

## **Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective: The Hospital Experience for the Older Adult**

### ***Course Directors:***

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***Faculty Sponsor: (if non-faculty course director) ----***

***Department:*** Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Geriatrics

### ***Student Liaisons:***

TBD

### ***Requirements:***

- minimum: 7 first-year and second-year medical students
- maximum: 15 first-year and second-year medical students

### ***Rationale:***

The United States population is aging at an unprecedented rate. Older adults have unique challenges associated with hospitalization. With an aging population comes an increased need for healthcare professionals who are trained and experienced in providing care specifically to older adults. It is imperative that all healthcare professionals, not only geriatricians, have proficient knowledge in the field of geriatric medicine. The best way to ensure early and universal exposure to geriatric medicine is to provide this education beginning in the first years of medical school.

The aim of this curriculum is to introduce pre-clerkship medical students to the field of geriatric medicine in an interactive and reflective format with an emphasis on inpatient care. Lecture topics include assessing the geriatric patient, hospitalization for the older adult, managing medications, and advance care planning. In addition to attending class, students will visit geriatric patients at the Clements University Hospital, using the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) as a guide. Guidelines for how to visit with the geriatric patients will be taken from the “HELP” manual, which is an active UT Southwestern student organization. Students will then have opportunities to reflect on their interactions with the geriatric patients they visit during class and during the “asynchronous” component of the curriculum. The asynchronous components will include completing a short activity (i.e. listening to a Ted Talk, reading a poem, viewing a set of photographs) and reflecting in writing on the D2L discussion board. With an emphasis on experiential and reflective learning, we hope to prepare medical students to provide the best care for their future geriatric patients and appreciate the importance of patient-centered medicine.

**Goals:**

1. To develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to assess and care for geriatric patients in the inpatient setting.
2. To build an understanding of the unique challenges that accompany the aging process and recognize how these challenges can be addressed by care providers.
3. To appreciate the collective expertise and interprofessional approach needed to care for geriatric patients.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the components involved in assessing the fall risk of an older adult.
2. Obtain a complete social history of a geriatric patient.
3. Compare and contrast delirium and dementia in a geriatric patient.
4. State potential hazards of hospitalization for geriatric patients.
5. Demonstrate strategies for preventing delirium in the hospitalized older adult.
6. Discuss the importance of having goals of care discussions and the role of advance care planning.
7. Explain how medication choice differs when working with older adults.
8. Describe the prescribing cascade and explain how polypharmacy can impact geriatric patients.

**Format:**

The “Hospital Care” part of the Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective is composed of a classroom component, an experiential component (visiting with geriatric patients at Clements University Hospital), and an asynchronous component. The classroom component includes lectures, discussions, and activities meant to prepare and reflect on the student’s upcoming or most recent visit to the hospital. Thus, students will approach their visits with geriatric patients in the hospital with the background knowledge learned from class. The asynchronous component is meant to supplement both the classroom and interactive experiences. This component will involve the use of the D2L discussion boards, where students will post reflections on art, video clips, poetry, and short stories related to aging and care of the older adult, with the intention of connecting these reflections to their experiences in the classroom and to their experiences visiting with older adults in the hospital.

Of note, this *Hospital* elective is part one of the Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective. The *Hospital* semester focuses on geriatric medicine within the realm of caring for the older adult in the inpatient setting. The second part of the Longitudinal Geriatric Medicine Elective is the separate yet related *Home Care Elective*, which will be offered in Spring and focuses on the outpatient setting. While we will encourage students to enroll in both semesters for a holistic introduction to geriatric medicine, students will not be required to enroll in both and one elective is not the prerequisite for the other elective.

***Student Evaluation:***

Grades will be pass/fail. Attendance is required to receive credit for the course. This course consists of three components:

- 1) classroom learning: lecture, discussion, and reflection
- 2) experiential learning: student interaction with geriatric patients at Clements University Hospital
- 3) asynchronous learning: activities and reflection pieces completed on a D2L discussion board

***Course Evaluation:***

Grading will be pass/fail. To receive transcript acknowledgment, students must:

- attend 5 of 7 classes, including the first class (introduction and orientation)
- visit geriatric patients in the hospital at least once per month (total of 5 visits)
- complete 4 of the 5 asynchronous activities
- complete the pre-course and post-course evaluation surveys