Your Psychiatry Clerkship

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What is it?

• 4 weeks in duration

• Most sites have some mixture of inpatient and outpatient care.
  – Range of severity of pathology

• Many sites have additional exposure to the legal system, other emergency psychiatry and consultation/liaison, substance abuse treatment etc.
What should you learn?

• We ARE NOT training students to be psychiatrists, we are training them to be skilled in psychiatric assessment and treatment the same as any other core skill.
  – You will add the skills learned on this rotation to your overall patient assessment and management and use them extensively in years to come.
• More specifically, you will follow the curriculum on the website with very specific goals and objectives related to the rotation.
What Resources Should I Use?

• The biggest resource for clinical rotations is always your clinical faculty.
  – Take every opportunity to engage in active learning
  – Ask your preceptor questions
  – Stimulate an educational environment, be an active learner

• The recommended text is the same one you used last year and is listed on the web site. *Introductory Textbook of Psychiatry* by Black and Andreason.
What Resources Should I Use?

• Other Texts may prove useful (especially for board preparation)
  – Blueprints in Psychiatry
  – First Aid for Psychiatry Clerkships

• Power Point cases embedded in the curriculum.

• Other documents on the web site.
  – Assessment of the Patient with Psychiatric Complaints
  – Review of the Mental Status Exam
What should I expect?

Maybe we should first talk about what not to expect. The greatest *misperception* by medical students starting their clerkship in psychiatry is that they will not be “doing medicine”. All of the clerkships (as well as the vast majority of modern psychiatry) are medically integrated specialty settings which require significant general medical knowledge and integration. You *will* be “doing medicine”
The Reality

• You will be busy on your rotation
• You will be learning about and managing the behavioral expression of brain dysfunction.
• The rotation may, in fact, be more mentally and emotionally challenging than you expect.
  – It is difficult business dealing with emotional stress
• You will survive!
  – Very few students have been lost (just kidding) but you do have to be vigilant just like on your other rotations.
How should I Prepare?

• Brush up on the basics
  – History and Physical
  – Particularly the Mental Status Exam.

• Review the Curriculum

• Contact the site **BEFORE** beginning
  – Alay your own anxiety through preparation
  – Alay anxiety from the site through contact, it will start you off on a good foot and show your motivation.
What are the Keys to Success?

1) Know how to take a complete history (including psychiatric ROS).

2) Know the Mental Status Exam

3) Be able to integrate all of this seamlessly.

4) Know how to present a case to your supervisors including residents and attending faculty. It is important for you to demonstrate that you know how to prioritize and organize information.
If I do all of these things, what can I expect?

- A solid foundation and skills in the assessment and management of psychiatric symptoms.
- Success on your rotation, the exam, and also on COMLEX.
- Success in your career as a physician
  - Like it or not you **WILL** deal with all sorts of psychiatric symptoms and conditions as a physician. Learning how to assess and manage them appropriately will ultimately help you and your patients.
- Better understanding of the Mind, Body, Spirit model of Osteopathic medicine.
• Psychiatric core rotations are available in selected locations for each region.
• Most are within the region but, because of limited availability, some students might be required to travel out of their home region for that rotation.
• Typically, students are confined to core sites as these locations are carefully constructed for a broad experience with an experienced faculty.
What if I don’t like the rotation?

• Well, we definitely hope this is not the case and we have gone to great lengths for it not to be, but if there is a significant reason that you don’t like it or more importantly don’t feel that you were able to achieve your goals on the rotation, I do want to hear about it!

• We make frequent minor changes to curriculum, both rotation and site specific, based on student feedback. You are helping us help you.
What if I really like the rotation?

• I definitely want to hear about this too!
• You may even be interested in learning more about careers in psychiatry or how it might fit into your ultimate career choices in other specialties. If so, the faculty are your resources. We are here to answer questions and help you so please contact us.
• See our department website for information on “Why Psychiatry?”
• We will put you on a contact list for our department and make sure you are aware of interesting news, speakers, etc.
How about the future?

• Many elective rotations in psychiatric fields and locations are available.
• Some students will choose electives in psychiatry because they are interested in those careers but some are just interested in a better understanding or more experience...we understand both and have suggestions for both.
• If you are interested in a particular set of skills or a particular area of psychiatric treatment, please contact me. I can’t promise that we can meet your every need but I will do my best.
Questions?
Contact Information

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I’ll look forward to hearing from you and hearing about your successes in Psychiatry!