The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Physician Assistant Department

Patient Communication
Fall 2016

Course Number: PHAS 5325
Credit Hours: 3 semester credit hours
Course Title: Patient Communication

Location:
Lecture: HSHE 1.102
Labs: Lab A – HSHE 2.135
      Lab B – HSHE 2.134
      Lab C – HSHE 2.134
      Lab D – HSHE 2.135
      Lab E – HSHE 2.134

Class Time(s):
Lecture: Monday 1:40 – 2:55 pm
         Wednesday 1:40 – 2:55 pm
Lab: Lab A Tuesday 8:00 - 10:40 am Villarreal
     Lab B Tuesday 8:00 - 10:40 am Abdelbary
     Lab C Tuesday 10:50 - 1:30 pm Strong
     Lab D Thursday 8:00 - 10:40 am Garza
     Lab E Thursday 10:50 - 1:30 pm Salinas

Required Textbooks & Materials:

Textbooks

The Patient History: An Evidence-Based Approach to Differential Diagnosis, 2e. by Henderson, Tierney, and Smetana.
Available at: http://bit.ly/PHAS5325

Smith's Patient-Centered Interviewing: An Evidence-Based Method, 3e. by Fortin, Dwamena, Frankel, and Smith.
Materials

- White student lab coat (blazer style)
- Name Tag/Badge
- Apple iPad

**Required iPad Apps:**

- iTunes U
  Available at: [http://apple.co/1V2xDfi](http://apple.co/1V2xDfi)

- SofTest-M by ExamSoft

- YouTube
  Available at: [http://apple.co/1SDl1hU](http://apple.co/1SDl1hU)

**Instructor & Contact Information:**

Professor Name: Elias Villarreal, Jr., MPAS, ADE, PA-C  
Office Location: HHSE 2.129  
Email Address: elias.villarreal@utrgv.edu  
Phone Contact: (956) 665-5291

Professor Name: Bassent Abdelbary, MBCHB, MPH  
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Email Address: bassent.abdelbary@utrgv.edu  
Phone Contact: (956) 665-2298

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with a comprehensive overview of health communication. Health communication is an area of study designed to impact the behavior, attitudes, and actions of individuals in a health setting – patients, providers and support staff – and to improve the health interaction as a result. Health communication is also an effective framework for molding educated patients with a vested interest in their own care. This course will give students an understanding of the tools used to improve communication in a healthcare setting and strategies for implementing these tools, which cover the role of the educated patient in today’s information-saturated world, the balance of power in the patient-provider relationship, the role of nonverbal communication, the provider-provider relationship, and the breaking of bad news. The course also will provide students with an overview of the areas in which health communication can be utilized, including academia, hospitals, physician offices, and in playing an active role in one’s own care. Role-play and simulated patients will be used to practice communication skills.
**Course Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking the Medical History</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Special Histories</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Education</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Modules</td>
<td>P/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating Genetics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Competency</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBT History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Health History</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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All items listed in the evaluation methods are a requirement to complete the course. Forfeit of any of the above course requirements, including the supplemental modules, will result in an incomplete grade until all course requirements have been completed.

**Grading Scale:**

The following grading scale is used to assign **FINAL** grades to this course:

- A: 90 – 100
- B: 80 – < 90
- C: 70 – < 80
- F: < 70
**Physician Assistant Core Competencies:**

This course will prepare the student to meet certain PA competencies. The Patient Communication course outcomes and learning objectives relate to the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession (2012)* as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Competencies for the PA Profession</th>
<th>Specific Competencies Addressed in Medical Interviewing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Knowledge</td>
<td>History and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses (Competency 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal &amp; Communication Skills</td>
<td>Create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients (Competency 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information (Competency 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction (Competency 3)</td>
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<td>Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group (Competency 4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety (Competency 5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes (Competency 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient Care</td>
<td>Work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care (Competency 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families (Competency 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain essential and accurate information about their patients (Competency 3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>Respect, compassion, and integrity (Competency 3)</td>
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<td>Responsiveness to the needs of patients and society (Competency 4)</td>
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<td>Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices (Competency 5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients’ culture, age, gender, and abilities (Competency 6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-reflection, critical curiosity and initiative (Competency 7)</td>
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| Practice-Based Learning & Improvement                                        | Recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others (Competency 5) |

| Systems-Based Practice                                                         | Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care (Competency 4) |

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start.
However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu. **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at accessibility@utrgv.edu.

