

Role of the Student Affairs Division, Phramongkutklo College of Medicine in Assessing Medical Cadets

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Objective: To evaluate the role of the Student Affairs Division: Phramongkutklo College of Medicine in assessing medical cadets and determine the problems and obstacles in assessing.

Material and Method: Qualitative study using focus group discussion was conducted in staff and medical cadets to determine functions, problems and obstacles of the Student Affairs Division, Phramongkutklo College of Medicine. Questionnaire was used to determine the agreement to ten domains: main educational programs, aims and missions, teaching methods, organizational culture, key requirements and expectation for programs, related units relationships and communication mechanisms, role of staff for student assessment, discipline, leadership assessment, problems and obstacles for student assessment and related units of student assessment, respectively.

Results: The present study indicated that majority of the subjects agreed with the curriculum of the Student Affairs Division, especially the military subjects. However, a leadership subject should be added. Majority of the subjects supported the organizational culture of the Student Affairs Division.

Conclusion: This study showed that most of the subjects supported the vital role of the Student Affairs Division: Phramongkutklo College of Medicine in assessing medical students. However, improving the current assessment system regarding the leadership, is needed.

Keywords: Academies and institutes, Curriculum, Education medical, Educational measurement, Military medicine, Needs assessment, Schools medical, Students medical

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Phramongkutklo College of Medicine, the only military medical school in Thailand, was established in 1975 in order to educate and inspire the scholars to be qualified doctors who can serve the armed forces. In the beginning, Phramongkutklo College of Medicine had only 32 medical cadets each year who were funded by the Army. To date, the number of medical cadets is increased up to 100 each year. Of 100 medical cadets, the Ministry of Public Health sponsors 80 medical cadets who will work as the civilian doctors when they graduate. Both, who will joined the Army's and the Ministry of Public Health's scholars, have been

studying in the same medical curriculum and are under the supervision of the Student Affairs Division.

Phramongkutklo College of Medicine consists of 4 main divisions: the Headquarters Division, the Academic Affairs Division, the Student Affairs Division or the Medical Cadets Division and the Support Division. The main function of the Student Affairs Division has two functional which are *Direct* and *Indirect aspects*. *Direct aspects* include government and assessment, training and assessment, dormitory services, food and welfare services, while, *Indirect aspects* include cooperating with the Academic Affairs Division, in assessing ethics and conducting aspects.

The Student affairs division of other military schools including the Chulachomklo Royal Military Academy, the Royal Thai Air Force Cadet Academy

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and the Royal Thai Naval Academy has similar roles including commanding and controlling, discipline training, psychology and military leadership training, physical education training and teaching basic military subjects⁽¹⁻³⁾. In contrast, the Student Affairs Division of civilian universities may have some different roles. For instances, the functions of the Student Affairs Division of Chulalongkorn University is to control discipline, to promote and to support academic activities and welfare and also to support art and culture⁽⁴⁾. For Ramkhamhaeng University, the Student Affairs Division promotes activities, develops and supports students⁽⁵⁾.

The Educational Quality Assurance of Phramongkutklao College of Medicine views the role of the Student Affairs Division as a supporting unit of the college. According to the standard criteria of Thai Medical Council, knowledge, skills, communications, ethics, conduct and discipline are essential competences of medical cadets. The important qualification of medical cadets that differs from civilian medical students is being able to work in combat situations in supporting the army. Thus, the Student Affairs Division has an important role regarding the conduct and disciplines that impacts summative assessment in order to make the medical cadets fit to the army work force. The aims of the study were to evaluate the functions, of the Student Affairs Division, Phramongkutklao College of Medicine in terms of the assessment of medical cadets and cooperating with the Academic Affairs Division, in assessing ethics and conducting aspects. In addition, our study aimed to find the problems and obstacles of the function roles of this division.

