

## **Clinical Problem Solving and Medical Decision Making Seminar Series Course Outline**

**Directors:** Bob Arnold, MD and Missy McNeil, MD

**Course Goals:** The process by which physicians make decisions is complicated and multifactorial. Understanding this process is critical in order to be able to teach the principles of clinical problem solving and medical decision making. Many theories and strategies have been put forward to better elucidate this process. The overall goal of this course is to introduce the learner to the principles of adult learning, how they are applied in the medical arena, and to develop strategies for teaching these skills in the clinical setting.

**Course Objectives: At the end of the course, learners will be able to:**

1. Describe the major theories of adult learning and problem solving.
2. Understand how to apply these theories to medical decision making in the clinical arena.
3. Develop strategies for teaching clinical problem solving and medical decision making.

### **Course Mechanics**

1. This will be a seminar course requiring active participation from learners.
2. Course is proposed to run the last two Wednesdays of the month at noon (see attached scheduled for 2008-2009 year). It is anticipated that this course will repeat on a yearly basis; maximum numbers of students per year 8-10 (***committee input requested***).
3. At each session, a landmark article highlighting either principles of adult learning or the application of such principles to clinical problem solving and medical decision making will be discussed. Articles will be chosen by the course directors both by their review of the literature and by consultation with experts in the field (tentative reference list under development—***suggestions from the committee welcome here***).
4. After an initial introduction and article presentation by the faculty leaders, students will rotate preparing the article for discussion.
5. It is expected that student will read the articles for discussion prior to the sessions, and that students will come to the class with examples both of when such strategies might be used and problems that they have encountered in applying the strategies discussed.

### **Course Requirements**

1. Students will be expected to attend at least 80% of the seminars.
2. Students will be expected to lead discussion sessions in rotation with faculty facilitation.
3. Students will be expected to have read the articles for presentation and to contribute to the class discussion.
4. Students will be expected to write a 5 page paper by the end of the course describing their attempt to incorporate one of the clinical problem solving/medical decision making skills discussed in a teaching encounter. Reflection on the success of the teaching encounter is a critical part of this assignment. (***could also ask them to keep a “teaching log” as they move through their clinical teaching encounters in the year documenting their attempts to use the different strategies outlined—feedback from the committee welcome here***).
5. Students will be expected to present their teaching attempt and reflection to the class at the end of the course for feedback from the group.

**Course Grading: Pass/Fail unless committee feels strongly that letter grades should be given**

**Proposed Course Schedule: For each teaching session, a lead faculty facilitator has been identified based on scheduling constraints; whenever possible, both course director will attend.**

Date	Lead Faculty	
September 24, 2008	Arnold	Introduction
October 22, 2008	Arnold	Article review and discussion
October 29, 2008	Arnold	Article review and discussion
November 19, 2008	McNeil	Article review and discussion
December 17, 2008	McNeil	Article review and discussion
January 21, 2009	McNeil	Article review and discussion
January 28, 2009	Arnold	Article review and discussion
February 18, 2009	McNeil	Article review and discussion
February 25, 2009	Arnold	Article review and discussion
March 19, 2009	McNeil	Article review and discussion
March 25, 2009	Arnold	Article review and discussion
April 22, 2009	Arnold	Article review and discussion
April 29, 2009	McNeil	Article review and discussion
May 20, 2009	McNeil	Student presentations
May 27, 2009	Arnold	Student presentations
June 17, 2009	McNeil	Student presentations

**Note: 16 hour one sessions are planned for a total of 16 contact hours for the course; this would then be a 1 credit course.**