Medical Student Education

The Department of Psychiatry has a strong presence in all four years of the UCSF medical school curriculum. At UCSF, nearly 10% of students choose psychiatry as a career each year, higher than the national average. The Department of Psychiatry Medical Student Education (MSE) Program coordinates:

- Required and elective medical school courses
- Elective courses for visiting students interested in the UCSF Psychiatry residency program
- Medical student career advising
- Teaching faculty recruitment and development

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Information for visiting students

Some fourth-year clinical electives are offered to qualified students enrolled in U.S. and Canadian medical schools. Please visit the School of Medicine Visiting Students website [4] for eligibility requirements and application forms.

Teaching opportunities

There are many teaching opportunities for volunteer and paid faculty in modalities such as preceptorships and small group teaching. Faculty recruitment and development is coordinated both by the department and the UCSF Office of Community Based Education [5].

To learn about opportunities to teach in the Department of Psychiatry, please contact Lowell Tong, MD [6].

For current faculty members, the School of Medicine Academy of Medical Educators [7] provides resources on improving your teaching skills and other faculty development
opportunities.

Information for premedical students interested in psychiatry

Psychiatry is a medical specialty, so psychiatric training follows general medical training. The most common path that people take is to complete a baccalaureate (college) degree and then apply to medical school for their MD degree (or osteopathic medical school for a DO degree). During the four years of medical school, all students do clinical rotations in many different specialties (e.g., Family Medicine, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry). At the end of medical school, students choose a specialty career path and apply to residency programs in that specialty. Psychiatry residency training is another four years after medical school to become a general psychiatrist; a minimum of five years is usually required for completing subspecialty psychiatry training such as Child, Forensic or Geriatric Psychiatry.

If you are interested in a professional career in mental health but do not wish to pursue becoming a physician and psychiatrist, you may instead consider a career in other disciplines such as Clinical Psychology, Psychiatric Nursing, Psychiatric Social Work, and Marriage/Family Therapy.

For more information about becoming a psychiatrist, please visit the American Psychiatric Association website [8].

Medical student courses and activities

Required courses

The UCSF School of Medicine offers an integrated, web-assisted curriculum across all four years of the MD program. Psychiatry is an integral part of many courses, and has a leadership role in the following:

- Foundations of Patient Care, a combined first and second year interdisciplinary course on the Patient-Doctor Relationship, Professionalism, Physical Exam Skills, and Clinical Reasoning. It is co-sponsored by Departments of Psychiatry, Medicine, Pediatrics, and Family & Community Medicine.
- Brain, Mind and Behavior, an interdisciplinary course covering basic neurosciences, neuroanatomy, neurology, and psychiatry topics.
- Third-Year Psychiatry Clerkship (integrated with the Neurology Clerkship). The psychiatry portion includes a four-week core inpatient or consultation rotation, and a half-day rotation in an ambulatory setting over eight weeks. There are also curricular components jointly taught by Neurology and Psychiatry. Clerkship sites are Langley Porter Psychiatric Hospital & Clinics, San Francisco General Hospital, San Francisco Veterans Medical Center, and UCSF-Fresno.

Elective courses

Psychiatry sponsors a wide range of pre-clinical and clinical electives throughout all years of medical school.
Course catalog

More detailed information for both required and elective courses can be found in the course schedule [9].

Student interest groups

- Psychiatry Interest Group
- Brain Interest Group [10]
- Redfield Group
- Mental Health Advocacy Group

Related links

- UCSF course schedules [9]
- Ilios [11] - UCSF School of Medicine curriculum management tool
- iRocket [12] - UCSF medical student portal
- UCSF School of Medicine [13]
- UCSF School of Medicine Education [14]
- Association for Academic Psychiatry [15]
- Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry [16]
- American Psychiatric Association [8]

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