Changes Are Coming to the Council on Education

New governance model reflects shift to “portfolio” concept of content delivery

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The AAOS Council on Education (COE) will soon undergo its first major change in governance in more than 10 years, with the implementation of a working structure that will designate new committee roles as of March 2017. The new structure will help the Academy move from a product-centered content delivery model to a new portfolio-based model that can better meet the educational needs of individual AAOS members.

Currently, the COE consists of 13 main committees and an additional 34 supporting committees, each focusing on a different anatomic area in orthopaedics. Most of these supporting committees are engaged in planning Annual Meeting programs, as well as with developing assessments and examinations in specific anatomic areas. Under the new model, the Council membership will be composed of program chairs and content committee chairs (See Fig. 1). The program chairs will be responsible for implementing Academy programs, such as online learning and publishing, assessment/exams, the Annual Meeting, The Journal of the AAOS (JAAOS), and continuing medical education (CME) courses. Two additional program chairs—the editor of the patient education website OrthoInfo and the chair of the International Committee—will also be on the Council. The content committee chairs will oversee 10 new content committees, each focused on an anatomic or specialty area.

Nimbler, faster

The goal of the new structure is to make the COE nimbler and more responsive to the needs of Academy members. As AAOS educational programs transition to online and digital formats, the new structure will enable the COE to develop content more rapidly and avoid overlap between similar projects, according to Evan Flatow, MD, COE chair. A key tenet of the structure is a closer working relationship with the specialty societies and their committees that work on education. Liaisons from each specialty society will be appointed through the Academy’s Committee Appointment Program (CAP) process and will serve on corresponding content committees.

Dr. Flatow noted that the COE is evolving to embrace the “dynamism shifts” in how educational content is being delivered to AAOS members. “We’re embracing feedback from our community. We look forward to working in collaboration with the specialty societies to ensure we minimize duplication and capitalize on our collective strengths," he said. “This is an exciting time in orthopaedic education.”

The new Council structure will consist of a Council chair, a chair-designee, nine program chairs, 10 content committee chairs, the second vice president of the Academy, the incoming chair of the Board of Councilors, and the Board of Specialty Societies (BOS) Education Committee chair.

Seven members—the chair, chair-designee, editor-in-chief of JAAOS, Annual Meeting chair, CME Courses chair, Assessment and Exams chair, and the chair of Online Learning and Publishing—will constitute the COE oversight group. Its role will be to provide leadership and decision making in support of education recommendations and proposals from the content committees.

The 10 content committees will be focused on the following anatomic areas:
- foot and ankle
- hand and wrist
- oncology
- shoulder and elbow
- sports medicine
- spine
- trauma
- pediatric orthopaedics
- hip and knee
- basic science

The role of each content committee will be to develop a multiyear plan for its specialty, including identification of content, key competencies, hot topics, and market trends that might be useful in developing and delivering relevant education across multiple delivery formats. General orthopaedic surgeons will also contribute to content development.

Content experts or subject matter experts on each content committee will come from a broad group of Academy Fellows. These will include the following:
- representatives from the Instructional Course Committees, Central Program Committees, and Examination Assessment Committees
- a liaison from the relevant specialty society
- a specialty deputy editor from JAAOS
- general orthopaedic surgeons an orthopaedic resident

Some members of each content committee will be appointed through the CAP process. To ensure continuity and succession, a chair-designee will be selected to work with each content committee chair.

By including an orthopaedic resident on each content committee, the AAOS will be better able to reach out to the next generation of orthopaedic surgeons to understand their learning needs. In addition, participation by a specialty society liaison will help the Academy collaborate and communicate with orthopaedic specialty societies.

Committees realigned

Three committees that currently report to the Council—the Publications Committee, the CME Courses Committee, and the Patient Education Committee—will no longer report to the COE. The new portfolio-based model is expected to result in a more rigorous evaluation of each specialty society’s educational content, the COE chair pointed out. Liaisons from the relevant specialty societies will now be appointed to the COE.

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