



Olive View – UCLA Medical Center
Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
Surgical Pathology Fellowship

Introduction:

The Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center (OVMC) offers two full-time fellowship positions in Surgical Pathology each year and two positions for elective rotations. A California medical license is required. The training is intended to provide the fellow with the final layer of confidence necessary to practice surgical pathology independently in a variety of settings from community hospitals to large academic institutions. The fellowship is a junior attending experience where the fellow worked into the attending schedule, including grossing, reading and writing up cases and performing procedures such as frozen sections and fine needle aspirations (FNA), etc. The fellow independently reviews cases, prepares reports ready for finalization and presents at tumor board and multidisciplinary conferences. Earning independent sign out privilege is highly encouraged.

Goals and Objectives:

The goal of our program is to help our fellows refine their professional attributes, medical knowledge, and surgical pathology diagnostic skills to allow them to practice surgical pathology independently and competently. Our goal is to develop surgical pathologists who excel in both community and academic practices, depending on the fellows' career ambitions. In achieving these goals, our fellowship program is designed to provide opportunities for the fellows to:

1. Acquire outstanding medical knowledge, diagnostic skills and experience to practice as a confident and competent surgical pathologist.
2. Understand the role of pathologists in the greater health care team and the impact of pathology reports on clinical management of patients, integrating into the team of professionals caring for the patients.
3. Perfect the skills to communicate pathology findings, both orally and in writing, in various settings including intraoperative consultations, community practices and large tertiary care facilities.
4. Become an outstanding educator for pathologists, clinicians and researchers in the field by participating in several teaching intradepartmental and interdepartmental multidisciplinary conferences.
5. Gain experience and participate in research activities and to critically evaluate published reports.

Structure and Learning Resources

Pathology Practice

The Department of Pathology at OVMC has adopted a general sign out system besides the special training or interest of faculty. The major learning interactions in anatomical pathology between the fellow and the faculty include FNA procedures with our without ultrasound guidance, intraoperative consultations, grossing highly complex cases, double scoping on selected challenging cases, and the Intradepartmental Consensus Conference. Consulting with the attending of record on selected cases which require consultation before finalization is a routine part of training. Furthermore, an invaluable part of training at OVMC is the daily Intradepartmental Consensus Conference where all the interesting, challenging, suspicious and malignant cases are examined and discussed by the faculty and fellows.

Faculty and fellows work on an average of 40 to 50 hours per week with a work load that is sometimes heavy. Most large surgical pathology specimens are high to moderately complex. The majority of these cases are from the female reproductive system, such as breast, gastrointestinal tract, genitourinary tract, lung, soft tissue, head and neck, bone marrow and lymph nodes. We also receive many biopsies from interventional radiology, gastroenterology, pulmonology, dermatology, urology and head & neck surgery. Neuropathology, bone pathology, pediatric pathology, nephropathology, ophthalmic pathology and neuromuscular pathology are provided by other UCLA affiliated institutions, where the elective rotations are also available. Fellows will manage the cytology of different body fluids and FNA samples obtained at the FNA clinic, or sent from interventional radiology, endobronchial ultrasound-guided FNA or endoscopic ultrasound-guided FNA services. Pap smears are currently sent to an outside institution.

Conferences and Hands-on Training

There are over 600 annual hours of pathology and multidisciplinary conferences most of which are directly applied to the patient care:

Intradepartmental Consensus Conference (Daily): Every afternoon all interesting, challenging, suspicious, malignant, and any cases with learning value are presented by the faculty and the fellows at the multihead microscope. The histological, ancillary and practical aspect of each case is discussed and a final consensus of opinion regarding diagnosis or management of each case is documented. The pathologists take this opportunity to ask thought provoking questions, review the current standard of practice and the literature.

Hands-on FNA, Ultrasound (US) and US-FNA Training: The FNA Clinic, conveniently located in Department of Pathology at OVMC, is an active part of our pathology practice and patient care. Fellows will be trained to perform FNA under supervision of faculty. Independent FNA procedure and US-FNA are encouraged. US-FNA training is offered by the faculty at OVMC to the fellows interested in this procedure. The training includes ultrasound physics, working with ultrasound systems, performing US-FNA on phantoms, and performing US-FNA on patients.

General Tumor Board (weekly): All suspicious and malignant cases (15 to 35 cases) are presented in the laboratory conference room, where clinical, radiological and pathological findings are presented and discussed between the services and treatment plans are documented. Presentation of patients is concise, revolving around clinical management and involves presenting patients to the corresponding service and documenting the management plan.

