

Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective: Home Care for the Older Adult

Course Directors:

Jessica Voit, M.D. (jessica.voit@utsouthwestern.edu)

Debbie Freeland, M.D. (deborah.freeland@utsouthwestern.edu)

Faculty Sponsor: (if non-faculty course director) ----

Department: Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Geriatrics

Student Liaisons:

Sydney Mulqueen (sydney.mulqueen@utsouthwestern.edu)

Michelle Mao (michelle.mao@utsouthwestern.edu)

Christopher Joshi (christopher.joshi@utsouthwestern.edu)

Requirements:

- minimum: 7 first-year and second-year medical students
- maximum: 15 first-year and second-year medical students

Rationale:

The United States population is aging at an unprecedented rate. With an aging population comes an increased need for healthcare professionals who are trained and experienced in providing care specifically to older adults. It is imperative that all healthcare professionals, not only geriatricians, have proficient knowledge in the field of geriatric medicine. The best way to ensure early and universal exposure to geriatric medicine is to provide this education beginning in the first years of medical school.

The aim of this curriculum is to introduce pre-clerkship medical students to the field of geriatric medicine in an interactive and reflective format. Lecture topics include ageism, mobility, living locations of older adults, and the challenges of caregiving for an older adult. Students will each be assigned an older adult in the Dallas community with whom they will visit monthly. During these visits, students will complete activities with their older adults, which will relate to the topic from the most recent lecture. Students will then have opportunities to reflect on their interactions with their assigned older adults during class and during the “asynchronous” component of the curriculum. These asynchronous components will include completing a short activity (i.e. listening to a Ted Talk, reading a poem, viewing a set of photographs) and reflecting in writing on the D2L discussion board. While not required, students will have the opportunity to keep in touch with their older adult after the end of the course. With an emphasis on experiential learning, we hope to prepare medical students to provide the best care for their future geriatric patients and appreciate the importance of patient-centered care.

Regarding interest in this proposed elective, forty-six UT Southwestern medical students stated, in a survey distributed in February of this year, that they would enroll in this elective given the opportunity.

Goals:

1. To develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to assess and care for geriatric patients in the outpatient setting.

2. To build an understanding of the unique challenges that accompany the aging process and recognize how these challenges can be addressed by care providers.
3. To appreciate the collective expertise and interprofessional approach needed to care for geriatric patients.

Objectives:

1. Define and identify the major geriatric syndromes.
2. Assess the functional abilities of an older adult using activities of daily living (ADLs) and independent activities of daily living (IADLs).
3. Define the differences between the following: rehabilitation facilities, assisted living facilities, long-term acute care, group homes, retirement centers, and nursing homes.
4. Describe how common caregiver stressors may contribute to caregiver burnout.
5. Describe current perceptions about the aging process.
6. Describe the differences in mobility aids used by older adults.
7. Perform a cognitive assessment in a patient where there is concern for memory loss.

Format:

The Home Care part of the Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective is composed of a classroom component, an experiential component (meeting monthly with the student's assigned older adult), and an asynchronous component. The classroom component includes lectures, discussions, and activities meant to prepare and reflect on the upcoming or most recent interaction with the student's assigned older adult. Thus, students will approach the monthly visit with their assigned older adult with the background knowledge of their most recent class. The asynchronous component is meant to supplement both the classroom and interactive experiences. This component will involve the use of the D2L discussion boards, asking students to post reflections on art, video clips, poetry, and short stories related to aging and care of the older adult, with the hope of connecting these reflections to their experiences in the classroom and to their experiences with their assigned older adults.

Of note, this *Home Care* elective is part one of the Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective. The *Home Care* semester focuses on geriatric medicine within the realm of caring for the older adult in the home/outpatient setting. The second part of the Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective is a separate yet related *Hospital Elective*, which we would like to offer in the spring. While we will encourage students to enroll in both for a wholistic introduction to geriatric medicine, students will not be required to enroll in both and one is not the prerequisite for the other elective.

Student Evaluation:

Grades will be pass/fail. Attendance is required to receive credit for the course. This course consists of three components:

- 1) classroom learning: lecture, discussion, and reflection
- 2) experiential learning: student interaction with an older adult in the Dallas community
- 3) asynchronous learning: activities and reflection pieces completed on a D2L discussion board

Course Evaluation:

Grading will be pass/fail. To receive transcript acknowledgment, students must:

- attend 8 of 10 classes, including the first class (A1)
- attend 4 of the 5 interactive sessions with the student's assigned older adult
- complete 3 of the 4 asynchronous activities
- complete the pre-course and post-course evaluation surveys

Schedule: (generic)

Exact dates and times for the classroom component will be sent at a later time.

	Classroom		Interactive Experiences		Asynchronous Activity	
Block A: Introduction	Class A1	1 hr	1 st month	1 hr	Activity 1	30 min
	Class A2	30 min				
Block B: On Aging	Class B1	1 hr	2 nd month	1 hr	Activity 2	30 min
	Class B2	1 hr				
Block C: Assessing the Older Adult	Class C1	1 hr	3 rd month	1 hr	Activity 3	30 min
	Class C2	1 hr				
Block D: The Meaning of “Home”	Class D1	1 hr	4 th month	1 hr	Activity 4	30 min
	Class D2	1 hr				
Block E: From a Caregiver's Perspective	Class E1	1 hr	5 th month	1 hr		
	Class E2	1 hr				
Hours:		9.5 hrs		5 hrs		2 hrs
						Total Hours: 16.5 hrs