

OHIO
UNIVERSITY

Ohio University
College of Osteopathic Medicine
Centers for Osteopathic Research and Education
Years III and IV Clerkship Curriculum

Class of 2009 CORE Clinical Rotation - Forensics



Course Title: Forensic Pathology

Instructor of Record: Peter B. Dane, D.O.

Credit Hour: 3 credit Hours per week of rotation

Rotation Length: 2-4 wks.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 6-week Family Medicine Clerkship

Syllabus Components

1. Rotation Description, Purpose and Philosophy
2. Rotation Objectives
3. Orientation to Rotation
4. Required Activities and Assignments
5. Student Performance Evaluation
6. Recommended Resources
7. Standards of Professional Conduct
8. Tips for Successfully Completing the Rotation

Last update: 10/16/07

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1. Rotation Description, Purpose, and Philosophy

The purpose of this rotation is for the student to learn the procedures and operations of the Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office, the components of a forensic autopsy and how toxicological and other special laboratory methods are applied to medicolegal death investigations.

2. Rotation Objectives

This rotation is intended to provide the student with an understanding of the interaction between the law and medicine as well as a review of normal anatomy and basic pathology. The forensic autopsy is a key component of medicolegal death investigation that elucidates mechanisms of injury and disease in the determination of cause of death.

Rotation Objectives: Knowledge Domain

1. Understand the basic distinctions between hospital and forensic autopsies.
2. Learn which deaths must be reported to the Coroner's Office or Medical Examiners Office.
3. Define cause and manner of death and the purpose of the Death Certificate.
4. Correlate the clinical and circumstantial history including signs and symptoms with pathological process of presenting disease.
5. Understand the role of the Medicolegal Death Investigator in evaluation of a death scene.
6. Understand the contribution of toxicological evaluation of body fluids.
7. Understand the reciprocal contributions between the Forensic Science (ie Trace Evidence and DNA analysis) and Forensic Pathology to death investigation.
8. Recognize the contribution of other scientific disciplines (ie anthropology, entomology odontology) in the identification of human remains
9. Recognize the contributions of Photography and Radiology to death investigation
10. Understand the legal aspects and issues of Forensic Pathology.

Rotation Objectives: Clinical Skills Domain

During this elective rotation, the student is expected to develop her/his competencies in the following clinical skills.

1. Death Certificate (O)
2. Describe pathogenesis of a disease process (O,A)
3. Differential diagnosis (O,A)
4. Basic components of the Forensic Autopsy (O,A)
5. Scene Visitation (O)
6. Court appearance with a Forensic Pathologist (O)

3. Orientation to the Rotation

The rotation orientation provides an opportunity to set/clarify expectations, answer questions and define roles, assess skill level and experience, , and anticipate and proactively resolve problems. The student should try to meet with the preceptor either prior to or early on the first day of the rotation. S/he should be prepared to share past clinical experiences and personal objectives for this rotation with the preceptor Clarifying the following details with the preceptor will help to ensure a rewarding and successful rotation:

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- a. Specific student responsibilities on the service.
- b. Specific preceptor expectations of the student on the service.
- c. Goals, objectives, structure and expected measurable outcomes of the rotation.
- d. Required rotation assignments and responsibilities in the preceptor's practice (e.g. clinics, lectures, conferences, other didactics, journal clubs, rounds, office hours, morning report).
- e. During this orientation, the student and preceptor should negotiate specific times (e.g. mid-rotation.) when feedback on student performance will be provided. Discuss the Evaluation of Student Clinical Performance form.

4. Required Learning Activities, Assignments, and Responsibilities

Satisfactory completion of the following activities is required to receive credit for this rotation:

- a. Attendance and participation in all didactic activities, such as lecture presentations, clinical case conferences, workshops, seminars, or professional development activities assigned by the CORE Assistant Dean.
- b. Submission of the rotation preceptors' completed written evaluation within 2 weeks of the end of the rotation.
- c. Submission of the online Student Rotation Evaluation through New Innovations.
- d. Fulfillment of all required responsibilities identified by the preceptor during orientation.
- e. Achievement of a passing grade on the post-rotation exam, or submission of a 1 -2 page summary description of how the student met the established objectives.

5. Student Performance Evaluation

A student's grade for this rotation will be based on completion of all assignments and the following criteria.