Material and Method

Qualitative study using focus group discussion was conducted in staff and medical cadets to determine the functions, problems and obstacles of the Student Affairs Division, Phramongkutklao College of Medicine. Questionnaire was constructed to determine the agreement to ten domains: main educational programs, aims and missions, teaching methods, organizational culture, key requirements and expectation for programs, related units relationships and communication mechanisms, role of staff for student assessment, discipline, leadership assessment, problems and obstacles for student assessment, related units of student assessment. The questionnaires were evaluated and improved by five specialists to give the content validity of ≥ 0.5 ^(6,7). These questionnaires were

subjected to 37 staff of the Student Affairs Division and 30 medical cadets of Phramongkutklao College of Medicine.

Results

Function of the Student Affairs Division in the assessment aspects has been divided into 3 parts: military courses, discipline and conduct and leadership. The Student Affairs Division, Phramongkutklao College of Medicine has conducted noncredit military science courses in the second and the third year of the medical curriculum program. Teaching techniques using in these courses are lecture, problem-based learning, practice and field training. Assessment criteria is passing or failing with no grading.

Discipline and conduct has been assessed according to the Army Regulation part of Phramongkutklao College of Medicine, 2004, Class 7; Scores of conduct and punishment. Each medical cadet has 200 scores each year. If 50 scores are cut in one year, parents will be notified. While the medical cadets would be expelled if 100 scores are cut. These scores will be used as criteria for choosing where to work when they graduate. The leadership has been assessed using the Likert scale in summative scores⁽⁸⁾. These scores also affect the selection of working places after they complete medical curriculum⁽⁹⁾.

Functions of the Student Affairs Division are in cooperation with other related units both internal and external units. For internal units, the Student Affairs Division is in part of the assessment of medical cadets especially conducts and ethical aspects using both formative and summative evaluation. The Student Affairs Division also works with external units such as the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy which is mainly responsible for military subjects in order to train and assess medical cadets.

From the focus group discussion, the number of the Student Affairs Division's staff was inadequate. Since the number of medical cadets was increased, assessment may not be completely covered by the limited number of staff. In addition, bias or attitude of staff in assessing medical cadets was also emphasized.

Agreement of the Student Affairs Division's functions was evaluated using questionnaires in 37 staff and 30 medical cadets. The results have been shown in Table 1. Most subjects supported the main educational curricula of the Student Affairs Division; however, they suggested adding a leadership course. Assessment for command should be done according to the same standard. Most subjects supported the

Table 1. Agreement of The Student Affairs Division's functions

Domains	Percentage of subjects (%)						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Main educational programs	1.9	4.2	10.1	59.3	23.1	1.4	100
Aims and missions	1.4	2.8	12.5	80.5	1.4	1.4	100
Teaching methods	1.9	4.9	5.9	79.9	5.9	1.5	100
Organizational culture	0	5.6	5.6	77.1	10.3	1.4	100
Key requirements and expectation for programs	0	1.5	9.7	79.1	8.3	1.4	100
Related units relationships and communication	2.1	3.5	7.6	79.9	6.9	0	100
Role of staff for student assessment	0.3	3.9	11.1	77.2	7.5	0	100
Discipline, leadership assessment	0.9	2.1	9.0	79.4	8.6	0	100
Problems and obstacles for student assessment	0.5	11.6	13.9	60.2	13.8	0	100
Related units of student assessment	1.4	4.9	19.4	67.3	6.3	0.7	100

1 = not agree very much, 2 = not agree, 3 = do not sure, 4 = agree, 5 = agree very much, 6 = not answer

Student Affairs Division to develop role to push forward in assessing.

Discussion

The Functions of the Student Affairs Division concerns three main assessment aspects: military subjects, discipline and conduct, and leadership. Since Phramongkutklo College of Medicine is relatively recent institute compared to other military schools, the Student Affairs Division has been developed based on these older schools' format. The educational curriculum and the expected graduates of Phramongkutklo College of Medicine are totally different from those military schools. Thus, assessments by the Student Affairs Division should be modified to fit the program and medical cadets. A course of leadership may not be clearly established so that it is rather difficult to be assessed. From focus group discussions, it has been suggested that standardization of assessment including leadership aspect should be attained by staff forums.

