

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

A. Large Group Lectures

There will be several lectures and demonstration interviews during the quarter to introduce new topics which focus on social history, the chief complaint, and the illness narrative (health history). There will be presentations of videotaped interviews, and if the situation permits, demonstration interviews will be done with actual patients in front of the entire class.

B. Small Group Sessions

Small group sessions involve rotations in groups to the E.R. clinic where you will observe 3rd and 4th year students as they interview actual patients in the Oral Medicine Emergency and Basic Assessment Clinics. This will happen twice for each of you during the quarter. You will informally evaluate the interviewers during these sessions, and will produce brief written summaries of what was learned from the patient during the interview.

Secondly, at the end of the quarter you will participate in one “small group” session with your assigned Oral Medicine faculty “Mentors” to evaluate and discuss what took place during your patient interview sessions. You will use the critiques you completed while observing the upper-class interviewers and your reflections on what transpired during your clinical sessions. The purpose of the Mentor Sessions is to provide the opportunity to reflect on and discuss the actual interview experiences you have had during the quarter. Come prepared to share what you observed during the interviews, whether “routine”, “odd”, well done, or poorly done.

We hope you will find these small group discussions to be a valuable opportunity to refine the skills you are learning and practicing in the course and to reflect on professional issues as you begin your dental training. You should additionally feel comfortable in approaching your Mentor for guidance or for questions regarding how to utilize information gathered during the interviews.

Suggestions for Small Group Activities:

Discussion of Critiques

You will meet with your mentors in small groups to go over the partner critiques. As you do this, consider the following:

What do you believe are one or two strong points in the student's interview? What one or two areas should the student concentrate on in the next interview? Also check for presence of important elements, clarity and organization, and brevity without loss of precision.

Re-enactment ---a way to deal with difficult interview situations by having a student play the part of a patient from a recent interview.

To prepare for this, the student should try to observe closely during the interview the physical pose of the patient: body position, how the weight is distributed and supported, where the legs, arms, and hands are; facial expression, tilt of the head; listen for tone of voice, volume, inflection, and energy level as well as for words.

Physically reproducing the position and demeanor and a few key phrases allows the student to step into the patient's shoes for a few minutes and take on the point of view of the patient.

Remarkable as this may sound, the act of physically imitating the patient often produces more insight into how the patient actually experiences his or her illness than an analysis from external observations. As one student said, "I went home and imitated the patient. And then I knew what questions I should have asked!"

In the small group, it is easy for others to give glib advice about how to handle difficult interviewing situations. But it is much more instructive to the group if the student can re-create the patient and let others try to meet the interview challenge. By "rehearsing" the patient's physical pose, expression and mood immediately following the interview, and by reviewing the write-up before the class, the student can bring an unusually rich learning experience to the group.