MD Curriculum Overview

The MD program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) strives to engage students in a learning process that will help them become highly competent and compassionate physicians who promote health and have a lifelong thirst for learning. We believe that no matter what field of medicine a graduate pursues or where he or she practices, integrating public health with clinical medicine will contribute to healthier patients and a more rewarding medical career.

Year 1, Fall Semester

- **Comprehensive Human Biochemistry**
- **Cell Structure and Function**
- **Molecular and Medical Genetics**
- **Principles of Population Medicine and Epidemiology**
- **Patient, Doctor and Society 1**

Year 1, Spring Semester

- **Neurobiology and Anatomy of Head and Neck**
- **Integrated Medical Anatomy**
- **Principles of Human Physiology**
- **Patient, Doctor and Society 2**

**Year 1**

- **Cell Structure and Function**
  Explores how the structure and function of cells and tissues constitute health and disease at the molecular and cellular level.

- **Comprehensive Human Biochemistry**
  Emphasizes human metabolism, biological regulation and medical implications of biochemistry.

- **Integrated Dermatology**
  First of the sequence of integrated organ system courses that continues throughout year 2.

- **Integrated Medical Anatomy**
  Draws together clinically relevant material from several anatomical disciplines—gross anatomy, histology, embryology and radiology.

- **Molecular and Medical Genetics**
  Explores the interaction between genetic composition, environmental influence and disease susceptibility, the limitations and benefits of molecular diagnostic testing, and the psychosocial impact of inherited genetic disease.

- **Neurobiology and Anatomy of the Head and Neck**
  Takes an integrated approach toward understanding the structure and function of the brain and the structures in the head and neck.

- **Patient, Doctor and Society 1 and 2**
  Integrates biological, psychological and social aspects of patient-centered care. A four-semester sequence that teaches communication and physical examination skills, ethics, evidence-based medicine and professionalism.

- **Principles of Human Physiology**
  Explores the function of the body’s principal organ systems, featuring practical applications of physiological principles in the context of human health and disease.

- **Principles of Population Medicine and Epidemiology**
  Emphasizes epidemiology, public health and health services research, providing a foundation in community health assessment and intervention, health disparities, health policy and global health.
Year 2
The second-year medical school curriculum is organized into three integrated course sequences:

• **Foundations of Medicine**
  Provides an understanding of the basic concepts of several key traditional disciplines that are essential to medical practice. Concepts are applied and reinforced throughout the organ system sequence. Integration of the traditional disciplines of pathology, pharmacology and nutrition, with foundations of neoplasia and infection, is a key feature.

• **Integrated Organ Systems**
  Courses are organized into integrated blocks that include the pathophysiology of systems and related organ-specific material from pharmacology, pathology, nutrition and neoplasia.

• **Patient, Doctor and Society 3 and 4**
  The third and fourth semesters of a four-semester sequence that teaches communication and physical examination skills, ethics, evidence-based medicine and professionalism. Organ-specific clinical skills are taught in alignment with the organ system sequence.

**Years 3 and 4**
In years 3 and 4, SMPH students rotate through required and elective clerkships and a preceptorship at sites throughout Wisconsin, where they gain broad exposure to many aspects of medicine and public health in outpatient, inpatient, community-based, rural and inner-city settings. As students advance through their clinical years, they have increased opportunities to tailor their electives to their interests and goals.

During the third year, students attend Core Curriculum Days at the Health Sciences Learning Center in Madison. These days consist of active learning about topics such as health disparities, palliative care and unanticipated outcomes, and include a Transitional Clerkship that orients students as they enter their clinical years.

Students experience seven core clerkships that must be completed by the end of the third year (Internal Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, Neuroscience, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Primary Care and Psychiatry) and two required clerkships that may be completed in the third or fourth year (Anesthesiology and Radiology). The fourth year includes additional required rotations, including the Medicine Subinternship, a Surgery selective, and a community-based Preceptorship. Students spend remaining time in electives.

On average, students spend about 16 weeks outside of Madison at rotations that include Aurora Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee, Marshfield Clinic in Marshfield and Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center in LaCrosse, as well as sites in Green Bay, Eau Claire, Wausau, Minocqua, Rice Lake and Appleton.