VCU M3 Internal Medicine Clerkship Expectations and Assignments

**Clerkship Expectations**
The guiding principle is that you will be as completely responsible for the care of assigned patients as you are able to be, for your level of training and your schedule of teaching activities.

**Responsibilities and Assignments**
As a member of the hospital team, you will make teaching rounds with the attending physician and work rounds with housestaff. You should be present at discussions or procedures involving your patients. You will be expected to present your patients on daily rounds with the attending physician. Note that the attending physician may ask you to present new patients either the day they are admitted to your team or the morning following the day of admission. For new patient admissions, you are expected to be ready to present a complete history and physical to the attending physician, but note that there are instances where the attending physician may ask for a truncated presentation depending on time constraints on a given day. For inpatient rotations you will record a complete history and physical on your patients when they are first admitted. You will also record daily progress notes for the patients assigned to your care. The most essential features of work-ups are accuracy, completeness, and precision. Your notes will be kept in the electronic medical record and need to be identified as “Student Documentation.” Your notes should be forwarded to either the resident or attending physician for review.

For outpatient rotations you are expected to record a focused encounter note on at least one of the patients you see each day. If your ambulatory rotation is at VCUHS or the VAMC, these notes should also be in the electronic medical record. For ambulatory rotations in the community, your encounter note will typically be done on paper. Please note that due to variations in clinic operations at different sites, the documentation expectations may vary from site to site depending on the preferences of your preceptor. You are NOT expected to write orders on your patients. You may do so if given the opportunity, but all student orders MUST be cosigned by housestaff, and most housestaff typically prefer to enter their own orders. **Under no circumstances will your written orders be carried out until they have been countersigned.**

**UNAUTHORIZED COMPUTER ACCESS OR USING THE PASSWORDS OF OTHERS IS EQUIVALENT TO THE FORGERY OF MEDICAL ORDERS.**
During each month, you are required to make a short Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) presentation related to a clinical question that arose from one of your patients. You are expected to use primary medical literature (NOT UpToDate) for this presentation. You are NOT expected to have a handout or PowerPoint presentation completed. It is your responsibility to make sure this gets done. If you haven’t done it, your resident and/or attending are free to comment on your lack of initiative.

You may, but are not required to, draw blood on your patients with assistance from the housestaff or the nursing staff if necessary. You may assist with other procedures as deemed appropriate by your team. No procedures other than venipuncture shall be performed by a student without direct supervision of an intern, resident, or attending.

You are required to complete your Medicine passport online throughout the course of your rotation. Students must log observation of a minimum of 22 of the 28 total diagnoses or procedures before 5:00 PM on the last day of the Clerkship. Failure to do so will result in an incomplete for the IM Clerkship.

Students must log documentation of the five Core Clinical Skills. Students are expected to have an attending or resident supervise and complete an evaluation for each skill:

- History Taking
- Abdominal Examination
- Cardiovascular Examination
- Pulmonary Examination
- Case Presentation

Once a skill has been observed, students should have the attending or resident complete the Core Clinical Skills evaluation form (located on the eCurriculum under the “Forms” section). This form must be turned in to Brie
Dubinsky in order for the skill to be approved and documented. All Core Clinical Skills must be completed and documented before 5 PM on the final day of the rotation. You must attend all TBL sessions regardless of whether you are rotating at VCUHS, the VAMC, or in the community. If your community preceptor is in a location where getting to VCUHS is particularly difficult, please contact the clerkship to discuss whether you can be excused from these sessions. You must attend all scheduled Harvey sessions. Both of these sessions will take place during the MCV inpatient month. Students rotating on an inpatient or an outpatient MCV rotation are required to attend all MCV core lectures. Students on inpatient and outpatient rotations at the VAMC are only required to attend those core lectures which are given jointly at the VAMC/MCV or which are broadcast to the VAMC by teleconference. Students rotating away from campus in the community are not required to attend core lectures, but are invited to do so if their clinical experience allows. Excused absences from mandatory activities will be granted for illness or personal emergencies, provided appropriate notification is made to the clerkship office. All unexcused absences from required clerkship activities will be documented in a professionalism concern note.

You will be expected to complete the online eCurriculum quiz at your scheduled time (or, as necessary, made up in the CIRC lab before the end of the rotation). Failure to complete the eCurriculum quiz will result in a zero for the quiz and a final grade of Incomplete until the quiz is made up. You will be expected to have mid-rotation evaluation forms completed by your attending physician during each month of the clerkship, and these forms need to be submitted to the clerkship office. Please note that attending physicians, not residents, must complete these mid-rotation evaluations. These evaluations are intended to provide feedback for your development; they are NOT used to determine your overall grade. The form can be found on the eCurriculum under the “forms” section.

