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Courses

Curriculum courses (p. 1) for Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences are listed below.


Gateway Curriculum

Under the new Gateway Curriculum, medical students spend their four years split among three phases. Phase I involves the first 16 months of medical school. During Phase I, students participate in three Procedural Immersions, which are three-week-long clinical and surgical experiences. The primary goals of the Procedural Immersions are to socialize the student to different clinical settings, to hone their clinical skills, and to allow them to explore the impact of society and health systems on an individual patient’s health. This 360-degree approach to early clinical exposure allows students to view practicing medicine through physician, patient, and systems lenses. In these rotations, medical students will often focus on longitudinal patient care by following a specific patient from the time they arrive until they leave and seeing how all health care team members are involved in that patient’s visit. During the Ophthalmology Procedural Immersion, students spend time in the University Eye Clinic and in the pediatric and adult sub-specialty services. Students will rotate through the resident oriented and resident-oriented conferences. On day one, they attend rounds with an inpatient consult team. This early exposure to clinical experience helps students to contextualize the classroom and clinical learning that they continue with over the next two phases.

The basic and clinical science of ophthalmology is taught in Phase 1 during Module 7: Brain and Behavior. During this module, the students will spend time learning about eye anatomy and physiology, the visual pathways in the brain, and the mechanisms of extraocular movements. The students participate in interactive case sessions that reinforce the material and encourage students to practice their critical thinking and eye examination skills.

During Phase 3, medical students will have opportunities to participate in electives in ophthalmology and advanced clinical rotations in ophthalmology. These will allow students to obtain further experience in clinical ophthalmology to strengthen their clinical knowledge and examination skills. The students will work closely with the ophthalmology residents and review the differential diagnosis of the “red eye,” the interpretation of an ophthalmologic consult note, and the handling of ocular emergencies. During this rotation, there is again emphasis on the use of the ophthalmoscope. Additional clinical skills introduced to rotating students include the use of the slit lamp and indirect ophthalmoscopy.

Legacy Curriculum: Fourth Year

The Ophthalmology Sub-Internship Rotation occurs during this time. During the month of June during their fourth year, students interested in pursuing a career in ophthalmology are encouraged to complete this intensive four-week rotation. Students will have personal indirect ophthalmoscopy lenses available for use on the rotation. Formal didactic sessions and workshops will be used to teach students how to perform a detailed ophthalmic history and exam, including the mastery of advanced slit lamp techniques and indirect fundoscopy. Students present a case at the department’s grand rounds. By the end of the rotation, students will be expected to function at the level of a first-year ophthalmology resident.

Curriculum Courses

M50 Ophth 801 Ophthalmology Subinternship
This elective is for senior students who plan to apply for a residency in Ophthalmology. In accordance with any subinternship, medical students will be expected to function at the level of a beginning first-year ophthalmology resident on this rotation. The students will rotate through the resident eye clinic and the subspecialty clinics of the full time faculty of the Washington University Medical School Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences (e.g., neuro-ophthalmology service, cornea/external disease service, etc.). Students may opt to check out indirect ophthalmoscopy lenses that may be used for the month to facilitate the acquisition of fundoscopy skills. During the rotation, the student’s responsibilities range from observation to working at a resident level and completing full eye examinations. There will be a rigorous academic curriculum for the rotation, including a weekly case presentation, weekly attendance at grand rounds, and a mix of medical student-oriented and resident-oriented conferences. On day one, students will receive a rotating call schedule for the entire month. A medical student is expected to be present at all times to assist the primary call ophthalmology resident during the rotation.

By the end of the four-week rotation, the student is expected to be proficient in taking an ocular history and performing a complete eye exam including slit lamp biomicroscopy and indirect ophthalmoscopy. All students interested in this senior elective must contact Course Director in March of year WUMS-III. The final grade of the student is determined by input from the director of the particular service(s) through which the student rotated, plus the case presentations.
M50 Ophth 805 Ophthalmology
The Ophthalmology elective is designed to provide a foundational experience in clinical and surgical ophthalmology for medical students. Time will be divided between the University Eye Service clinic, adult inpatient consults, pediatric ophthalmology, and other ophthalmology subspecialties (e.g. Glaucoma, Cornea, or Retina). The amount of time at each location will depend on length of the rotation and the student’s specific interests. There are didactic sessions with Dr. Andrew Lee and Dr. Cynthia Montana during which the students present their own cases. In addition, there are continuing opportunities to attend educational conferences. At the end of the experience, the student is expected to be familiar with the routine eye exam, common eye conditions and their treatment, and the use of the slit lamp and ophthalmoscope.

M50 Ophth 816 Away Rotation in Ophthalmology
This four-week elective is for senior students from medical schools across the United States who are in good standing at their home institution and who are planning to apply for a residency in ophthalmology. To enroll in this elective, students must first apply online for the elective via the visiting student application service (VSAS). These applications will be reviewed and invitations will then be sent to individuals to enroll in the elective. Due to large demand, not all eligible away students will be accepted for the rotation. The dates for this elective are not flexible. The students will rotate through the resident eye clinic and the subspecialty clinics of the full time faculty of the Washington University Medical School Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences (e.g., neuro-ophthalmology service, cornea/external disease service, etc.). In exchange for a refundable deposit, students may opt to check-out indirect ophthalmoscopy lenses that may be used for the month to facilitate the acquisition of fundoscopy skills. During the rotation, the student’s responsibilities range from observation (including observing surgery) to working at a resident level and completing full eye examinations. Didactics will include weekly case presentation sessions, weekly attendance at grand rounds, and a mix of medical student-oriented and resident-oriented conferences. Also, there will be medical student-oriented workshops to learn the basics of the slit lamp and indirect ophthalmoscopy. On day one, students will receive a schedule of conferences that they are expected to attend during the month. By the end of the four-week rotation, the student is expected to be proficient in taking an ocular history and performing a complete eye exam including slit lamp biomicroscopy and indirect ophthalmoscopy.

M50 Ophth 900 Research Elective - Ophthalmology
Research opportunities may be available. If interested, please contact the Department of Ophthalmology.