

Jay Weiss Institute for Health Equity Pathway in Social Medicine

Overview

The aim of the Pathway is to expose students to the scholarship in social medicine and health disparities and its applications for community-based research, service, advocacy and clinical care. The Pathway's goals are accomplished through didactic, scholarly and experiential components.

The didactic component includes weekly, faculty-facilitated seminars supplemented by student-led discussions of clinical cases, community-based projects, and Grand Rounds. The scholarly component is a mentored, community-based research, service or advocacy project and corresponding deliverable. The experiential component includes exposures to faculty partnerships with community-based organizations and completing the Caring for Communities through Free Clinics course.

Mission and Learning Goals

To understand the social determinants of health, including institutional and societal barriers to providing care for underserved communities;

To review the evidence base for reducing health disparities, including the role of health systems, community-based organizations and healthy policies;

To develop community competency among students;

To address health inequities in our communities through community-based participatory research, service and advocacy;

Principles of Social Medicine

The following principles of social medicine will inform individual scholarship in the Pathway:

Most major morbidities (e.g., obesity, asthma, cancer screening, drug and alcohol use) cannot be addressed in the medical clinic; they demand creative, community-based solutions.

Disadvantaged communities have historically been the most in need of, but the last to benefit from health-related research.

Community members should serve as partners, not just subjects, in needs assessments, service planning, and/or research endeavors.

Student Guidelines for Participation

Attendance

Mandatory: Each student is expected to attend the weekly seminars and case studies in addition to bimonthly student-lead meetings as outlined in the curriculum (MS1 and MS2)

Although not required, students are encouraged to attend Jay Weiss Institute activities including Grand Rounds, What's up Doc?, etc... (All years)

Community-based Research, Service and Advocacy Projects

Mandatory: Each student is expected to commit at least 10 hours per month on a community-based research, service or advocacy project. (MS2)

Deliverables

Mandatory: Each student is expected to summarize their community-based project in at least one of the following formats (MS2):

Poster submitted for presentation at a local or national, peer-reviewed meeting

Scholarly paper

Advocacy piece (letter to editor, newspaper article)

Reflection paper

Presentation to peers

Case Presentation

Mandatory: Each student is required to present one case from their clinical rotations and facilitate a corresponding discussion with MS2 students. This one hour presentation and discussion must highlight upstream, social determinants of disease etiology and patient health status. (MS3)

Caring for the Communities through Free Clinics Course

Mandatory: This course provides an opportunity for third and fourth year medical students to provide clinical care at student-run free clinics while advancing their knowledge of the social determinants of health and the barriers that uninsured patients encounter in obtaining primary medical care and specialty care when needed. The student-run free clinic elective will provide medical students with an engaging clinical experience that will prepare them to more effectively care and advocate for uninsured patients. This course is required for Social Medicine Pathway students. (MS3 /MS4)