This spring, P3 students participated in a panel discussion that addressed the economics of end-of-life care in the U.S. This novel teaching approach for incorporating pharmacoeconomics and ethics into the classroom was conducted at the end of the Hematology/Oncology module. The debate was an attempt to break away from the standard lecture format and use an active learning approach involving the students.

P3’s were placed in a mock situation where they represented pharmacy on an expert panel convened by the government to discuss skyrocketing oncology costs and what can be done about them. The students were asked to read articles on the subject prior to class. Then at the beginning of the discussion were asked to respond to a series of questions such as “Is it ethical to only provide medical treatment to those who are able to pay for it?” and “To enact healthcare reform I believe higher taxes/premiums will be required.”

The panel was moderated by Dr. Chris Owens and included Drs. Vaughn Culbertson and Tim Hunt. Also on the panel was Dr. Ralph Baergen, a professor of ethics from the Department of English and Philosophy.

After the initial opinion poll the panel explored the topic with introductory statements. Dr. Hunt provided data to provide a framework on the issue of healthcare economics in the U.S. According to his research the U.S. spent 4% of its national output of goods and services in the early 1960’s. Currently the number sits at 20%. Medicare is responsible for 25% of that spending. He also mentioned that in 2010 there were 46 million Medicare beneficiaries. By 2030 there will be almost 80 million on the government program. He stated that, “The Medicare trust fund is being depleted, the program will be insolvent in 6-8 years.” The data that Dr. Hunt provided effectively illustrated that there is a problem with health economics in the U.S.

Dr. Culbertson’s opening statement addressed the ethics and politics of health economics. He began by introducing an editorial that ran in the Idaho Statesman titled, “Obamacare, legislating healthcare not in the constitution.” The editorial stated that, “legislating healthcare is not part of governments

From left: Dr. Chris Owens, Dr. Tim Hunt and Dr. Ralph Baergen

(Cont.)
Continued ...

job description.”

“Your whole perception as a health care provider is changing dramatically from the expectation that everyone will have healthcare to perhaps only those that can afford healthcare will receive it,” he said.

Culbertson mentioned that he believes that rationing will take place in some form but it won’t be called, “rationing”. He believes that the solution is in pharmacoeconomics. “I do believe that pharmacoeconomics has to be the solution and pharmacoeconomic analysis is the instrument we should rely upon,” he said “The field of pharmacoeconomics and health economics needs some kind of methodology for determining what health care benefits will benefit society the most.”

The final panel member, Dr. Ralph Baergen addressed the ethics of healthcare. “It doesn’t matter how much money you have in your bank account, if you don’t have access to health care when you need it none of your other opportunities matter,” he said. “Treating people justly is expensive,” he said. “The more evenhanded a system is the more expensive it will be.”

Baergen argued that rationing of healthcare is already present in the system. Healthcare is either withheld by insurance companies or the expense is pushed onto the patient. Baergan commented that the current system of rationing is unethical.

The students then participated in the discussion and addressed their concerns regarding the fair distribution of healthcare and abuses of the healthcare system.

The debate sparked active discussion from students in both Meridian and Pocatello with some students expressing strong opinions.

According to Teddie Gould who coordinates this P3 course, the panel discussion will also be a part of next years course.

Ten Years Later... The Class of 2003 Reunites

It was 10 years ago that the class of 2003 walked the halls of the College of Pharmacy. This July they came together again to revisit memories of their time here. “It was amazing how quickly the years evaporated and it felt like the old days,” said Anna Bartoo, 2003 graduate and organizer of the reunion. “It was fun to reconnect with my classmates, most of which I hadn’t seen since graduation,” she said.

Bartoo decided to plan a reunion when one of her physician friends told her of his medical school reunion. She thought it sounded like a fun tradition so she began by contacting a few of her classmates. “Several people expressed interest, so that’s what began it all,” said Bartoo.

With spouses and children, about 60 people attended the reunion, which was held July 27 in Meridian. Classmates came from all over the United States -- Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Arizona, Washington; and Idaho -- Pocatello, Burley, Meridian, Twin Falls. Reunion events included a tour of the Meridian campus with Dean Cady & a BBQ in Julius Kleiner Park. The kids played in the splash pad, while the adults took part in rousing games of volleyball and bocce ball.

“If I was very grateful for the enthusiasm and support I received from the college,” said Bartoo who organized the reunion with classmate Rhonda Coltrin. “Pharmacy has been a tremendous career and has provided a wonderful life for me and my family. I will always be grateful for the fine education I received at ISU,” she added.

If you are interested in organizing a reunion of your classmates, the College can help! We will help you contact your classmates and be a part of the event. Email or call Julie Hillebrant at julie@pharmacy.isu.edu, 208-282-3393.
Renovation Celebration!

Please come and join your friends and family at the College of Pharmacy...

...for the unveiling of our newly renovated student lounge and compounding lab in the historic Leonard Hall.

Friday, October 4th

11 am - Noon
Annual David Chu Lectureship - This year’s guest lecturer is Dr. Greg Warren of Open Eye Scientific Software. C.E. credit will be provided to all lecture attendees. C.E. is also available in Meridian via distance learning technology.

4:30 pm
Ribbon cutting & tour of newly renovated Student Learning Center - Unveiling of the Eugene O Leonard and Emmons E. Roscoe display of pharmacy and pharmacognosy artifacts. Unveiling of the first ever donor wall in the history of the ISU College of Pharmacy.

4:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Community Open House & Free Flu Shots

5:20 pm - 6:00 pm
Retirement Reception for ISU Provost and College of Pharmacy Professor Dr. Barbara Adamcik.

Saturday, October 5th

10:00 am
Homecoming Parade

11:30 am - 1:30 pm
Tailgate Party for all ISU College of Pharmacy guests in the Holt Arena parking lot.

2:00 pm
Homecoming Football Game vs. Univ. of North Dakota as we cheer our Bengals to victory!!! A block of tickets has been reserved under the College of Pharmacy with the ISU ticket office at $8.00 each until September 27. Call the ticket office at 208-282-4093 to reserve your tickets to be picked up at will call.

To RSVP and for more information contact Carla at carla@pharmacy.isu.edu or (208) 282-2175