SURGERY CLERKSHIP COURSE DESCRIPTION
(SU 019)

This course is designed to provide the student with a balanced, multidisciplinary perspective of the surgical sciences. The objectives are to provide an understanding of the surgical management of disease, to illustrate special problems encountered with surgical patients, to fix clearly in the student’s mind the means available for establishing diagnoses of surgical problems, to expose the student to the expectations and limitations of appropriate surgical theory, and to give students familiarity in the pre- and post-operative care of patients. Major surgical problems are presented so that a correlation between clinical observations, surgical (operative) pathology, and the physiological alterations brought about by operation can be made. This background is intended to lead the student to appreciate both the philosophy and practice of surgery and their relationships to the medical practice in general.

Students are required to complete the 12-week surgery course, which consists of exposure to both inpatient and outpatient surgery, encompassing General Surgery, Orthopaedics, Otolaryngology, Neurosurgery, Urology, Cardiothoracic Surgery, Plastic Surgery, Pediatric Surgery, and Transplantation. Each student will be assigned to rotations at some or all of the following locations: UCLA Center for Health Sciences, West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, Olive View Medical Center, Harbor/UCLA Medical Center. Objectives of the course in Surgery are the same at all locations, but administrative details and the flavor of the course will differ somewhat in each hospital.

Students will be assigned to evaluate and follow both inpatients and outpatients, and are considered part of the treatment team of each service. Although they will not have primary responsibility for ward duties, they will be expected to become familiar with ward procedures and to participate in patient care activities. Teaching on the wards is provided by the association of students with all levels of the staff, including junior and senior housestaff and faculty. Students are expected to follow their patients to the Operating Room where they may be asked to “scrub,” so that the entire treatment cycle of the surgical patient from diagnosis to operative management and through recovery can be observed. Attendance at Problem Based Learning (PBL) sessions, a student lecture series, and certain departmental conferences are required of all students on all rotations. The on-call schedule varies with the service to which the student is assigned. A number of rotations require occasional overnight attendance. Secure and comfortable accommodations are available.

All students will take a written and oral final examination. The final grade is based upon the ward grade (50%), the written examination (25%), and the oral examination (25%). Students are reminded that although they may not be assigned rotations on every surgical specialty service, they are expected to have a working knowledge of the major principles of each and may be examined on these. Readings and syllabi will be distributed at the initial orientation meeting. No scheduling preferences will be accepted. Electives in most General Surgery and Specialty Surgery areas are available.

Students may contact the Surgery Education Office at (310) 825-6643 if they have questions.

Course Chairs
Hugh Gelabert, M.D.
Christian deVirgilio, M.D.

Course Coordinators
Center for Health Sciences
Hugh Gelabert, M.D.

Harbor/UCLA Medical Center
Christian deVirgilio, M.D.

Olive View-UCLA Medical Center
Jesse Thompson, M.D.

West Los Angeles VA Medical Center
Mark Sawicki, M.D.
Dennis Baker, M.D.

*This is not the location of the “Block” orientation.
Criteria for Letters of Distinction in Surgery

1. The student must demonstrate a superior performance of the written examination.

2. The student must demonstrate a superior performance on the oral examination.

3. The student must demonstrate superior performance on their clinical evaluations.

4. Nomination(s) or letter(s) of recommendations from individual faculty member(s) will be taken into consideration.