

Elective Counseling

Immersion Phase Introduction for Class of 2027

Phase Directors

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School of Medicine

Elective Counseling Resources

<https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/md-gateway/elective-counseling-overview/>

MD Gateway

Elective Counseling Overview

Immersion Phase Elective Counseling Overview

Immersion Phase Elective Counseling is a joint effort between Medical Student Affairs, Careers in Medicine, the Immersion Phase Team, College Mentors, and the Faculty Specialty Advisors designed to support students in planning and managing their Immersion Phase schedules to ensure timely achievement of graduation requirements and preparation for post-graduation plans.

In need of individual elective counseling? Please [let us know](#) so we can schedule a one-on-one session with you!

Elective Counseling

Elective Counseling:
Immersion Phase
Requirements

Elective Counseling:
Documents

Elective Counseling:
Presentations

Elective Counseling Overview



School of Medicine

Session Goals

- Describe the overarching goals and course types in the Immersion Phase
- Discuss Immersion Phase curricular requirements, including FHD, Inquiry, and LC
- Discuss the upcoming registration timeline and provide counseling on your elective choices



Curriculum 2.0: Immersion Phase

A highly individualized post-clerkship phase that uses clinical context to build upon prior learning

Advanced Clinical Experiences

rigorous clinical rotations



Integrated Science Courses

mixed didactic and clinical experiences



Acting Internships

supervised intern-level responsibilities



Research

mentored research project

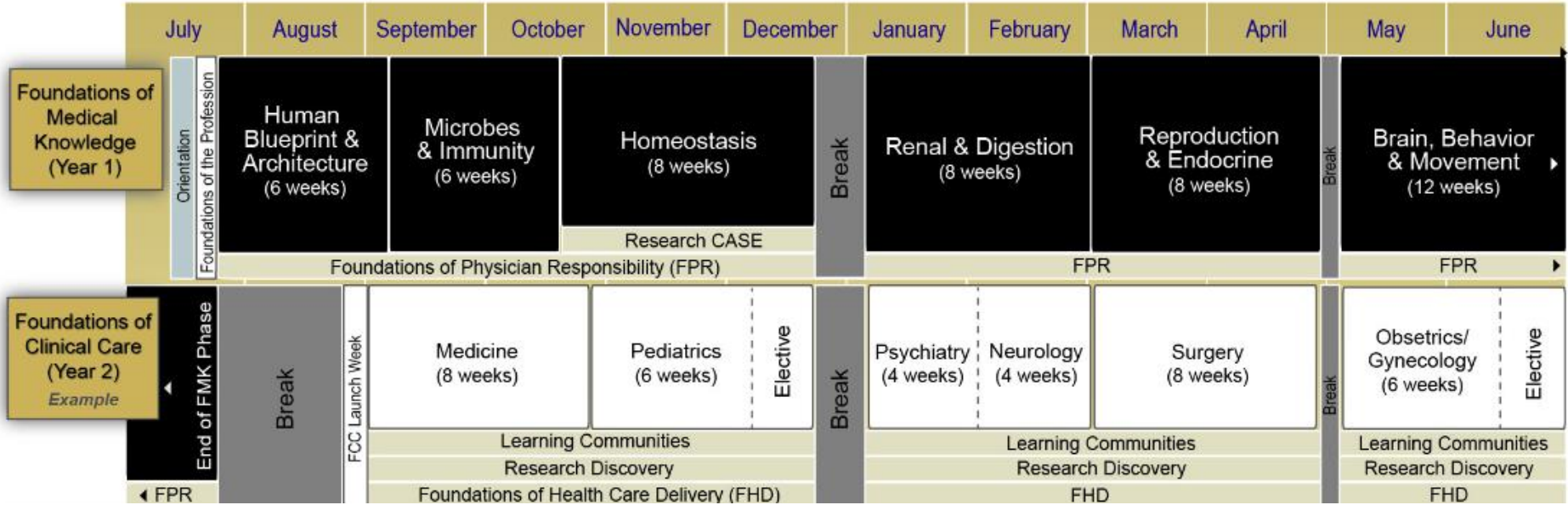


IMMERSION PHASE GOALS

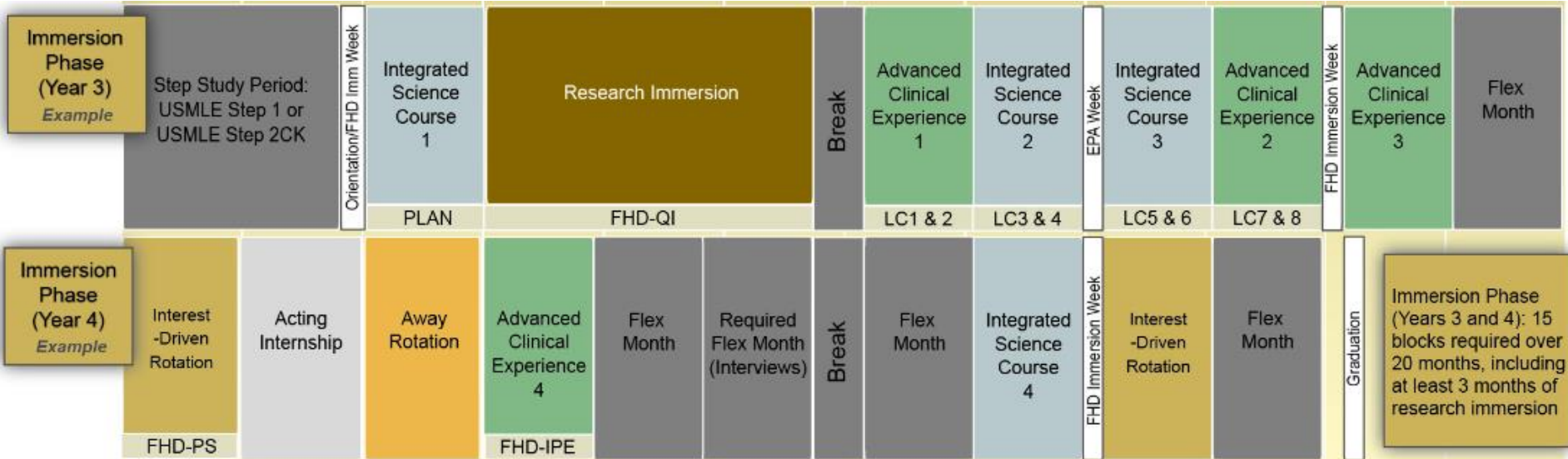
- Deepen **FOUNDATIONAL SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE** during meaningful clinical engagement
- Solidify **CLINICAL SKILLS**
- Enhance **PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING SKILLS**
- Ensure readiness for **INTERN ROLE/RESIDENCY**
- Expand knowledge and skills regarding **SCHOLARSHIP**
- Further grow knowledge and skills regarding **LEADERSHIP**
- Encourage **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

VUSM Curriculum 2.0

Vanderbilt University School of Medicine Curriculum Schematic



VUSM Curriculum 2.0



Immersion Weeks are Mandatory

Year 3:

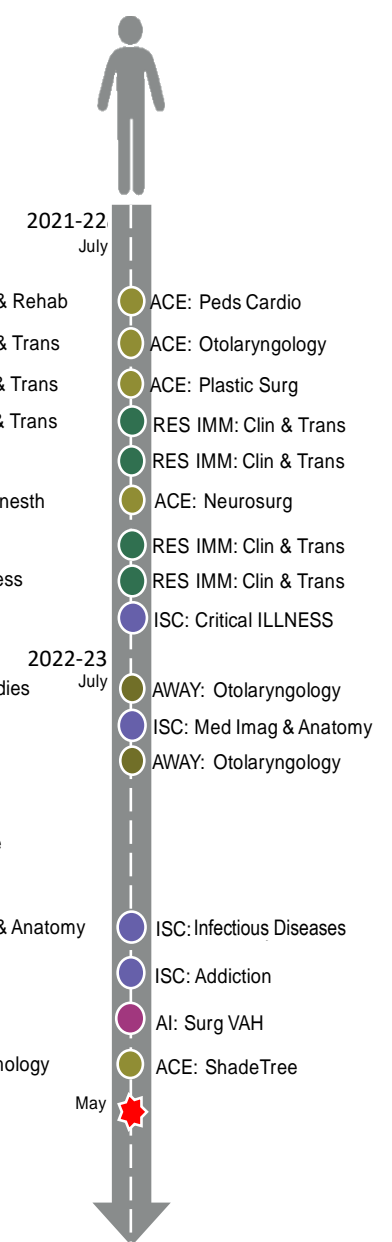
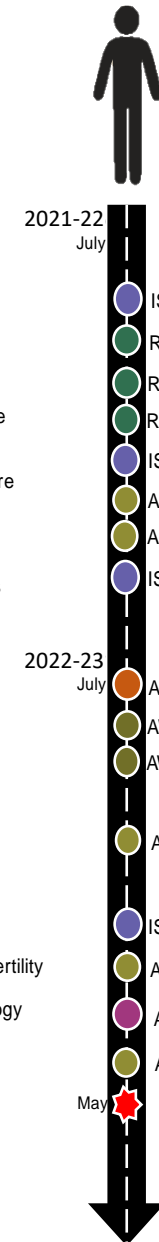
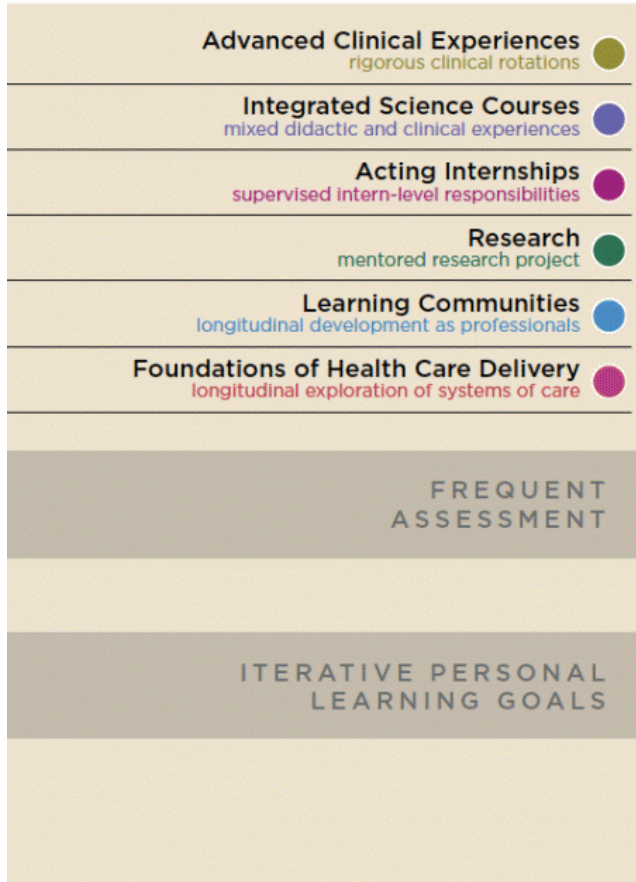
Aug. 25-29, 2025 — Immersion Orientation (Monday), FHD (Tue-Fri)