Gynecology Tumor Board and Colposcopy Conference (Weekly): All suspicious, malignant and selected benign cases are presented in conference room. Here clinical, radiological and pathological findings are presented and discussed between the services and treatment plans are documented. Presentation of patients is concise, revolving around clinical management and involves presenting patients to the corresponding service and documenting the management plan.

GI Biopsy Conference (Weekly): All GI biopsies are examined at the multihead microscope and discussed with the gastroenterology service. This is an opportunity for the fellows in both services to teach, exchange their information and exercise a more efficient multidisciplinary patient care.

Bone Marrow Conference (Weekly): All bone marrow biopsies and aspirates are presented at multihead microscope to the pathology fellows and hematology-oncology service. Conference involves clinical presentation and extensive teaching histologic examination of bone marrow and peripheral blood smears.

Breast Conference (Every Two Weeks): FNA samples, biopsies, and excisional samples are presented in this multidisciplinary manner. Clinical management is discussed and documented based on the clinical, radiological and pathological findings.

Cytopathology Conference (Every Two Weeks): A variety of specimens including cytology of body fluids, FNA from superficial and deep-seated masses, endobronchial ultrasound-guided FNA and endoscopic ultrasound-guided FNA are presented at the multihead microscope and discussed.

Pulmonary Pathology Conference (Monthly): All the pulmonary pathology cases are examined at multihead microscope and discussed with pulmonary pathology expert. This conference will be repeated for the pulmonology service, which can further learning value of this conference for the pathology fellows.

Dermatopathology Conference (Monthly): Selected dermatopathology cases are presented at the multihead microscope and discussed by a dermatopathologists from the Department of Pathology at UCLA Medical Center. Goals of this conference is to enhance competency in diagnosis of inflammatory and neoplastic skin lesions.

Neuropathology Conference (Monthly): Selected neuropathology cases are presented at the multihead microscope and discussed by a neuropathologist from the Department of Pathology at UCLA Medical Center. Goals of this conference is to enhance competency in diagnosis of neoplastic brain lesions.

Lymphoma Conference (Monthly): Selected lymphoma cases are presented by the Hematopathology Service from Department of Pathology at UCLA Medical Center. Goals of this conference are to review different aspects of a recently encountered challenging case.

Journal Club Presentation (Monthly): Articles applied to the daily practice are selected by the fellows and faculty and presented at the monthly journal club.

College of American Pathologists (CAP) Education Programs: Department of Pathology at OVMC is enrolled in different educational programs provided by CAP, including Performance Improvement Program, Non-gynecologic Cytopathology Education Program, Gynecology Cytopathology Education Program and many Teleconference Education Programs. Fellows actively participate in these activities and discussions at multihead microscope conferences.

Elective Rotations

One to two months of elective specialty rotations are offered at other UCLA-affiliated institutions:

Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center is a 522 bed academic and community hospital. Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at UCLA Medical Center provides a variety of specialty rotations. Additional information is available at <http://pathology.ucla.edu/fellowship-programs>.

Santa Monica UCLA Medical Center, is a 266 bed academic and community hospital with a large surgical oncology division. It provides exposure to a community hospital style practice and provides exposure to a wide array of specimen types. During the rotation, there are no residents and the fellow reviews all surgical cases and biopsies independently. Gross dissections are performed by the P.A. under the direction and guidance of the fellow. Cases are presented to the attending of record, ready to be finalized.

Clinical Responsibilities

Fellows will function in the capacity of junior attendings and rotate in different services similar to the faculty. The fellows are in charge of the assigned tasks and cases. The completed cases will be given to the faculty for final sign out. The fellows are encouraged to show initiative in the assigned tasks and ownership of their cases. The fellows are in charge of the assigned tasks based on the monthly schedule in four main services:

1) Intraoperative Consultation and Large Specimens

2) Biopsy Service

3) Cytology and FNA Service

4) Overnight Calls (The fellow will participate in home calls under attending supervision with responsibilities including frozen section, cytology adequacy and consultation. Most frozen sections are requested before 4:30 PM. Seldom certain surgeries may need after-hours frozen sections, most of which occur between 4:30 and 7:30 PM.)

Conference Responsibilities

Tumor Board Presentation: Each week one fellow is assigned to present all the pathology images and a brief review of pathology report.

Journal Club Presentation: Articles applied to the daily practice are selected by the fellows and faculty and presented at the monthly journal club.

Specialty Conferences: Fellows are expected to attend all conferences. Presenting at specialty conferences by the interested fellows are highly valued and shall be arranged.