

COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine

Introduction to Osteopathic Medicine

As a philosophy, science and art, osteopathic medicine is a total approach to health and disease. It recognizes that the neuromusculoskeletal system is of major importance to human life. The interrelationship between this and other body-systems is a basic part of osteopathic philosophy. An emphasis on primary care, health maintenance, prevention of disease and attention to the neuromusculoskeletal system is key to osteopathic medical education and practice. Universally accepted today, these attributes were considered unorthodox when Dr. Andrew Taylor Still (1828-1917) objected to the crude medications of his time and sought to enhance the body's inherent healing through manipulation.

The osteopathic physician incorporates evaluation and treatment of the musculoskeletal system as a basis for an approach to health and disease, combining it with the diagnostic and therapeutic modalities used by general scientific approaches to the healing arts. Like their MD counterparts, DOs must be licensed in the states where they practice, and additional board certification in specialties further underscores their professional credentials. All 50 states and the District of Columbia provide for the unlimited practice of medicine and surgery by osteopathic physicians. Licensing boards are usually composed of senior members of the osteopathic profession. In some states, MDs and DOs participate in combined licensing boards.

THE OSTEOPATHIC PHILOSOPHY

This philosophy provides the osteopathic physician with a unique way of looking at health and disease. These premises include the following:

- The human body is a unit in which structure and function are reciprocally interdependent.
- The body, through a complex system, tends to be self-regulating and self-healing.
- The adequate function of body systems depends on the unimpeded flow of blood and nerve impulses.
- The musculoskeletal system is a major body system, and its importance exceeds that of mere framework and support.
- There are musculoskeletal components to disease that are not only manifestations of the disease, but also important contributing and maintaining factors.

The adoption of these basic premises led to the development of the osteopathic total-body concept. The patient is considered as part of their relationship to their psycho-, social, economic, and physical environment rather than as an isolated unit. Instead of emphasizing the momentary disease state, the osteopathic approach studies and treats the person's well-being, lifestyle and behavior as a whole.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The program leading to the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree is guided by the following goals for the purpose of providing a

comprehensive and contemporary curriculum to educate health professionals to care for the whole person, advance the health of diverse communities and participate in the ever-changing environment. The curriculum seeks to:

- Integrate and appropriately sequence basic and clinical science material
- Present major themes in biomedicine
- Integrate early clinical experiences and case studies, and emphasize problem-solving to increase the application of knowledge-based issues to issues of patient care
- Utilize methods in information technology and informatics
- Participate in inter-professional education activities.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Each candidate for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine must:

- Maintain established standards of personal and professional conduct
- Successfully fulfill all academic and clinical requirements
- Pass COMLEX Level 1, Level 2 CE (National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners).

All requirements must be completed within six years from the first date of matriculation.

Each graduate must be free of indebtedness to the College. Those students who have received financial aid are required to complete the exit interview on-line process at least one week prior to commencement. The College academic transcript will be given when all financial obligations to PCOM and the exit interview have been met

Note: It is the responsibility of the graduate to fulfill the requirements for practice for the state licensing board in the state in which he or she chooses to practice. These requirements vary widely and are regulated by the laws of each state. It is the responsibility of the graduate to get the information needed pertaining to state licensing and to fulfill these responsibilities.