Welcome!

The UCLA Neurology Clerkship is partnered with the Psychiatry Clerkship to enhance students’ understanding of the interplay between brain and behavior and to introduce current clinical applications of modern neuroscience. The Clerkship is comprised of a 4-week clinical Neurology rotation preceding or following a 4-week clinical Psychiatry rotation. We hope you will enjoy your time spent with us in Neurology and develop a sound, fundamental base in clinical Neurology for future reference in whatever specialty you may choose as a career.

For those students in the COVID-impacted clerkships, your 4-week rotation will be divided into a remote portion and a clinical portion. The exact distribution depends on the timing of the official return to curriculum decision.

Clerkship Goals

The primary goals of the 3rd year Neurology Clerkship are for you to:

1. Gain competence in taking a neurologic history and performing a neurologic exam, and use them to aid in localization and diagnosis of neurologic disease
2. Develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to assess, diagnose, and refer patients presenting in the primary care setting with neurologic complaints
3. Have the opportunity to explore the field of neurology as a potential career path through exposure to a variety of complaints and diagnoses through patient encounters and case-based didactics

Objectives

At the completion of the 3rd year Clerkship, you should be able to:

1. Perform a complete neurologic exam
2. Perform an appropriately focused neurologic history and screening exam based on presenting symptoms
3. Localize a lesion based on history and exam findings
4. Generate an appropriate basic differential diagnosis for common neurologic presentations and diagnoses
5. Recognize neurological emergencies and describe initial steps in their evaluation and management
6. State the indications for an LP and describe techniques to perform procedure appropriately and safely
7. Describe indications for CT and MRI imaging of the CNS, emphasizing their use in emergency situations
8. Describe ethical and psychosocial issues encountered in the care of neurologically ill patients
9. Describe differential diagnosis, initial evaluation, and basic management of the following chief complaints, using experience gained through patient interactions or case-based didactics
   a. Altered mental status
   b. Cognitive impairment or dementia
   c. Dizziness or vertigo
   d. Disturbance of speech or language
   e. Headache
   f. Loss of consciousness (syncope vs seizure), coma
   g. Numbness or altered sensation
   h. Seizure or epilepsy
   i. Stroke
   j. Tremor or abnormal movement
   k. Vision loss or diplopia
   l. Weakness

Clerkship Structure

You will be rotating at one of five sites:
1. Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center
2. West LA VAMC
3. Olive View-UCLA Medical Center
4. Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
5. Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Required Clinical Duties

See the separate Rotation Schedules handout for detailed information for each site.

1. INPATIENT
   a. You are expected to participate fully as a member of your team, performing neurologic examinations and assessments (including written H&P’s) on new patients, presenting them daily to your residents and attendings, discussing diagnosis and management principles, and writing daily progress notes. You will be responsible for pre-rounding on your assigned patients in preparation for each morning’s work rounds and following up on their clinical course throughout the day. You are expected to participate in all aspects of the team’s daily routine, which will vary by site. This includes remaining with the team until the completion of all work responsibilities for each day. You will be required to have your supervising attendings observe your Neurologic Examination (in part or in entirety) over the course of the 4 weeks.

2. OUTPATIENT
   a. You will attend outpatient clinics as detailed for your site.
      i. At Harbor, Olive View and the VA you will attend clinics along with the resident team integrated into your weekly schedule.
ii. At Cedars, you will attend both General and subspecialty Neurology clinics as detailed in your individual schedule for the rotation.

iii. At RRUMC, you will attend subspecialty Neurology clinics as detailed in your individual schedule for the rotation, typically 4-5 half day clinics in total.

3. You will work **two weekend days** while on service, and may be asked by your senior resident or attending to cross-cover patients assigned to another student during that time.

