

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Western Regional Representatives

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY and RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the CFMS Western Regional Representatives is to act as a liaison between the Western Region medical schools (University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, University of Calgary, University of Manitoba, and University of Saskatchewan) and the CFMS executive, to represent the interests of the Western Region schools, as well as to foster communications between the five Western schools themselves.

Along with representing our respective regions, all CFMS regional representatives act as members of the CFMS executive team and assist in carrying out tasks related to the CFMS Strategic Plan and annual operations. This year we have taken on responsibility for co-chairing the Nominations Committee (Fatemeh, in conjunction with Ontario Regional Representative Yousif Atwan), and coordinating the Student Initiative Grants program (Emily).

II. MEETINGS ATTENDED

DATE	MEETING	LOCATION
Sept. 27, 2016	Western Regional Representatives Transition Meeting	Teleconference
October 4, 2016	Western Deans' Meeting School Pre-Meeting: University of Calgary	Teleconference
October 5, 2016	Western Deans' Meeting School Pre-Meeting: University of Manitoba	Teleconference
October 5, 2016	Western Deans' Meeting School Pre-Meeting: University of Saskatchewan	Teleconference
October 6, 2016	Western Deans' Meeting School Pre-Meeting: University of British Columbia	Teleconference
Oct. 15, 2015	Western Deans' Meeting Preparation Meeting	Vancouver, British Columbia
Oct. 16, 2015	Western Deans' Meeting	Vancouver, British Columbia
Oct. 16-18, 2015	CFMS Fall Executive Meeting	Ottawa, Ontario
Nov. 22, 2015	CFMS Executive November Teleconference	Teleconference
Nov. 24, 2015	Western Region November Teleconference	Teleconference
Jan. 8-10, 2016	CFMS Winter Executive Meeting	Toronto, Ontario
Jan. 24, 2016	Western Region January Teleconference	Teleconference

Mar. 6, 2016	CFMS Executive March Teleconference	Teleconference
Mar. 16, 2016	Western Region March Teleconference	Teleconference

*Note: All meetings were attended by both Western Representatives unless otherwise noted.

III. WESTERN-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES, ISSUES and ACTIVITIES

A) WESTERN DEANS' MEETING PRESENTATION

The Western Deans' Meeting is an annual meeting of deans and undergraduate medical education program staff from Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan medical schools. The CFMS Western Regional Representatives, along with the presidents from each of the school's respective medical societies, have been lucky in the past few years to be invited to present to the attendees on issues that are seen to be of particular concern or importance to medical students at their schools.

In preparation for this meeting, individual teleconferences were held with each school's medical student association presidents and CFMS representatives in order to determine which issues were common amongst schools and should be focused on. The day prior to the presentation itself, the Western Representatives, MSA presidents, and Taneille Johnson (former Western Regional Representative) met in person for final discussion and preparation. The pre-meeting was effective in determining potential improvements for areas of concern, which we were able to then present constructively to the Western Deans' Meeting attendees.

The final presentation focused on three main issues: 1) Ice Bowl, 2) Career Advising, and 3) Learner Mistreatment, with each school having a part in speaking to particular concerns. It was received well and the presentation team fielded questions from the deans and program staff, which led to good discussion.

In consideration for next year's Western Deans' Meeting (in Winnipeg, Manitoba), it will be important to gather more clerk feedback in advance, as well as to advocate for more time for student-faculty discussion following the presentation.

B) WESTERN REGION MEETINGS

Regular teleconferences have been hosted on a monthly basis (with the exception of December and February) with representatives from the Western Region schools. This year we have engaged not only the presidents from each Medical Student Association, but also the respective CFMS representatives. We feel that this has led to high levels of engagement and discussion, and has allowed the teleconferences to have a broad range of perspectives, as well as ensuring all schools are represented, even if one representative from a school cannot be present.

All representatives from the Western Region will also have the opportunity to attend a brief formal meeting at SGM in order to ensure that we connect in person.

C) ICE BOWL

Ice Bowl is an annual hockey tournament held and attended by the Western region medical schools. A concern that has arisen with Ice Bowl is that it has much lower attendance from the University of British Columbia than other participating medical schools, which resulted in a focused discussion at the beginning of our term around potential reasons and remedies for this.

Ice Bowl 2015 was hosted by the University of Saskatchewan, with roughly 560 student participants. Ice Bowl 2016 will be hosted by the University of Calgary from September 16-18, 2016, and planning is going well. Additionally, the University of Saskatchewan Ice Bowl team is assisting with the creation of a transition and planning document for Ice Bowl in order to ensure optimal support for future organizing committees.

