

Classroom Issues – summary of discussion held at the CBMS Council Meeting on December 4, 2020

Many of our societies are directly involved with helping their members adjust to the realities of instruction and assessment in the age of COVID-19 and the inevitable changes that we face even after emerging from this time. What are the issues that your teachers and instructors are wrestling with? What resources and supports are being found to be most helpful?

The issues raised in this group included communicating to teachers what is most important (conceptual or high level understanding, habits of mind), how to teach effectively in these new modalities, what technologies are available and how to use them, and ensuring that the administration is communicating that normal instruction is not possible in these abnormal times. This includes flexible approaches that recognize that not all students will be learning at the same pace and providing support for co-requisite topics.

Summative assessment was also a major topic. This raised questions about the purpose and nature of summative assessment. One concrete suggestion given the prevalence of cheating in an online environment is to have students sign a statement promising not to cheat.