previous courses, similar rating given to courses that did not undergo curricular change)?
2. To what extent can the Authors rule out a Hawthorne effect (i.e. any change as such is perceived as positive)? One way would perhaps be to study a third cohort.
3. No information is given to the objective consequences of curricular change on student learning (e.g. test results)
4. What are the key elements of curricular change that others should adopt to perform a similar study, and to hope for similar outcome?
5. The discussion of “problematization” versus PBL seems misleading, since the study intervention was a change from traditional lecture-based towards "problematization", along with part of the lectures

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Levels of significance (exact p-values) should not be indicated

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

None