D) COMMITTEE OF WESTERN MEDICAL SOCIETIES PROPOSAL

In the 2014-2015 year, the idea of creating a formal association with membership from the Western Region medical schools was raised. This included the creation by our predecessors of a proposed Terms of Reference for a Committee of Western Medical Societies (similar to the Ontario Medical Students' Association). At the start of our term, we undertook a discussion with the Western medical society presidents and CFMS representatives in regards to the purpose of such a group and the feasibility, benefits, and potential concerns with creating a formal association. The outcome of this was the decision that, at this time, the formal creation of a Western medical student association would not be pursued as it was thought that it would create increased bureaucracy and organizational resource demand without improving Western communication abilities, heightening school lobbying leverage, or adding benefits beyond what could emerge from the informal collaboration of Western schools. If circumstances or opinions change in future years however, the option is still available.

E) TRANSITION DOCUMENT

As CFMS regional representative portfolios are somewhat more flexible than CFMS vice president portfolios, given the nature of representing a particular region rather than working in specifically-designated areas, it can be a challenge to know exactly what the areas of need over time and the representative history has been. For this reason, we are working this year to create a stronger and more detailed transition document for the Western Regional Representative position, including a history of issues relevant to member schools, the various medical student association structures, et cetera.

F) OTHER WESTERN REGION INVOLVEMENT

Emily attended and participated in the Provincial Lobby Day organized jointly by the University of Alberta and University of Calgary Government Advocacy and Affairs Committees. She also attended and assisted in the organization of the annual Alberta Medical Students' Conference and Retreat (AMSCAR).

IV. GENERAL CFMS ACTIVITIES

A) NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Fatemeh co-chaired the CFMS Nominations Committee alongside Ontario Regional Representative, Yousif Atwan. This committee is responsible for selecting CFMS's external representatives to committees and meetings through a fair and transparent process. This year, the committee oversaw the selection of applicants for positions advertised in the Fall Call (selecting for National Officers, and representatives to CFMS committees such as the Education and Finance Committees), the IFMSA March Meeting, SGM Travel Awards, and most recently the CFMS Winter Call (selecting for the CMAJ editors, and representatives to external committees). As a part of this role, applications were collected from the general membership, anonymized and distributed to external representatives from each member school to be evaluated based on a predetermined scoring rubric. For a more detailed description of the positions filled during the respective calls, please visit the CFMS website.

Emily also participated in the Nominations Committee by acting as a reviewer and scorer for the Fall Call and IFMSA March Meeting.

B) STUDENT INITIATIVE GRANTS (SIGs)

Emily is the 2015-2016 Student Initiative Grants coordinator, and as such was responsible for receiving all 2015 SIG applications, coordinating the review process, and notifying successful and unsuccessful applicants. She continues to maintain ongoing follow-up communication with the successful project recipients for the 2015 cycle, as well as with previously successful applicants whose projects are still active.

The 2015 application cycle saw over 40 applications for funding for creative initiatives from across the country. The CFMS SIGs program was able to fund thirteen of these projects, either partially or fully; however the decisions were certainly difficult given the high caliber of proposals received. Fatemeh, as well as Ontario Regional Representative Yousif Atwan, assisted with SIGs by being the two other reviewers and scorers for the SIGs application adjudication process.

Emily is currently working to revise the SIGs application documents and improve the adjudication process through a review of the application process and the scoring criteria. This is being done to ensure that they are optimally clear, effective for differentiating between projects, and aligned with the CFMS mission and Strategic Plan. The overall CFMS Executive team (particularly Fatemeh and Yousif) will be engaged around suggested changes and the final documents and process. Past applicants (successful or unsuccessful) are also welcome to submit feedback on their experiences with the process and SIGs program.

C) CFMS WELLNESS SURVEY

Both of us participated in promotion of the CFMS Wellness Survey at our respective universities, as well as encouraging other Western schools to do the same. Fatemeh

additionally played a key role in assisted with resolution of some of the survey administration difficulties that arose with faculty at the University of Alberta.

D) CFMS Elections Task Force Committee

Fatemeh was a committee member on the CFMS Elections Task Force Committee, which was ultimately responsible for a series of recommendations, put forth by Past President Bryce Durafourt to the general council, to be presented at the Spring General Meeting.

IV. FUTURE AIMS

Over the remainder of our term as CFMS's Western Regional Representatives, we will continue to balance representation of the Western Region schools with working with the rest of the CFMS Executive team to further the Strategic Plan of the organization and improve the experiences of our medical colleagues across the country.

In particular, we will focus on continuing to improve communications among the Western Region medical schools by maintaining regular contact via teleconferences. We will also explore a suggestion that arose at our most recent teleconference of developing a means of better informing Western presidents and CFMS representatives of the current activities and priorities of CFMS on a more detailed level. One option for this is a circulated newsletter; however we are open to discussions around the method that will serve our membership best.

With a focus on Western school support and engagement beyond medical student association presidents and CFMS representatives, we will also continue to support the Ice Bowl 2016 planning team as needed and encourage reduction of barriers to participation.

Lastly, as the University of Alberta was the successful in their bid to host the 2016 CFMS AGM, we will support them as needed and prepare to welcome delegates to our beautiful province in September.

We look forward to SGM 2015 and as always, welcome any questions or feedback in regards to our Western Region Representative roles or our respective Nominations Committee and Student Initiative Grants portfolios.

Respectfully submitted by:

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