

SPECIAL TOPICS COURSES

Description

The Special Topics courses allow students the opportunity to perform scholarly investigation in pharmaceutical sciences or pharmaceutical care through individual or small group work under the direction and oversight of a faculty member. Generally, successful completion of a scholarly project is required for successful course completion.

Requirements for Special Topics Courses

As soon as possible:

1. **A student identifies and meets with a faculty mentor** for the Special Topics course to discuss expectations for the course.
2. A “letter of intent” must be signed by both student and faculty mentor indicating a plan to develop a course proposal and intent to work together for completion.
3. The student may not register for the course without the written approval of the Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

No later than the first week of the term:

1. The faculty mentor and the student must develop a proposal for the course using the attached format to submit to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee for approval. An example of a proposal for the Special Topics course can be found in Appendix 1.

Within one week prior to the end of the term:

1. A summary report must be submitted to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee prior to grade assignment for the course. This summary should support the grade that is recommended for the student for the course.
2. The summary report should include:
 - a. A scientific description of the results of the project, including the hypothesis/aim, methods, results and conclusions, where appropriate.
 - b. Examples of the work complete for the project, such as abstracts, posters, or other documents.
 - c. A student reflection of the achievement of the ability outcomes for the project.

Proposal for SPECIAL TOPICS Courses University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy

The mission of the curriculum is to prepare students to optimize pharmaceutical care at the level of a pharmacotherapy generalist. The curriculum prepares pharmacists, as health care providers, to work collaboratively with others to achieve effective use of medicines and other interventions to mitigate disease and maximize health and well-being of patients and of society as a whole. The curriculum fosters professionalism and civic involvement while encouraging advancement of the profession and the individual through life-long learning.

Special Topics and Special Topics 2, Pharm 5800 and 5803 (Spring Term)

Credit Hours: 1 – 3 hours

Professional Year P-3, Fall or Spring Terms

Course Description:

[Provide a brief description of the expectations for the course.]

Faculty Mentor(s), with Signature(s):

Student Candidate(s), with Signature(s):

Project Description:

[In 1 – 2 paragraphs, provide a description of the purpose of the project, hypotheses, methods to be used and outcomes. The student's role in the project must be clearly -described.

If the project is not identified until after the start of the term, the project description should be submitted to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee no later than the end of the first week of the term.]

Ability Outcomes of the Experience:

[Faculty and the student should identify and list specific ability outcomes that the student must demonstrate in order to successfully complete the course and relate the outcomes to the Curricular Outcomes of the School of Pharmacy.]

Assessment Methods:

[Faculty should identify the methods to be used for assessing the student's performance and the process for grade assignment. Assessment should be based on the ability outcomes identified for the course. Students must be assigned a letter grade upon completion of the course.]

Time budget:

[The time budget should be based on the credit allotment for the course, using the following guidelines:

1 credit course = 3 hours / week

2 credit course = 6 hours / week

3 credit course = 9 hours / week

The time budget can include any combination of direct contact hours with the faculty mentor and additional time for data collection, analysis, preparation and completion of the project.]

Appendix 1

Sample Proposal for SPECIAL TOPICS Courses University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy

The mission of the curriculum is to prepare students to optimize pharmaceutical care at the level of a pharmacotherapy generalist. The curriculum prepares pharmacists, as health care providers, to work collaboratively with others to achieve effective use of medicines and other interventions to mitigate disease and maximize health and well-being of patients and of society as a whole. The curriculum fosters professionalism and civic involvement while encouraging advancement of the profession and the individual through life-long learning.

Special Topics and Special Topics 2, Pharm 5800, 5803, Credit Hours 3 hours

Professional Year P-3, Spring or Fall Terms

Course Description:

The student has the opportunity to explore a pharmaceutical science or pharmaceutical care research topic in an individual or small group basis with the oversight of a faculty member. Generally, successful completion of a project is required.

Faculty Mentor with Signature:

Susan Skledar RPh, MPH

Student Candidate(s) with Signature:

(student name)

Course Grading

Students will be graded using a letter grade system. If students complete the required projects and assignments, are present for weekly and ad-hoc meetings, and are prepared for meetings, they will receive an "A" letter grade. If the student does not complete the assignments, fails to report for weekly/ad-hoc meetings, or is not consistently prepared for meetings, they will receive an "F" letter grade.

