TITLE: Autopsy Elective

COURSE NO.: SOMN712

DEPARTMENT: Neurosciences, Pathology, Psychiatry

DURATION: Semester

DIRECTOR (faculty responsible for grading): Dr. Robert Crissman

COORDINATOR: Dr. Robert Crissman

FACULTY PARTICIPANTS:
- Robert Crissman, PhD  Anatomy, Department of Neurosciences, x 4120
- James Patrick, MD, Department of Pathology & Lucas County Coroner
- Diane Scala-Barnett, MD, Department of Pathology & Assistant Lucas County Coroner
- Cynthia Beisser, MD, Department of Pathology & Assistant Lucas County Coroner
- Walter Edinger, PhD, Department of Psychiatry, ethics  x 5672
- Pathology Fellows or Residents, As available and have received instructions

SEMESTERS AVAILABLE:
- One elective that takes place during Spring & Summer semesters, at times students are not scheduled for regular classes.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:
- 25 total

LOCATION:
- Lectures rooms to be announced on HSC and at county coroner’s office building (Arlington Ave)

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:
The purpose of this elective is to introduce first year medical student to the process, procedures, requirements and requests that surrounds the autopsy. The autopsy, as a multidiscipline educational tool, will provide a format for engendering professionalism, fundamentals of clinical practice, death and dying issues, prepare the student to describe the process of an autopsy, discussing reasons and ethical issues that surround requests for autopsy. It is interdisciplinary in that it addresses issues that arise in Anatomy dissection, Pathology, Psychiatry, and the Fundamental Practice of Medicine and Professionalism. In addition, it would serve as a foundation for current practices and courses in preclinical, clinical years as well as residencies.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:
At the end of the elective the student should able to:

1. Define and discuss purpose of an autopsy.
   K8, K10, S7, S11, P1, P3
2. List and discuss the advantages and disadvantages for carrying out an autopsy.
   K8, K10, S7, S11, P3

3. List the typical procedures carried out during the process.
   K8, K10, S1, S7, S11, P1, P5, P7

4. Identify, list and discuss the circumstances an autopsy should be performed, is required or is optional. When are relatives request honored or overruled?
   K10, S7, S11, P1, P2

5. Describe and discuss the role of the coroner in investigation of the death of a person in various circumstances.
   K10, S1, S11, P1, P2, P3, P7

6. Explain when, how and who is most likely to request permission to do an autopsy.
   K10, S1, S7, P1, P2, P5

7. Discuss the typical time it takes for an autopsy to occur and when and to whom reports are sent.
   K8, S7, S11, P1, P2, P5, P7

8. Discuss the current rate of autopsies, compare previous with current rates and explain why change.
   K8, K10, S11

9. Describe what barriers are present to having an autopsy done.
   K8, K10, P3, P7, S11

10. Recognize and discuss the “other” issues surrounding autopsies, e.g., smell, mutilation, religious and ethical objections, your own mortality and role in medical malpractice.
    K10, S11, P3

11. Observe and assist with one complete autopsy.
    K8, K10, S1, S7, P1, P3

12. Compare and contrast the anatomy cadaver to that of an autopsy cadaver. (Describe difference between embalmed tissue and fresh tissue.)
    K8, S7, P3

13. Be able to describe and discuss the various processes that occur within the body after death.
    K8, K10, S7, P1

14. List and practice the normal hygienic techniques during autopsy. Give reasons for the various levels of protection.
    K8, K10, S7, P5, P7

15. List and describe the sequence and reasons for the various cuts and organs removed.
    K8, K10, S7, P3, P5,
16. Identify all the involved individuals and their functions before, during and after the autopsy.
   S7, P7

17. Relate a brief history of the investigation of death by autopsy.
   K8, K10, S7

18. Describe and discuss the process of filling out a death certificate (includes who, when and why).
   S7, P1, P2, P3, P5, P7

19. Describe and compare the process of embalming, cremation, liquefaction and freeze-dried ecological composting and how to deal with funeral directors.
   K8, K10, S1, P5, P7

METHODS OF TEACHING:
Readings:
Read a selected list of selected references and websites.
Write a required short position paper dealing with the issue of death and dying or autopsy based on references and autopsy experience.

Lecture and Small group discussions
All students are required to attend the general informational lectures (3-4) at the beginning of the semester and than be broken in to small groups (2-3 students) to attend the autopsy during block II & III. Required small group discussions would be held after the students attended the autopsy to organize and focus their experience.

Mandatory attendance of autopsy.
Standardized patient interview:
Interview a standardized patient and ask for permission to do an autopsy on a recently-deceased, close relative. (Faculty must develop from your own experience, what are some of the typical questions asked by relatives, reasons for not doing autopsies and how would you respond?)

The required paper and standardized patient would be completed individually prior to the completion of the course.

METHODS OF STUDENT EVALUATION:
A pre-test and post-test will be given at the beginning and completion of the course.
Paper addressing ethics and issues of death and dying.
Attendance at autopsy.
Interview of standardized patient that student requests permission to care out autopsy on recently deceased relative.

In order to complete the course, all forms of evaluation must be completed. Required are pre and post quiz, position paper on death and dying based or autopsy based on reading and autopsy experience, mandatory attendance at all lectures, small groups and autopsy, as well as interview of standardized patient.
LINKAGE TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

Knowledge:

K8 Demonstrate knowledge of the use of study designs, statistical methods, and the scientific method in establishing the causation of disease and efficacy of traditional and non-traditional therapies.

K10 Demonstrate knowledge of the theories and principles that govern ethical decision making and of the major ethical dilemmas in medicine, particularly those that arise at the beginning and end of life and those that arise from the rapid expansion of knowledge of genetics.

Skills:

S1 Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with patients, patients’ families, colleagues, and others with whom physicians must exchange information in carrying out their responsibilities.

S7 Use knowledge of the most frequent clinical, laboratory, radiographic and pathological manifestations to interpret the results of commonly used diagnostic procedures.

S11 Retrieve (from electronic databases and other resources), manage, and utilize biomedical information for solving problems and for making decisions that are relevant to the care of individuals and populations in order to stay abreast of ongoing scientific advances.

Professional:

P1 Demonstrate ethical, responsible, reliable, and dependable behavior in all aspects of their professional lives and a commitment to patients, society and the profession.

P2 Demonstrate honesty and integrity in all interactions with patients. Patients’ families, colleagues, and others with whom students interact in their professional lives.

P3 Demonstrate the capacity to recognize and accept limitations in one’s own knowledge and clinical skills, and a commitment to continuously improve one’s knowledge and ability.

P5 Demonstrate compassionate treatment of patients and respect for their privacy.

P7 Demonstrate knowledge of, and respect for, the roles of other health-care professionals, and of the need to collaborate with others in caring for individual patients and in promoting the health of defined populations.

ELECTIVE EVALUATION:

Ongoing feedback will be elicited from the students and faculty as the course proceeds. There will be a course evaluation survey at the end of the course.

PREREQUISITES: (if any)

Must have taken at least first quarter of Block II (Human Structure and Development).