

Enriching Medical Student Learning Experiences

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Background and Purpose

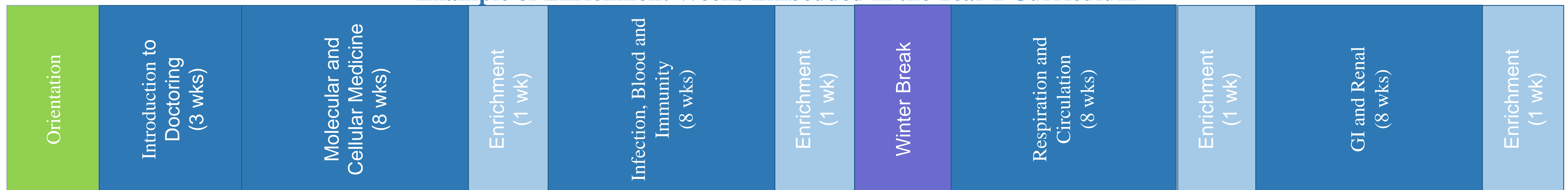
Students must develop skills in assessing their learning needs and strategies to meet those needs. Curricula should provide active and enriching ways to explore medicine beyond the classroom. The program should enhance the elements of motivation, discovery, innovation, social services, cultural exploration, and personal development.

Curricular Methods

The University of Kansas School of Medicine instituted a new curriculum in 2017 called ACE (Active, Competency-based, and Excellence-driven).

- Eight one-week courses of enrichment experiences are embedded within the first two years of the curriculum.
- Students are required to participate in a one-week, non-graded enrichment experience according to their own learning needs and interests.
- Students choose the enrichment activities from clinical experiences, professional or leadership development, research/scholarly activity, and community engagement.
- Enrichment activities on each campus, other than research, are selected by lottery according to each student's priorities.

Example of Enrichment Weeks Embedded in the Year 1 Curriculum



Results

196 enrichment activities across three campuses were developed for 211 students in each class. Most students selected clinical experiences with enrichments available in most medical specialties and sub-specialties. Students also used enrichment weeks to conduct research/scholarly activity, particularly those pursuing the Honors Track. A total of 2071 enrichment experiences were completed in the first two years of the new curriculum. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive as students engage in activities specific to their own interests. The Honors program has thrived, in part, because of the dedicated curricular time during enrichment weeks to work on scholarly activities.

The number of enrichment activities available on each campus by type.

Enrichment Type	Kansas City	Wichita	Salina
Clinical Experiences	82	56	6
Professional Development	13	6	7
Leadership Development	2	3	0
Research and Scholarly Activity	3	5	2
Community Engagement	4	6	1

The number of enrichment activities completed on each campus.

Enrichment Type	Kansas City	Wichita	Salina
Clinical Experiences	1008	239	11
Professional Development	182	49	40
Leadership Development	15	2	0
Research and Scholarly Activity	405	14	3
Community Engagement	85	11	7

Conclusions

- Based on the popularity of enrichment weeks among students and faculty, they will be maintained as part of the required curriculum. They provide a novel method to engage medical students and motivate their individual interests.
- Students like the experiences early in the curriculum as a change of pace from the rigorous academic studies and appreciate the broader view of what medical practice will be for them in the future.
- Flexibility is required to administer the program as it is difficult to provide so many different experiences to 211 students in each of the M1 and M2 classes during each enrichment week. The enrichment lottery is conducted weeks in advance and changes in faculty and sponsoring agency schedules occur frequently.

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