The advisory role should be prominent since medical cadets spend most of their time under the supervision of the Student Affairs Division. The main problem was the limited number of staff in this division due to the limited positions from the beginning of the institute establishment. The Student Affairs Division has released this problem by including young staff from the Academic Affairs Division who are willing to take the role of The Student Affairs Division as well. In addition, the assessment would be enhanced simply by good communication between the Student Affairs Division and the Academic Affairs Division. These two

divisions can work hand-in-hand in order to assess and make the medical cadets to be not only qualified doctors but also the doctors who can fit in the Royal Thai Arm Forces and work in different and difficult situations.

There are two groups of medical cadets according to the scholarships, so that their future career path would be different. It is controversial to use different criteria for the assessment between these 2 groups. However, it has been suggested that assessment using the same criteria should be done in order to reduce biases. Further qualitative studies should be conducted to find the best assessment among these two different groups.

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บทบาทของกองการปกครอง วิทยาลัยแพทยศาสตร์พระมงกุฎเกล้าในการประเมินผลนักเรียนแพทย์ทหาร

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วัตถุประสงค์: กองการปกครอง วิทยาลัยแพทยศาสตร์พระมงกุฎเกล้าเป็นหน่วยงานหนึ่งที่สำคัญโดยมีหน้าที่ในการปกครองและบังคับบัญชานักเรียนแพทย์ทหารให้มีระเบียบวินัย ฝึกสอนวิชาทหารและภาวะผู้นำ อีกรูปแบบที่สำคัญคือ มีส่วนร่วมในการประเมินผลด้านความประพฤติกับภาควิชา หรือ หน่วยงานอื่นที่เกี่ยวข้อง รวมทั้งการประสานงานร่วมกัน

วัตถุประสงค์และวิธีการ: เพื่อประเมินบทบาทของกองการปกครอง วิทยาลัยแพทยศาสตร์พระมงกุฎเกล้าในด้านการประเมินผลโดยเฉพาะความประพฤติและภาวะผู้นำของนักเรียนแพทย์ทหาร โครงสร้างและการบริหารจัดการของกองการปกครอง การประสานงานกับหน่วยงานอื่น ปัญหา และอุปสรรคในการประเมินผล โดยนำผลที่ได้มานำเสนอต่อผู้บริหาร และปรับปรุงด้านการประเมินผลต่อไป

วิธีการศึกษาใช้ทั้งการวิเคราะห์จากเอกสารที่เกี่ยวข้องของกองการปกครอง วิทยาลัยแพทยศาสตร์พระมงกุฎเกล้า และการสร้างแบบสอบถามจำนวน 30 ข้อ และคำถามปลายเปิด โดยให้ครอบคลุมองค์ประกอบ 11 ด้านของเนื้อหา โดยแจกแบบสอบถามแก่นักเรียนแพทย์ทหารชั้นปีที่ 4 และบุคลากรของกองการปกครองจำนวน 72 คน

ผลการศึกษา: ผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามส่วนใหญ่สนับสนุนหลักสูตรของกองการปกครอง วิทยาลัยแพทยศาสตร์พระมงกุฎเกล้า โดยเฉพาะวิชาทหารแต่ควรเพิ่มวิชาภาวะผู้นำ, สนับสนุนความมีวัฒนธรรมองค์กร, สนับสนุนการให้ความรู้ด้านการประเมินผลแก่บุคลากรของกองการปกครองและควรปรับปรุงการประเมินผลภาวะผู้นำและความประพฤติในอนาคต

สรุป: ผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามส่วนใหญ่สนับสนุนบทบาทของกองการปกครอง วิทยาลัยแพทยศาสตร์พระมงกุฎเกล้าในการประเมินผลนักเรียนแพทย์ทหาร อย่างไรก็ตามควรปรับปรุงระบบการประเมินผลด้านภาวะผู้นำ และความประพฤติให้มีประสิทธิภาพยิ่งขึ้น