Program for the History of Medicine, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

Course Title: History of Pathology

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Course Description:

One of the most important principles for the practice of medicine is understanding the basis and nature of disease, the object of the medical specialty of Pathology. This course will review the evolution of the discipline, including many of those physicians and scientists who contributed to its development. We will specifically emphasize the importance of the discipline for the development of medical science, with consideration of the changing definitions of health and disease, the relationship between the clinic and the laboratory, as well as the influence of technologic advances more generally. The course will conclude with a discussion of the future of Pathology.

Learning outcomes:

1. Understand the evolution of Pathology as a distinct specialty along with its subspecialties.
2. Appreciate the changes in technology that led to the creation of modern Pathology.
3. Apply the lessons learned to understand the current state of Pathology in society and to anticipate its future.

General references:


Course Topics and Schedule

Week 1. In the Beginning There was Disease; Antiquity to the Renaissance
Readings: Selections from the Bible, Hippocrates, Galen and Avicenna

Week 2. The Renaissance Lights the Way; Setting the Foundations of Modern Medicine
Readings: Selections from early modern anatomical works, Fracastoro, Morgagni, and Geller

Week 3. Technology and Medical Revolution; The Microscope and Printing Technology
Readings: Selections from Leeuwenhoek, Hooke, Lister, Hodgkin, and Bertoloni Meli

Week 4. The Nineteenth Century and Evolution of a Modern Specialty
Readings: Selections from Bernard, Rokitansky, Virchow, Pasteur and Koch

Week 5. The Twentieth Century; A Peak and the Developing Nadir. (SG)
Readings: tbd

Week 6. Factors Determining the Future; Medical, Scientific, Societal, Legislative and Economic:
Readings: tbd