SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION
Syllabus

2010-2011

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“Pathology Small Group Discussion”

Introduction

1. Medical School should be a pleasant experience.
2. Medical Education should be fun.
3. Continuing Medical Education is a major objective.
4. Small groups create the optimal atmosphere for learning.

Important Points

1. Small group teaching is the format that provides the curriculum the opportunity to create an interactive learning environment.
2. Small group teaching complements the lectures given in an integrated curriculum and encourages extensive interaction with all students.
3. Pathology is the bridge that connects all of the Medical Specialties e.g. Anatomy, Biochemistry, Physiology, Medicine and Surgery etc.
4. This format utilizes the graphic features of Pathology e.g. Gross and Microscopic features to teach the relationship between disease and the various Medical Specialties.
5. This format also teaches the student how to think, diagnose, treat and understand the behavior of disease.
6. The computer plays a key role with the use of computer images in this format and promotes the concept of an integrated curriculum in an interactive learning environment.
7. The Medical Students, become interactive partners in their medical education.
8. Students discuss case history and interpret history, physical exam, and lab tests, interpret gross and microscopic pathology images and make a primary diagnosis and a list of differential diagnoses.

Goals

The goal of the small group discussion is to

- Provide an opportunity to exercise critical thinking, self-directed learning
- Provide an opportunity for interactive learning through active participation
- Provide an opportunity for students to test their understanding of a subject matter in discussion format
- Provide an opportunity to integrate various facts presented at lectures
- Provide an opportunity to improve communication skills and team work
• To improve and enhance performance on Unit exams and National Board exams (USMLE)

Objectives

The overall objective of the pathology small group is to:

• Understand the etiology and pathogenesis of disease processes
• Describe morphologic patterns of disease that aid in diagnosis of disease processes
• Link the morphologic changes seen in disease processes to functional consequences
• Relate clinical signs and symptoms to disease processes to arrive at accurate diagnosis
• Apply knowledge of disease process to interpret signs, symptoms, radiologic and laboratory findings and arrive at accurate differential diagnosis of disease
• Apply knowledge of disease process to choose appropriate confirmatory tests
• Apply knowledge of disease process to choose appropriate therapy and predict outcome of disease

Instruction Materials and Methods

• Pathology small group discussions are case based studies and are complimentary to the subject matter taught in each unit
• The Interactive Case studies are derived from the CD Companion to Pathologic Basis of Disease Robbins and Cotran 7th edition CD ROM
• Approximately 3-5 cases will be discussed per small group session
• Each case has Objectives, Case histories, gross and microscopic pathology images and discussion questions
• Each student is expected to study the assigned cases over the weekend preceding the small group topic and prepare ahead for discussions
• Students will be divided into small groups of approximately 10 students in each group and assigned a Facilitator to guide the discussion
• The sessions will be entirely student centered with Instructors facilitating the discussion with pointer questions
• Emphasis is on independent learning, integration and application of information
• Small group sessions will be held Tuesday and Thursday afternoons (unless indicated) from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm in Room 2203
• Students should bring their lap tops and the CD Rom of cases along with notes that they have prepared for discussions
• The Instructors will project the cases on a screen to facilitate discussion
• To facilitate active discussion by the students, lap tops should be closed during discussion
Discussions will start on time. A 15 minute grace period will be provided. Students arriving late will not be allowed into the small group discussion rooms. No make-ups will be given for missed sessions.

**Attendance is mandatory.** Students must sign their assigned attendance sheet. If students have to miss a session they can make up the next or previous session but they **have to stay in their assigned room.** The guidelines outlined in the University and College of Medicine Policy Handbook for excused absences will be strictly followed.

**Penalty for unexcused absence** consists of a **1 point deduction** from each Small Group Exam for each unexcused absence during a given unit.

Warning will be given to students who have more than one unexcused absence. Thereafter the point deduction will double.

**Evaluation Students**

- Students will be evaluated based on attendance and small group exams.
- A formative evaluation based on participation, preparedness and critical thinking will be performed.
- At the end of each Unit, there will be a small group exam covering aspects of cases discussed during that unit. (Some units may have more than one small group exam).
- The small group exams consist of 40 clinical vignette format questions with case histories, gross and microscopic images and multiple choice questions. The questions are second order requiring interpretation and critical thinking. There will be 70 seconds per question.
- The small group exams will be projected in Power Point format held in Rm 3019. The exams will comprise 15% of the Unit grade. If there is more than 1 exam in a given unit, each exam will comprise an equal fraction for a total 15%.
- Students will not be allowed into the exam room 30 minutes after the start of the exam. When students miss an exam they need to obtain an **official excuse form Dr. Bland and contact the pathology office 806-6306 within 48 hours to schedule a make up.**

**Course**

- All students are expected to evaluate the small group teaching format at the end of each unit.

**Instructors**

- All students are expected to evaluate each Instructor at the end of each unit.

**Reference:** Pathologic basis of Disease. Robbins and Cotran 7th Edition