



Three Questions for Sandra Pfister, PhD

Curriculum Change from the Perspective of a Foundational Science Leader

Transformational Times: What aspect of the new curriculum do you see as having the most potential for transforming education at MCW?

Dr. Sandra Pfister: My hope is that the new curriculum will create better relationships between basic scientists and clinicians. I honestly believe that every basic scientist should have a chance to shadow a clinician on rounds AND the clinician should spend some time in the basic scientist's lab collecting/analyzing experimental data. We would see that we are more "alike," and that there is value in our connections. Together we can transform our medical students into inquiry-driven physician scientists who will provide the best care for future patients.

Transformational Times: What keeps you up at night?

Dr. Sandra Pfister: I wonder about resources and time for all the expected changes. I still direct two current preclinical courses. I also give lectures in many other M2 units. How do I continue to be my best in my current teaching roles while I am involved in the meetings and planning for the new curriculum? More than ever, I feel exhausted.

Transformational Times: Which aspects of the new curriculum excite you most?

Dr. Sandra Pfister: I actually hope that I will get to know some of the medical students. The way we teach in pre-clinical courses (and now even more amplified by COVID-19 restrictions) has never allowed for time to interact with students in any meaningful way. It would be exciting (to me) if there are opportunities to facilitate the same group of students in Phase 1 and then re-connect with them in Phase 2 and/or Phase 3.

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