4. You will take **two evenings of call** with the on-call resident at your assigned site.
   a. On call nights will end no later than 9:00pm.
   b. Your required **weekend days do not** count as call nights.
   c. If you are interested in exploring your interests in neurology, you may certainly arrange to take additional call.
   d. The call requirement will vary by site according to how the residents take call at that site.
      i. At West LA VA and Olive View there is home call. You are responsible for receiving information from the on-call resident prior to the next morning’s rounds on the admissions or consults overnight. You will pre-round and present one or more of those new cases on morning rounds to the attending.
      ii. At RRUMC, Cedars and Harbor you will take call with the admitting resident (long call resident depending on site) until no later than 9:00pm and present one or more new cases on morning rounds to the attending.

5. At the start of your rotation, **schedule your weekend days and call days with your site’s senior residents**. You will also need to inform them of your assigned **Systems Based Healthcare schedule**.

6. There will be an average of one day off per week. These are the weekend days that you are not assigned to be on service. **Weekdays off for exam preparation are not allowed.**

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**Required Clerkship Activities:**

1. Attendance at Orientation is mandatory. Orientation is scheduled for a full day, the first day of your Neurology and Psychiatry clerkship. It includes an Introduction to the clerkship by the clerkship directors followed by Neurology and Psychiatry specific lectures. Neurology sessions include 1- Neurologic Examination (bring your tools); 2- LP simulation; 3- Stroke, and 4- Neuro-Ophthalmology.

2. Complete the **Patient Log**. You are to log patient or case-based encounters that illustrate the chief complaints listed in the clerkship objectives above in the patient log system. (A minimum of 10 is required to pass the course)

3. Have your **Completion Checklist (white card)** signed by the attending and returned at the time of the Neurology Shelf Exam. This documents your:
   a. Two nights of call (no later than 9:00pm)
   b. 3 H&P write-ups reviewed and signed off by a resident or attending. Additional details below.
   c. All 7 elements of a full neurological exam under observation, with each signed off by an attending. You must have a history (Initial or Follow-Up) observed and signed off by an attending (You may accomplish this with ward or clinic attendings – be proactive and plan
ahead. Take opportunities to demonstrate these exam elements for the faculty you work with and remind them you need to be observed doing so. Get feedback!

d. Meet for mid-rotation feedback with the attending on service. Have the attending sign and date the white card for verification. This can occur at any time during the clerkship when you receive feedback from an attending, not only at the two-week time point. We encourage weekly feedback sessions with attendings in order to make continued progress over the course of the rotation. There are multiple slots to be filled for such weekly feedback on your white card.

4. Meet weekly to cover the **Casebook Series** with faculty, residents or fellows as detailed for your Site (times and locations vary). Olive View, VA and RRUMC students all report to Westwood for casebook discussion from 10:00am-12:00pm on Wednesdays. These case discussions cover pertinent core neurologic problems and disease states.

5. Submit **3 full History and Physical write-ups** at the time of your Neurology Shelf Exam for review by the clerkship director. These should be **initial consults or admission H&Ps and NOT follow-up notes**. They should have a complete history, a complete, detailed neurologic examination with a detailed discussion in A/P of Differential Diagnoses and Treatment Plans.

### Supplemental Clerkship Resources:

1. **American Academy of Neurology’s NeuroSAE Medical Student Edition.** This is a practice exam designed for medical students on Neurology clerkships who are preparing to take the NBME Neurology Shelf examination. This set of practice questions is provided to you free of charge by DGSOM. You will receive an email early in the rotation which will include instructions for accessing the practice exam. We STRONGLY ENCOURAGE you to use this valuable resource.

2. **Online resources posted on Gryphon.** Online resources, previous lectures and teaching sessions are posted on Gryphon under ‘Instructional Materials.’ They can be reviewed at any time over the course of the clerkship and are meant to supplement your study plan and preparation for Casebook discussions, clinical duties and Shelf preparation. The suggested text is: Lange Clinical Neurology.

### The Test

On the final Friday of your 4-week Neurology rotation, you will take the NBME Neurology Subject Examination, which has **100 questions** over **2 hours and 30 minutes**. You will take your Psychiatry NBME Subject Examination on the final Friday of your Psychiatry 4-week rotation.