The Preceptor's Written Evaluation

A student must receive a passing grade from the preceptor in order to pass the rotation. If the preceptor considers the student's progress to be *Marginal*, then a remediation recommendation will be developed by the CORE Assistant Dean, in consultation with the preceptor, and submitted to the Associate Dean for Pre-Doctoral Education for approval. If the preceptor fails the student, the student is awarded a grade of "F" for the rotation regardless of the grade s/he received on the post-rotation exam. The failure report must be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Pre-Doctoral Education and to the Committee on Student Progress (CSP).

6. Recommended Resources

- Handbook of Forensic Pathology. DiMaio VJM and Dana SE, 2006
- The Internet Pathology Laboratory for Medical Education (WebPath) <http://library.med.utah.edu/WebPath/webpath.html>
- Robbins and Cotran. Pathologic Basis of Disease. 7th edition, 2005
- Cause of Death and the Death Certificate. Randy Hanzlick M.D. FCAP editor. , 2006. College of American Pathologists publication

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The following have been identified as resources for ALL rotations by CORE preceptors.

Cooper, D., H, Krainik, A., J., & Lubner, S., J. (2007). *The Washington manual of medical therapeutics*. (32nd ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

McPhee, S., J., Papadakis, M., A., & Tierney, L., M. (2007). *2007 Current medical diagnosis and treatment*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Also available on AccessMedicine

Ward, R. (2003). *Foundations for osteopathic medicine* (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Medical Dictionary (Dorland or Taber)

CORE OMM Curriculum for Students and Interns. Materials available through CORE Office

PubMed (www.pubmed.gov) or
PubMed configured to show OU resources
(<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?myncbishare=oucom>) or
Medline available through OhioLINK (<http://rave.ohiolink.edu/databases/login/medl>)

National Guideline Clearing House (<http://www.guideline.gov/>)

AccessMedicine available to OU students at: http://www.library.ohiou.edu/cgi-bin/redir_athensonly.pl?http://www.accessmedicine.com/

Evidence-Based Medicine Resources available on OU-COM home page via Current Student dropdown menu:

Cochrane Library
InfoPOEMs/InfoRetriever

MD Consult (Available to COM students for \$25 fee through Office of Academic Affairs/Pre-Doctoral Education)

7. Standards of Professional Conduct

The OU-COM Honor Code applies to all activities in the CORE as well as on the Athens campus.

“As a member of the medical profession, I will maintain the highest standards of academic and personal behavior. As a medical student I will not cheat or plagiarize or tolerate that behavior in others.” OU-COM Honor Code

Students are encouraged to study together and to share their knowledge freely with one another during the learning process. During examinations, however, no assistance from other students or from outside sources is allowed, unless explicitly permitted by the CORE office. Books, notes, and other materials must be left at the periphery of the testing area during examinations.

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Professional standards required of a member of the Osteopathic profession are a requirement for passing this rotation, as is compliance with the professional standards of the hospital and outpatient offices of the student's preceptor. Students are expected to maintain high professional standards of behaviors. They should exhibit such personal characteristics as honesty and integrity, as well as to maintain patient confidentiality at all times.

Unprofessional behavior may result in a failing grade in this rotation, regardless of other academic performance on this rotation, and could subject the student to dismissal from the hospital in which they are based. Professional conduct shall be evaluated by the CORE Assistant Dean through observation of and interaction with the student, his/her preceptor, other hospital attending physicians and staff.

8. Tips for Successfully Completing the Rotation

Being successful on this rotation requires you to be a proactive student. Taking an interest in the specialty and becoming an active team member of the service is critical to learning in a clinical setting. Remember, the clinical learning environment differs from the classroom. You will be "thinking on your feet" and "learning as you go." To capitalize on "the learning moment," seek out opportunities to ask questions and speak up appropriately.

In addition, be sure to:

1. review the syllabus to ensure that you understand all requirements.
2. discuss with your preceptor your previous clinical experiences and personal goals and objectives for this rotation. The rotation orientation is an opportune time to initiate this discussion and to develop positive rapport with you preceptor.
3. clarify your preceptor's expectations of your activities.
4. complete your skills and procedure log as you proceed through the rotation; avoid procrastinating until the end.
5. come prepared to take advantage of the opportunities this rotation has to offer.

If you have any questions, contact your CORE Administrator or CORE Assistant Dean.