Project Description

**University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Presbyterian
Drug Use and Disease State Management Program**

Background

This special topics course provides the student with advanced knowledge and skills related to design, implementation, and evaluation of clinical practice guidelines related to drug therapy, patient safety and/or management of disease states in the hospital setting. The student will take part in interdisciplinary

practice guideline design, focusing on implementation in the health care setting. The implementation of the guideline, including design of practitioner educational materials and data collection tools, attending formal presentations of the guideline at the hospital Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee and its subcommittees, analysis of pharmacy process and inventory issues related to practice change, healthcare team member teaching (inservices, etc), will be the responsibility of the student, under the direction of the faculty preceptor. The student will interact with the DUDSM pharmacy team as well, which is comprised of additional faculty, hospital-based clinical pharmacists, student interns, and a quality data analyst pharmacy technician. Regarding guideline compliance evaluation, the student will design and carry out post-implementation patient monitoring processes, and time-permitting, collate the compliance data to evaluate the success of the guideline in improving patient safety. For this course experience, the project will be implementation of a patient safety proposal to ensure safe use of acetaminophen in the hospital setting.

In preparing implementation materials and processes, the student will research and review the literature related to safe use of acetaminophen, as well as review approaches by other institutions for ensuring safety. Systems management processes will be analyzed regarding current and needed inventory to make the process infrastructure support this guideline change.

Progress and literature discussions will take place weekly with the primary faculty mentor. After discussion on each topic, the student will research the next step of the project timeline and/or revise submitted project materials.

Estimated Time Budget:

One to two hours per week will be spent researching, reading, and preparing education/implementation tools each week, with an additional one to two hours per week in discussions with the faculty mentor. Additionally, 1-3 hours per week will be required by the student to attend UPMC interdisciplinary committee presentations/discussions of the practice guideline.

Ability Outcomes of the Experience

Following completion of this semester, student should be able to:

- 1) Research and evaluate current literature related to acetaminophen overdose and acute liver failure.
 - a. **General Outcome 1: Critical Thinking**
 - b. **Practice Outcome 4: Pharmacodynamic decision making**
- 2) Use critical thinking skills to troubleshoot sources of potential error that may occur when implementing a hospital formulary change.
 - a. **General Outcome 1: Critical Thinking**
 - b. **Practice Outcome 6: Management**
- 3) Develop written education materials concerning formulary change for hospital pharmacy staff. Student will also help to organize nursing inservices and physician continuing medical education as necessary
 - a. **General Outcome 3: Communication Skills (Oral and Written)**
 - b. **General Outcome 5: Social Interaction, Citizenship, Leadership, Professionalism**
 - c. **Practice Outcome 6: Management**
- 4) Demonstrate communication skills through verbal and written interactions with various health care professionals while implementing changes in hospital formulary.
 - a. **General Outcome 3: Communication Skills (Oral and Written)**
 - b. **General Outcome 5: Social Interaction, Citizenship, Leadership, Professionalism**

- 5) Gain familiarity with writing hospital drug use policy.
 - a. **General Outcome 3: Communication Skills (Oral and Written)**
- 6) Conduct retrospective and concurrent chart reviews to evaluate effectiveness of formulary change, and will respect patient confidentiality while doing so. Student will intervene on patient charts when necessary.
 - a. **General Outcome 1: Critical Thinking**
 - b. **General Outcome 4: Professional Responsibility and Ethics**
- 7) Evaluate product equivalence by doing conversion calculations.
 - a. **Practice Outcome 5: Pharmaceutical Product Preparation, Dispensing and Administering**
 - b. **Practice Outcome 2: Pharmaceutical Care Plan Development**
- 8) Design an analgesic regimen that prevents or resolves a drug-related problem (acetaminophen overdose).
 - a. **Practice Outcome 2: Pharmaceutical Care Plan Development**
 - b. **General Outcome 4: Professional Responsibility and Ethics**