It is a difficult but fair exam with clinical, case-based scenarios. Well-prepared students have done extremely well on it. Unfortunately, some students have failed it, and often this is because of poor preparation.

Consider taking practice tests. As detailed above, a practice test available through the American Academy of Neurology: the NeuroSAE Medical Student Edition is provided to you at no cost at the start of the Neurology Clerkship.
In order to **PASS** the clerkship, you must score ≥10th percentile based on the 2018-19 national norms for the exam. A score below the 10th percentile based on 2018-19 national norms, which is an Equated Percent Correct Score of 69 or lower will result in a Fail. The Neurology Shelf Examination performance will be categorized otherwise into Pass, High Pass and Honors according to the DGSOM Grading System criteria for all required clinical clerkships as below.

***You are expected to work until the end of the last Thursday before the test day, just as on any other day. Your teams are specifically instructed not to send you home or give you a day off. **Please do not ask.** Instead, plan your studying well in advance – this is a marathon, not a sprint.***

### Requirements to Complete Clerkship (Summary)

In order to complete this clerkship successfully, you must:

- Participate in inpatient and outpatient duties – including seeing new consults and admissions, following patients, writing daily notes, and assisting with other team activities – on all assigned days, including two weekend days.
- Take 2 nights of “Call.”
- Submit your completed and signed Completion Checklist (white card).
- Submit 3 H&Ps.
- Complete patient log for all patient interactions and case-based discussions for items on the list. Minimum of 10 encounters. (Log actual patient encounters first; use casebook only if necessary)
- Score ≥10th percentile (based on 2018-2019 national norms—70 and above) on the NBME Neurology Subject Examination.
- Complete evaluations of your residents, attendings, and teachers at the end of the clerkship.

### Grading

The Grading System implemented by DGSOM in the 2016-17 academic year is uniform across clinical clerkships. The Final Grade for the Neurology clerkship is comprised of your clinical performance evaluations (summative of all evaluators) in combination with your NBME Neurology Shelf Examination performance. Cutoffs for the NBME shelf exam for 2020-21 are as follows based on the 2018-19 national norms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>% Rank</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 87</td>
<td>≥80</td>
<td>Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>60-79</td>
<td>High Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-82</td>
<td>10-59</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 69</td>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading policy can be viewed in its entirety on the DGSOM website: [https://medschool.ucla.edu/current-2-evaluation-grading](https://medschool.ucla.edu/current-2-evaluation-grading)

2b – Grading Policy – Clinical Years
Tips for Success

In order to excel on this rotation:

1. Bring all the proper tools:
   a. Reflex hammer, tuning forks, penlight, ophthalmoscope, stethoscope, vision card
2. Know the most about your patients as people – be their best advocate
3. Read about your patients’ specific conditions – be an expert on their neurologic issues
4. When assigned a patient to see, continue to see that patient every day until told not to by your resident.
5. Do not hesitate to ask questions. It is a great way to learn.
6. Go the “extra mile” (What would you appreciate if you were the patient?)
7. Show enthusiasm and seek out new patients -- volunteer to see new patients.
8. Seek and incorporate feedback throughout your clinical rotation
9. Check out with your team daily before leaving – sometimes important clinical events develop late in the day: stick it out with your team
10. Balance and pacing are key to succeeding– plan ahead!

What Can You Expect From Us?

We want you to have a well-rounded experience with us on Neurology. You should be accepted as a team member, and given the opportunity to evaluate patients assigned to you. You should be treated with respect as a team member and have the opportunity to model your behavior after professional interactions by your residents and attendings. You should receive feedback from your team members (be proactive and solicit it!) on your skills in examination, oral presentation, and write-ups. You should receive informal teaching throughout your clinical experiences to help solidify your knowledge of clinical Neurology.

Contacts

Please do not hesitate to contact your Site Director, Clerkship Director, or the Clerkship Coordinator if there is a concern or question about your rotation experience or your own interests in neurology. Good luck and have fun!

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