Mar. 2-6, 2026 — Intro to Core EPAs

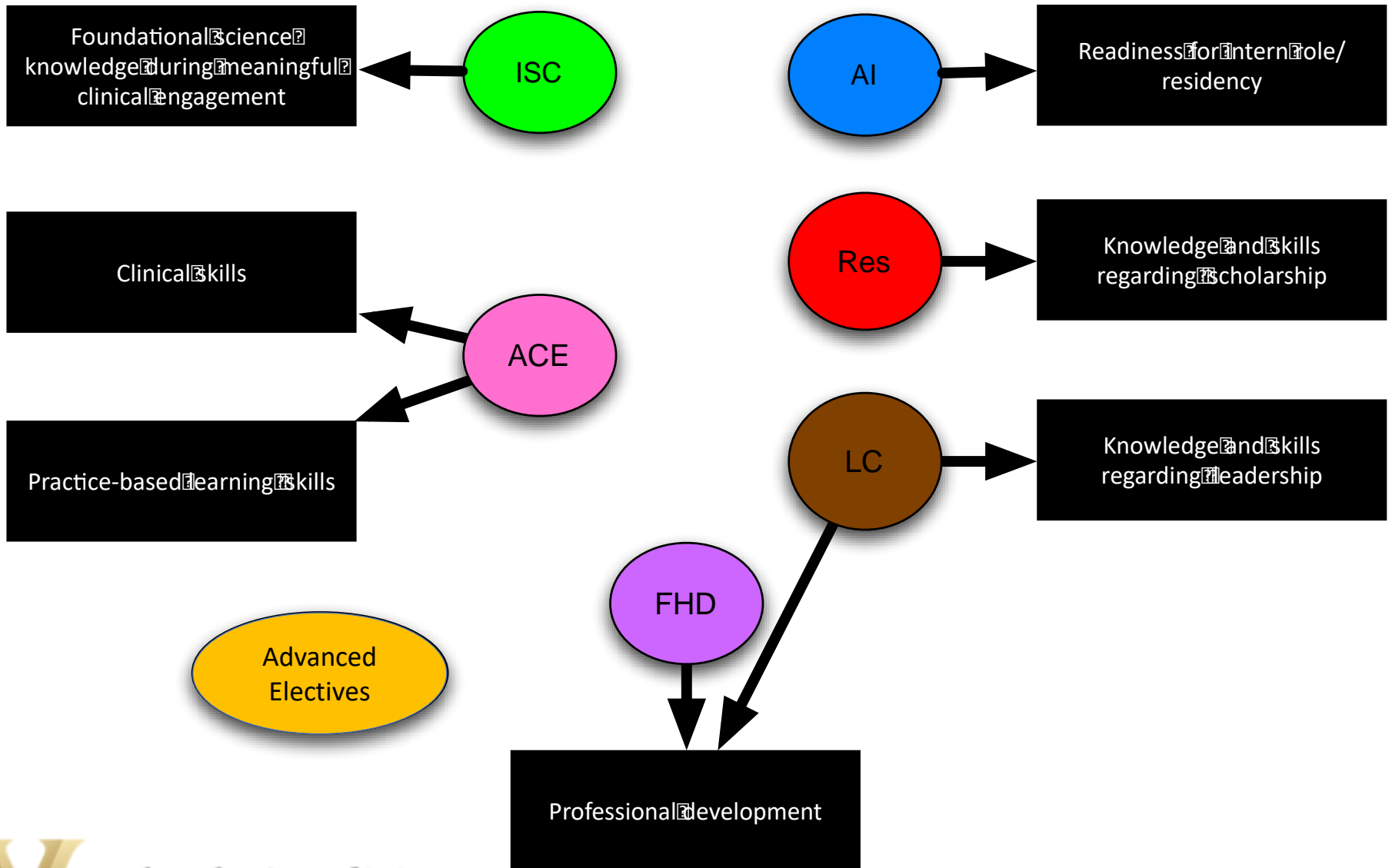
May 4-8, 2026 — FHD: AC2 and IPE1

Do not submit abstracts to meetings/conferences that occur during mandatory Immersion Weeks

