

# MD PROGRAM

## University Park Curriculum

Penn State College of Medicine's University Park curriculum uses an exciting inquiry-based educational model to promote learning. Our curriculum uses early clinical exposure to provide students with early exposure to patient care. This forms the substrate to holistically prepare students for the ongoing practice of evidence-based medicine in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

Penn State College of Medicine has a tradition of excellence in education that is scientifically and clinically rigorous with a deep foundation in scholarship and humanistic care. Building on our experience, and benefiting from the resources that our regional campus in University Park offers, we invite you to learn in an environment that fosters inter-professional team skills, curiosity, and a commitment to the calling of medicine.

### Curriculum Highlights

#### Patient-based Experiences

Early clinical immersion, integrated with active small group discussions, drives the exploration of the Four Pillars of the Penn State College of Medicine: Foundational Sciences; Clinical Sciences; Health Systems Science and Health Humanities.

#### Individualized Mentoring

Our small class size allows for regular and frequent individual mentoring from core faculty as well. It also promotes longitudinal learning relationships with a diverse group of health professionals in our clinical practice and community service sites.

#### Experiential Learning

The UP curriculum is designed to be experiential. Individuals learn best when connecting knowledge and skills to experience. Your learning centers around patients and health care communities you encounter, supported by colleagues, faculty, and the ample resources of the College of Medicine and Penn State.

#### Community Engagement

You will engage with patients, community representatives, and health system leaders to learn and promote community-based solutions to improve healthcare outcomes.

#### A Culture of Respect and Humanistic Care

Penn State College of Medicine is home to the nation's first Department of Humanities. We remain committed to developing humanistic, curious health care professionals. The UP Curriculum is designed to support and enhance the role of the Health Humanities through patient experiences, integrated small group reflection, and faculty mentorship.

## Curriculum

### Year 1

- **Transition to Medicine I**
  - *Last half of July*
  - This time helps you transition to University Park and build skills necessary for success in medicine.
  - These first weeks are when you join the collegial ranks of the profession, and begin first steps of your on-the-job training.

- **Patients and Sciences 1**

- *Middle of July to middle of December, with November break*
- The clinical experiences in Patients and Sciences 1 engage students in meaningful, patient-centered roles within primary care practice sites. Students bring patient cases to inquiry group (IQ) sessions to co-create learning objectives around the four core Penn State College of Medicine pillars (Biomedical, Health Humanities, Health Systems and Clinical Sciences) with faculty facilitators. Students then research the learning objectives for collaborative discussion, practical application, and additional question generation through the rest of the week and beyond. Students learn history, physical exam, and presentation skills in PS1 and PS2 and practice these skills in their clinical immersion sites. In addition to the IQ groups and clinical immersions, students participate in collaborative science tutorials for deeper exploration of biomedical science concepts.

- **Patients and Sciences 2**

- *January to June*
- The experiences in Patients and Sciences 2 build on what is learned in Patients and Sciences 1.

- **Career Exploration/Preceptorship Week**

- *Middle of March*
- This week provides first-year medical students the opportunity to explore medical specialties of their choice. Students are encouraged to engage with practices either in or outside of the State College area to experience different disciplines from a more personal vantage.

- **Reflection and Assessment Weeks**

- *End of Sept/Dec/March/May*
- These weeks are reserved for reflection on educational goals and accomplishment and formal assessment.

- **Portfolio Development**

- *Various times throughout first year*
- Beginning in the first year and continuing through until graduation, students will periodically work on their learning portfolios. These are compilations of the student's performance that provide some additional qualitative evidence of developmental progression towards the competencies and sub-competencies of the medical school.

- **Scholarship/Research and Global Health**

- *Summer, end of Year 1*
- Students have the opportunity to do research for the Medical Student Research project and/or participate in Global Health opportunities.

### Year 2

- **Scholarship/Research and Global Health**

- *Summer, start of Year 2*
- As above.

- **Transition to Clerkships II**

- *Beginning of Year 2*
- This course focuses on successfully transitioning students from preclinical to clinical training, building on the knowledge and clinical skills covered in Phase I. It includes advanced clinical skills training through simulation as well as several fundamental medical principles from various specialties that will

be expanded and reinforced in subsequent clerkships. In addition, roles and responsibilities of a second-year medical student are covered through discussions on reflection, professionalism, and communication.

