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Boot camp for UM medical students help them prep for residency

Fourth-year medical students at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine will be better prepared to enter residency thanks to the experience they will gain from the new Senior Residency Preparation Course – part of the NextGenMD curriculum

May 19, 2022 – The boot camp was initially launched in 2015 as a two-week elective for a pilot group of eight students, to ready them for residency training. Since then, word of mouth

has spread about the value of the boot camp, with the result that the 2022 cohort of 50 students was the largest to date.



Front row from left, Paul Mendez, M.D., Gauri Agarwal, M.D., and Alecia Stein, M.D. with the 2022 cohort of the Senior Residency Preparation Boot Camp.

In 2023, the boot camp will become a four-week required course for all graduating medical students, and will include specialty components such as emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics-gynecology, and pediatrics. The course will be directed by Gauri Agarwal, M.D., associate dean of curriculum; Alecia Stein, M.D., director of simulation education; and Paul Mendez, M.D., director of clinical skills. Faculty members from the Departments of Medicine, Anesthesiology, Radiology, and Medical Education, and the Division of Emergency Medicine, will also contribute to the lessons in a voluntary role.

“The goal is to provide students greater confidence in beginning their internship year by preparing [them] to communicate effectively in challenging scenarios with standardized patients, to handle acute emergencies using high-fidelity simulations at the Gordon Center, to prepare for the

professionalism required of residency training, and to consolidate the knowledge gained over four years of medical school,” Dr. Agarwal said.

Students taking the course can expect an interactive experience, performing simulations, procedure labs, and standardized patient sessions in “real” scenarios that they will encounter in residency.

A favorite of the students has been emergency scenarios in which they are the first person in the room and must make an assessment and begin initial management, exercising a greater and unaccustomed level of independence. They also practice communication scenarios they may never have encountered, such as significant medical errors or informing a family member of a patient’s death.

“I had been waiting for an experience like this throughout medical school,” said Daniel Beckerman, a fourth-year student. “To be challenged with working effectively as a team to navigate common yet extremely consequential scenarios is important. I am glad the Miller School is leveraging the resources available to them through the Gordon Center to improve the way medical education is delivered, and hope they find more ways to integrate this type of learning into the new curriculum.”

The Department of Medical Education has been taking notes throughout the boot camps, with an eye to the course’s launch in 2023. Many of the popular boot camp lessons will remain as part of the course curriculum, while coverage will broaden to encompass other needed areas and give students the best experience.

“We will have the time to create specialty paths within the course so students specializing in certain areas can add those skill sets,” Dr. Agarwal said. “We also hope to add an interprofessional piece that existed before the pandemic,

training with fellow nursing and physical therapy students.

“The ultimate goal of the NextGenMD curriculum is to create transformational leaders in medicine, but the most immediate goal at graduation is ensuring that our students take outstanding care of their patients in residency and are prepared well for that transition to more independent practice.”

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