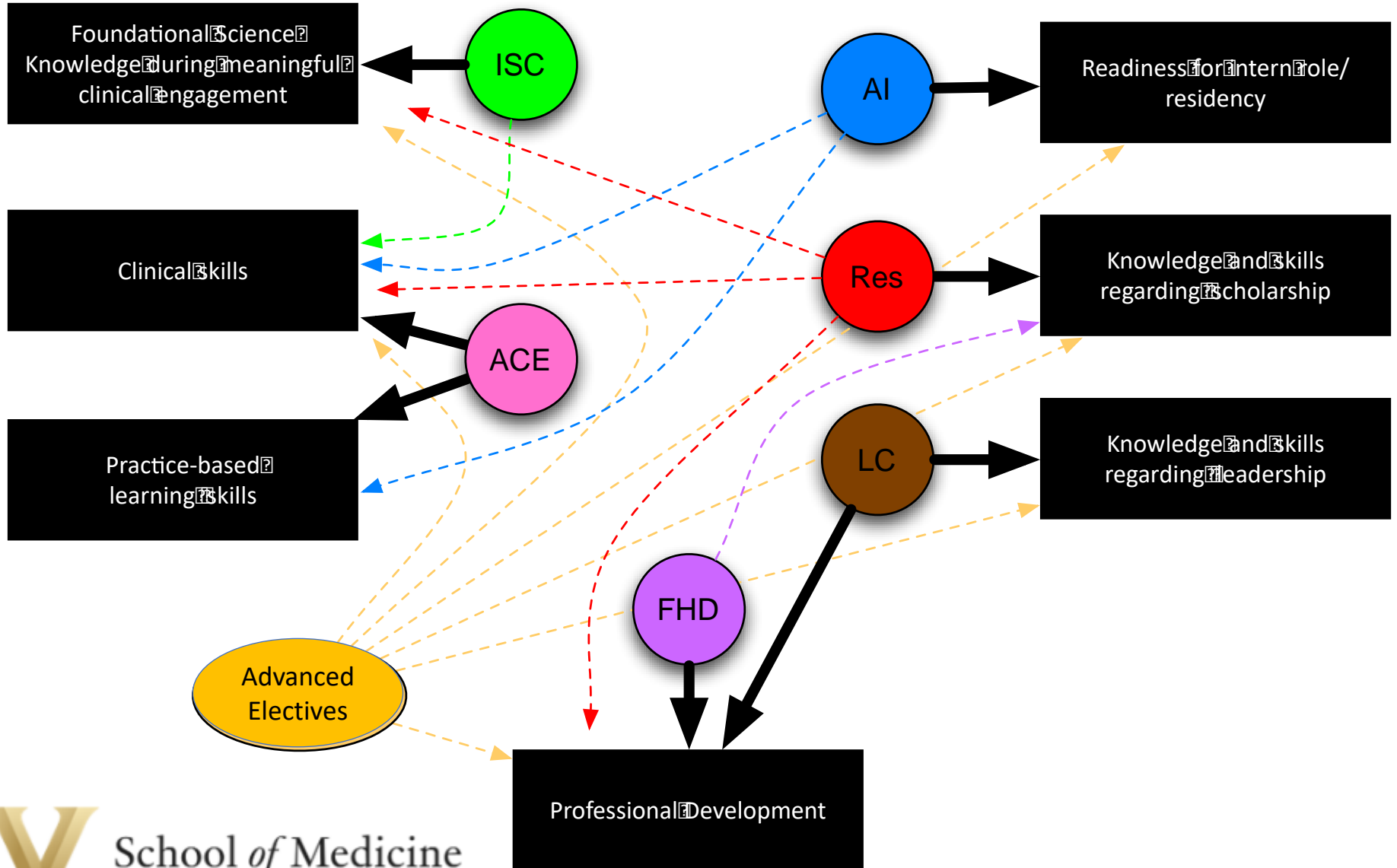
Individualization



Courses Designed to Meet Phase Goals



Courses Designed to Meet Phase Goals



C 2.0 Immersion Phase: Course Types

ACE: Advanced Clinical Experience

- Rigorous clinical experience

ISC: Integrated Science Course

- Didactic and clinical experiences

AI: Acting Internship

- Supervised intern-level responsibilities

AE: Advanced Elective

- Competency- or interest-driven
- Usually non-clinical setting

Special Studies

- Competency- or interest-driven rotation
- Tailored course
- NOT in the catalog



C 2.0 Immersion Phase Requirements (traditional)

Minimum C2.0 Requirements (in Months)		
On-Campus	4	Integrated Science Courses (ISCs)
	1	Acting Internship (AI)
	4	Advanced Clinical Electives (ACEs)
On-Campus or Away (away with approval*)	3	Research Immersion
	3	Competency and Interest-Driven Rotations [#] (can be ISCs, ACEs, AIs or AEs)
15 required months		Must include: 1 Primary Care course 1 Acute Care course (EM or ICU-based course)
7 Flex months		2 months for Step Study + 1 month for interviews + 4 flex months

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/catalogs/kuali/som-24-25.php#/content/6606d6835022a2001ce8b6c4>

ISC, ACE, and AI grading = H/HP/P/F

Students can register for up to 19 months

* No more than two clinical aways for graduation credit

[#]At least one must be clinical rotation

ACE Course Type Objectives

- Function as an effective member of the patient care team.
- Display professional duty while demonstrating compassion and respect for all persons.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the science for the ACE course specialty.
- Utilize effective communication strategies with patients, families, and healthcare colleagues, including the demonstration of sensitivity and responsiveness to persons of diverse identities.



ACE Course Type Objectives

- Model a sustainable approach to continuous self-regulated learning as evidenced by the collection, analysis, interpretation, and implementation of newly acquired information.
- Perform situation appropriate H&Ps and interpret clinical information to formulate a prioritized differential diagnoses that guides the creation of a patient-specific management plan.
- Exhibit clinical judgment that is safe and commensurate for the level of training.



Advanced Clinical Experiences (ACE)

- 4-week clinical rotations
- More than 70 ACEs available across multiple specialties
- Graded as H/HP/P/F



ISC Course Type Objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the foundational science for the ISC course topics.
- Function as an effective member of the patient care team.
- Utilize effective communication strategies with patients, families, and healthcare colleagues, including the demonstration of sensitivity and responsiveness to persons of diverse identities.



ISC Course Type Objectives

- Integrate foundational science knowledge into clinical scenarios through the exploration of patient evaluation (symptoms, diagnostic studies, and underlying pathophysiology) and management plan development.
- Model a commitment to continuous self-regulated learning as evidenced by the collection, analysis, interpretation, and implementation of newly acquired information.
- Display professional duty while demonstrating compassion and respect for all persons.



