

An Anesthesiology Clerkship for General Medical Education

Tammy Y. Euliano, MD
University of Florida College of Medicine

Learner Audience: (*context/setting*) 4th year medical students

Background: Compulsory anesthesiology exposure during UGME is uncommon in the US. According to the AAMC Curriculum Directory¹, only 27 of 126 medical schools required an anesthesiology clerkship last year. Reasons to sponsor a clerkship include recruitment into the specialty and education of all physicians. While the former proves relatively ineffective, anesthesiologists have much to contribute to general medical education.

Needs Assessment: The “general medical education” focus at UF led to substantial evolution of our required anesthesiology clerkship over the last several years, culminating in a 4th year 2-week clerkship entitled, “Life Support Skills & Perioperative Medicine.” In 2005-06 student comments regarding relevance for their chosen careers prompted development of a novel curriculum for students not pursuing anesthesiology, including personalized learning objectives (PLO) and formative on-line quizzes.

Hypothesis: We hypothesized an improved course, as reflected by student comments and course evaluations.

Curriculum Design: We developed a list of topics of broad interest that anesthesiologists teach well, but which are not well-addressed elsewhere. We then assigned values to each topic for each field of medicine (Table 1). Students completed a pre-course survey rating each topic for perceived importance and current level of understanding. Software generated a personalized letter with learning objectives and reading assignments based on the greater of their perception or Table 1. At the end of the clerkship students rated the PLO on a 5-point Likert scale (poor-to-excellent)

Outcome: Data analysis was deemed exempt by the IRB. Pre-course surveys were completed by 95/103 students (92%), representing all non-anesthesiology fields of study. Students rated the PLO 3.9 with 76% very good or excellent. There were positive comments, e.g. “...great job of tailoring the clerkship to meet our future careers; and I really appreciated [you] taking a vested interest in my goals.” However the overall clerkship evaluation remained unchanged at 4.1. Altering the final exam to match the PLO might increase their perceived value.

¹ <http://www.aamc.org/meded/curric/start.htm> accessed October 8, 2008