**Learning & Assessment Activities:**

**Lectures:**

Lectures are provided during class time. They are used to convey critical information and background regarding the subject matter. They are intended as a supplement to the information already provided in the required textbook(s). Lectures are delivered utilizing student-centered techniques to promote active learning.

**Laboratory Experience:**

Laboratory experiences are designed to allow the student time to practice the practical application of the subject matter. Instruction during lab times is completely student-centered and interactive encouraging active learning. Students have the opportunity to work individually, in pairs and in group settings. Emphasis is placed on performance and practical application.

**Supplemental Modules:**

- Lesson 4.1: Genetics Modules (6)
- Lesson 10: Think Cultural Health Modules (3 Courses)
- Lesson 11: LGBT Modules (3)
- Lesson 12: Oral Health Modules (8)

**Written Examination(s):**

There are three written examinations for this course. The first examination is focused on Taking the Medical History. The second examination is focused on Taking Special Histories. The third examination is focused on Patient Education. Exams consist of multiple choice questions. Two minutes of time per question will be allotted on the examination. Please refer to the FYI Handbook for testing failure policies. Remediation and retesting is not offered for written examinations in this course.

**Practical Examination(s):**

There are two practical examinations for this course. The examinations consist of a live interview with a real, simulated patient in an outpatient type setting. Your lab instructor will grade the examination. Students are expected to dress appropriately and conduct the interview as if it were conducted in a real office setting. The grading forms/rubrics
used for the practical examination can be found on in this course. All students must pass each practical examination in order to pass the class. A passing score for the practical examination is an 80. Remediation and retesting is offered to students who fail either practical examination. Students who pass the practical examination on their second attempt will receive a maximum score of 80. Students failing to obtain a passing score on the second practical examination will receive an “F” for the entire course regardless of performance on all other coursework. A student may attempt either practical examination no more than two times. Students failing the practical examination will not be allowed to see patients in any clinical settings; therefore, affecting their progress in the physician assistant program.

Course Goals:

Taking a Medical History & Taking Special Histories

1. To be able to accept opportunities for feedback and be responsive to improve skills. Students should be able to effectively reflect upon and evaluate their own performance.
2. To be able to set the stage, make the connection, establish the relationship and create the context in which medical care is delivered.
3. To be able to reflect general organizational skills, empathy, and data gathering. These skills apply to all parts of the history and physical exam including HPI, PMH, FH, SH, and ROS.
4. To be able to gather information to create a thorough story of the patient's illness or problem.
5. To determine the appropriate questions to ask in obtaining relevant patient history data appropriate to the patient complaint in each of the assigned modules to include predisposition in genetic testing.
6. To be able to confirm with the patient that all business has been addressed, describes the next steps that will occur, verifies the patient's understanding of the follow-up plans, thanks the patient and closes the visit.

Patient Education

1. Identify pertinent components in the conduction of the patient education process.
2. Communicate to patient and others the pathophysiology of a selected disease process.
3. Explain to patient about the symptoms and progression of a selected disease process.
4. Discuss treatment options for a selected disease process.
5. Manage emotional reactions of patient to various disease states.
6. Identify types of and sources/resources for patient education materials.
7. Identify basic techniques of family counseling and how this intervention can be employed.
8. Identify the stages and emotional reactions associated with death and dying.
9. Provide support and information to the surviving family members of a patient who has expired.
10. Conduct a thorough patient education session.

**Mandatory Course Evaluation Period:**

Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account ([http://my.utrgv.edu](http://my.utrgv.edu)); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available:

- Oct 5 – Oct 12 for Module 1 courses
- Dec 1 – Dec 7 for Module 2 courses
- Nov 18 – Dec 8 for full fall semester courses

**Scholastic Integrity:**

As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence:**

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](http://www.utrgv.edu/equity), including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.