YEARS 1 & 2 ELECTIVE COURSE

TITLE: Medical Missions

COURSE NO.: SOMN 621

DEPARTMENT: Students for Medical Missions (SMM) organization

DURATION: Minimum of 6 days

DIRECTOR: Dr. Richard Paat, M.D., FACP, Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine, University of Toledo Medical Center, Email: richpaat@gmail.com, Phone: 419-893-9413

SEMESTERS AVAILABLE: spring break and summer break

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: Variable depending on number of spots available for each trip

LOCATION: Central America

COORDINATOR: Appointed fourth year medical student team leaders

FACULTY: Dr. Richard Paat, M.D., FACP, Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine, University of Toledo Medical Center, Email: richpaat@gmail.com, Phone: 419-893-9413

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:
The goal of the UTCOM organization Students for Medical Missions is to provide students with opportunities to both participate in and support medical mission trips abroad. To obtain this elective, Students for Medical Missions members will participate in one of Dr. Paat’s medical mission trips to countries in Central America, including but not limited to: Honduras and Guatemala. Each day of the mission trip clinics are set up in villages of the greater area that we are staying in, and stations are established for triage, pharmacy, and a dental care area in addition to the clinics where patients are seen. In addition, each day a group of selected students have the opportunity to shadow in the local hospital, observing surgeries and general medical practices of the area.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:
Students will be able to

1) prepare for a medical mission including medical supply organizing and packing
2) elicit history data including: pertinent history of present illness, past medical history, family history, and social history for patients presenting to clinics
3) perform appropriate physical exam for patients presenting to clinics, and demonstrate proficiency in clinical skills regarding examination of head and neck, chest, abdomen, skin, and musculoskeletal system
4) apply clinical reasoning and decision making skills to formulate differential diagnoses to attending physicians
5) present integrated patient histories, clinical findings, and differential diagnoses to attending physicians
6) appropriately address diagnoses, treatments, and disease prevention according to the patients’ cultural understanding of disease and educational level
7) describe the importance of community partnerships and development projects, including community health promoter training and water filtration programs in successful and sustainable medical mission work
8) describe health care problems and disparities facing those living in developing countries
9) work with local health professionals to gain skills and understanding in problem solving and treatment of patients when working in a setting with limited resources
10) develop cultural competence by researching healthcare disparities and barriers to healthcare by interacting with local healthcare professionals, volunteers, and patients
11) describe the differences between the healthcare systems of the U.S. and the mission destination

METHODS OF TEACHING:
Prior to going on the mission trip, medical students will be assigned a tropical disease common to the mission trip destination, and will research the disease and create an illness script. Each mission trip participant will present their tropical disease and will be given a copy of everyone’s illness script. Medical students will have the illness scripts to reference when formulating differential diagnoses of patients on the mission trip; in addition, an awareness of diseases common to the area will help guide medical student interviews with patients and physical examinations. During the mission trip, medical students will be taught any physical exam techniques relevant to the patient encounter. Medical students will also be taught how to prescribe and calculate medication dosages, basic suturing techniques, and how to administer injections. Medical students will also be given a basic Spanish language reference sheet and will work with translators if necessary to help alleviate any communication barriers with patients.

METHODS OF EVALUATION AND STUDENT FEEDBACK:
Students will be evaluated based on accuracy of illness scripts, presenting patient histories to attending physicians on the mission trip, and will be given feedback based on the case presented. Attending physicians will also assess medical student interactions with the patients, including physical exam techniques and communication styles, and will give feedback and advice accordingly.

LINKAGE TO EPOs:
Medical mission trip participation builds knowledge according to UTCOM’s following Educational Program Objectives:

K5: Knowledge of the most frequent clinical, laboratory, radiographic, and pathologic manifestations of common diseases
K7: Application of basic science knowledge to clinical problems
K12: Knowledge of the manner in which people of diverse cultures and belief systems perceive health and illness and respond to symptoms, diseases, and treatments
K13: Knowledge of the important non-biological determinants of poor health and of the economic, psychological, social and cultural factors that contribute to the development and/or continuation of disease.
K14: Knowledge of the importance of recognizing and addressing gender and cultural biases in individuals involved in the delivery of health care as well as in the process of health care delivery.

S1: The ability to 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.

S2: The ability to demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to patients’ culture, age, gender and disabilities.

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

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

P6: An awareness of the physicians’ role in providing health care for members of traditionally underserved populations and of their responsibility to provide care to patients who are unable to pay.

QUALITY ASSURANCE:
Medical students will be expected to attend each day of clinic, and a check-in will be conducted upon leaving the hotel for each day of clinic, and prior to returning at the end of the day to ensure that each student is present.

Medical students are required to notify a group coordinator or attending physician each time they leave the hotel other than for a group event.

PREREQUISITES: (if any)
Medical students must be active members of Students for Medical Missions organization, attend packing meetings to prepare for the trip, participate in the tropical disease research and presentation, and participate in any mission trip-specific fundraising events.