

Enrichment Elective: Homelessness, Addiction, and How to Better Care for Patients (ELEC 5041)

Updated information as of January 2011

Faculty: Richard P. Usatine, MD

Assistant Director of Humanities, Center for Medical Humanities and Ethics

Goals and Objectives:

1. To increase awareness about homelessness, and how it relates to healthcare
2. To increase awareness about addiction, and how it relates to healthcare
3. To prepare first and second year students for working at Student Run Clinics
4. To encourage student teaching within all 4 years of medical school

Available to: MS1 and MS2

Course Description:

This longitudinal elective spans the whole academic year. This course is for MS1 and MS2 students with a special interest in learning about issues of homelessness and addiction, and how these relate to the provision of healthcare to underserved and vulnerable populations. MS4 students in the Humanism fellowship work with the students in the clinics and you will have the opportunity to work on projects with the MS4 students. Completion results in this course being listed on your transcript

Seminar topics: *(subject to change)*

Seminar 1: Introduction to the Course, Discussion of course objectives and discussion of homelessness (how people become homeless and how this affects their health).

What illnesses are most common among the homeless population? How can we provide the best care for a homeless patient?

Seminar 2: Homelessness – Guest speakers include the director of the SAMMinistries Living and Learning Center and one parent who is living there with her family.

Seminar 3: Addiction - Guest speaker – CEO of Alpha Home

Seminar 4: The Homeless & Addicts – How social stigmas affect the care for this population.

Seminar 5: Health Care Policy – How can we change our health care system to better care for homeless persons and families and patients with substance dependence?

Seminar 6: Field trip to Haven for Hope and Restoration Center—new comprehensive facility for homeless persons in San Antonio

Expectations for Students:

1. Must volunteer 6 times in our clinics over the year (with priority sign up-‘Enrichment’)
2. Must attend 4 of 6 seminars covering homelessness, addiction, and teen pregnancy
3. Participation in group discussions
4. Each student must volunteer once per semester at each of the following clinics: Alpha Home, SAMMinistries, and Haven for Hope.