- **Clerkships**

- *August of 2nd year through July of 3rd year*
- Required core clinical clerkships in Internal Medicine, Family and Community Medicine, Psychiatry, Health Equity, Neurology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics and Surgery are offered at the UP campus. Clerkships at the UP campus are conducted through a Longitudinal Integrated (LIC) model. This model allows for continuity of learners, teachers, patients and practices over the course of an entire year and provides the student an opportunity to display developmental growth over all of the core clerkships.

- **Clinically Integrated Medical Sciences ("Marsh Rounds")**

- *Year 2, with breaks*
- This course will focus on building an integrated sciences approach into second-year medical students' clinical training. Mastery of the processes covered by the course will enhance students' ability to think critically about complex, clinical problems through the respective lenses of biomedical sciences, systems and social sciences. This course incorporates a humanities stripe dedicated to student reflection on clinical experiences while providing a supportive environment for sharing difficulties and insights. Dr. Marsh was the Founding Dean of the University Park Regional Campus and continues to be a valued and beloved educator for the UP medical students.

- **Humanities**

- *Year 2, with breaks*
- Humanities coursework continues through Year 2 primarily through the use of "Kienle" small groups that are conducted most all weeks of the year. These groups are designed to directly address some of the difficult challenges that medical students encounter during their growth and professional development in this first clinical educational year. The Drs. Kienle were professors in the early years of the College of Medicine and were dedicated toward supporting the Office of Medical Humanities.

- **Health Systems in Clerkships**

- *Year 2, with breaks*
- Health Systems in Clerkships accompanies the Year 2 Clerkships.

- **Assessment**

- There are seven clerkship exams during Year 2.

### Year 3

- **Patients and Sciences 4**

- The experiences in Patients and Sciences 4 are designed to build on what is learned in Patients and Sciences 1 and 2. This return to basic science is specifically engineered to allow students deeper explorations of core foundational science elements having within a robust context of clinical experience. Roughly ½ day per week is maintained in a longitudinal clinical experience of the student's own choosing.

- **Assessment**

- There are serial formative quizzes and two summative exams.
- To benchmark basic science progress, the CBSE exam is delivered at the start and end of PS4.

- Two reflective writing exercises are submitted based on the students longitudinal clinical experience and are kept for the learner portfolio.

- **USMLE Study**

- USMLE study begins midway through the third year.
- Students are required to take USMLE Step 1 prior to the start of the Translating Health Systems course.
- Students will often take Step 2 CK shortly after taking USMLE Step 1. In any case, the examination must be taken prior to October 31st of the 4th year.
- USMLE Step 2 CS must be completed by the end of Dec in the 4th year.

- **Translating Health Systems**

- Phase III includes a two-week Translating Health Systems intersession. This course is designed to help students apply concepts of patient safety, quality improvement, value, and teams to the clinical setting. It provides students with opportunities to actively identify patient safety issues and develop a quality improvement project proposal. By design, this course emphasizes teamwork, an essential component in providing quality patient care. The goal is to guide learning in these concepts so that students will have the base knowledge to help improve care of their patients and the health system in which they will work during the fourth year of medical school and in residencies.

- **Phase III: Discovery**

- Phase III includes a discovery phase which allows for board preparation and career exploration as well as acting internships.

- **Phase IV: Residency Prep**

- Phase IV includes residency preparation, interviews and two total acting internships in different clinical fields or one acting internship and one critical care rotation.

### Year 4

- **Phase IV: Residency Prep**

- *Year 4, with breaks*
- Phase IV includes residency preparation, interviews and two total acting internships in different clinical fields or one acting internship and one critical care rotation. Students also prepare for and take the USMLE Step 2 CK and CS in the earlier part of Year 4. (see above)

- **Transition to Internship**

- *Spring (Usually the 1-2 weeks immediately preceding Commencement and Graduation)*
- Transition to Internship, occurs at the end of each student's medical school career and builds on these concepts in preparation for residency training. POM III is the final requirement for each graduating fourth year medical school class, taking place just prior to medical school graduation. Its structure includes both large group workshops (involving the entire fourth-year class) and a number of small group "selective" sessions. POM III was designed with goals of providing review and practice of key clinical skills and concepts, as well as introduction of new information regarding communication and collaboration with other health professionals, teaching and evaluation strategies for interns in their educator roles, and practice in effective patient handoffs. The course also includes time for reflection on

professional responsibilities, personal stressors and individual support systems.

- **Graduation**
  - *May*