**Summary of Required Assignments**

These assignments are to be completed and turned in by the LAST DAY of the clerkship:
- Passport (must be complete, but students are not required to print a copy)
- Core Clinical Skills Evaluations
- Online eCurriculum Quiz

These assignments are to be completed and turned in by the mid-point of each month’s rotation:
- Mid-rotation evaluations (to be completed by attending physicians)

These assignments are to be completed by the end of each month’s rotation:
- Short EBM presentation

ALL ASSIGNMENTS (INCLUDING THE PASSPORT) ARE DUE BY 5:00 PM ON THE LAST DAY OF THE CLERKSHIP. FAILURE TO COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS ON TIME WILL RESULT IN ONE GRADE REDUCTION FOR THE CLERKSHIP. AFTER SEVEN DAYS, IF ASSIGNMENTS ARE STILL INCOMPLETE, THE STUDENT’S LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND LACK OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR WILL BE NOTED IN THE CLERKSHIP SUMMARY AND A PROFESSIONALISM CONCERN NOTE WILL BE FILED IN THE DEAN’S OFFICE.

**Procedures-Skills**

You are not required to perform procedures during your clerkship. You are encouraged to observe and participate in procedures when possible, particularly if the procedures involve your patients.

The following skills, if done at some point in your clerkship, should be entered into your Passport:
- ECG Interpretation
- ABG Interpretation
- Chest x-ray interpretation

The following procedures may be performed without supervision:
- Peripheral venipuncture
- Placement of peripheral IV line
The following procedures, if you perform them, MUST be supervised by an intern, resident, or attending:

- Drawing blood from a peripheral artery (obtaining an ABG)
- Nasogastric tube placement
- Lumbar puncture
- Central line placement
- Arthrocentesis
- Paracentesis
- Thoracentesis

**Patient Load**

There is no arbitrary “required” patient number during inpatient rotations. However, a reasonable goal is 2-3 patients at any given time. On the days of admission, you should perform at least one complete H&P of a new case. **However, the number of cases that you both admit and carry is up to your supervising medical team.**

You are expected to perform a complete history and physical examination and formal write-ups on each patient that you admit to your service.

Your resident is in charge of assigning patients.

Failure to take initiative or to assume appropriate responsibility is considered a serious problem, and is considered by Clerkship Committee during the grading process.

**Work Day Schedule and Call**

**For inpatient rotations:**

You are responsible for pre-rounding on each of your assigned inpatients. You are expected to arrive on the wards at an early enough time to have seen your patients and be ready to present your patients on rounds. At both MCV and the VAMC, rounds will begin at 8:00 AM. Rounds are expected to be finished by 10:30-10:45 AM so that residents may attend morning report at 11 a.m. You are encouraged to accompany your team to morning report. You are expected to remain available until 5:00 PM or later (as patient responsibility dictates), even on the last day of the rotation. You will admit patients with the team as directed by your supervising resident and attending. None of the inpatient ward teams take overnight call.

**For ambulatory rotations:**

You are expected to arrive at your ambulatory rotation site prior to the first scheduled patient. At VCUHS and VAMC, most clinics start at 8:00 AM. For community preceptors, your arrival time will be based on the preference of your preceptor. You are expected to be present throughout the day during your ambulatory rotations up until 5:00 PM. If a given clinic session ends early, you may be dismissed prior to 5:00 PM at the discretion of your supervising physician.

**Days Off**

The Department of Internal Medicine is committed to providing discretionary time off to residents, interns, and students. You will have weekends between rotations free (as noted on the schedule). During your inpatient rotations, you will be given one weekend day off each weekend. You may not take weekdays off. During your ambulatory rotation, you will be off the entire weekend. Any additional time off must be requested through the Clerkship administration—please complete an Exception Request Form and turn it in to Brie Dubinsky for approval.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Exception requests are approved at the discretion of the Clerkship Director and will be honored according to the guidelines set forth by the School of Medicine. **These are not meant for personal holidays to attend weddings or other functions, vacation time, etc.**

**Scut**

You are expected to help with patient care duties on your assigned patients. This can include obtaining outside medical records, transporting patients in urgent situations, sending hospital records to referring physicians, etc., and these duties are not considered “scut.” Note that attendance at formal didactic sessions (lectures, Harvey, TBL) is required and you are not to perform these patient care duties if they preclude you from attending mandatory clerkship activities.
Dress
Students should dress professionally at all times. Please refer to the School of Medicine policy for detailed wardrobe guidelines. Note that for inpatient rotations the VCUHS Infection Control Committee has issued a recommendation for inpatient attire, and this recommendation does vary from the School of Medicine guidelines. You will NOT be penalized if you follow the Infection Control Committee’s recommendation during your inpatient rotations. The Infection Control Committee recommends a “bare below the elbows” approach for inpatient care (please see the document entitled “Bare Below the Elbows,” located in the “Overview” section of the eCurriculum site).