Integrated Science Courses (ISC)



- 4-week rotation designed to reinforce and advance the foundational sciences* underlying clinical medicine
- Innovative mix of didactic and clinical activities with multiple learning activities (CELA, CBL, TBL, lectures, conferences, community clinics, etc.)
- Graded as H/HP/P/F

**traditional pre-clerkship sciences as well as social and behavioral sciences, health services and population science, systems science, quantitative methods and informatics.*

Integrated Science Courses

- 1) Cardiovascular Diseases
- 2) Clinical Cancer Medicine
- 3) Clinical Informatics
- 4) Community Health
- 5) Critical Illness
- 6) Diabetes Mellitus
- 7) Disability Competent Care
- 8) Emergency Care
- 9) Global Health
- 10) Healthy Aging and Quality Dying
- 11) High-Value Care
- 12) How Doctors Think
- 13) Infectious Diseases
- 14) Injury, Repair, and Rehabilitation
- 15) LGBTQ+ Health
- 16) Medical Imaging and Anatomy
- 17) A National Crisis: Opioids, Pain, Addiction and Policy
- 18) Sexual Medicine and Reproduction
- 19) The Skinny on Obesity



Registering for ISCs

- Plan to register for at least 2 and no more than 3 during initial registration
- ~50% of total spots are held for your cohort
- ISC spots are not held 50/50 in each month, but over the full year
 - Example: VMS4s cannot take April ISCs so all spots open for VUMS3s



AI Course Type Objectives

- Utilize effective communication strategies with patients, families, and healthcare colleagues, including the demonstration of sensitivity and responsiveness to persons of diverse identities.
- Exhibit clinical judgment that is safe and commensurate with an intern level of training.
- Communicate effectively with the health-care team, both verbally and in written form using efficient, safety-oriented practices during (a) Care of the student's primary patients, (b) Cross-cover patients, (c) Handovers of cared, and (d) Discussing and entering patient orders.



AI Course Type Objectives

- Model a commitment to continuous self-regulated learning as evidenced by the collection, analysis, interpretation, and implementation of newly acquired information.
- Provide patient care in setting more consistent with intern-level responsibility, specifically including the following: (a) Managing a larger patient care census more consistent with an intern-level group of patients including patient documentation and (b) Under appropriate supervision, demonstrating safe and effective cross-cover of patients not routinely cared for by the student. Practicing evidence-based patient management that reflects individual patient, medical center, and overall health care system cost considerations.



AI Course Type Objectives

- Function as an effective member of the patient care team.
- Display professional duty while demonstrating compassion and respect for all persons.
- Perform situation-appropriate (problem-focused or complete) history and physical examinations, and interpret clinical information to formulate a prioritized differential diagnosis that guides the creation of a patient-specific management plan.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the science for the AI specialty.



Acting Internships (AI)

- A 4-week intensive, inpatient experience designed to provide supervised intern-level responsibilities.
- All time devoted to the AI
 - No holidays
 - No longitudinal courses (No PLAN, FHD, or LC)
- Graded as H/HP/P/F



Acting Internship Timeline

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
Year 3	Step Study					AI Fair	AI Survey & Assignment		AIs Available			
Year 4	AIs Available					Fixed Flex Month for Interviews		AIs available for students who don't need prior to residency applications			Graduation	

Date	Event
Early January	AI preference survey to VMS3s and MSTPs
Mid January	AI preference survey closes
Early February	VMS3s/MSTPs notified of initial assigned AI
Late February	Enrollment visible in YES for current AY
Late April	Self-add/drop for next AY AIs opens



Acting Internships (AI)

- If you need to complete an AI before residency applications: AIs offered March to September
- If you DO NOT need to complete an AI before residency applications: AIs February and March of Y4
- **Initial AI enrollment is NOT through YES.**
 - In November/December, we will have an AI Counseling Session to learn about the options and the process for enrollment.



Advanced Electives (AE)

- 4-week courses that are typically classroom-based (i.e., most do not count for clinical credit; check the course catalog)
- These courses meet the competency- and interest-driven requirement
- Graded as Pass/Fail

AE: Career Exploration

AE: Ecology and Health

AE: Ethics in Health Care

AE: Global Health

AE: Housing and Health

AE: Med School 101

AE: Narrative Medicine

AE: Preparation for Surgical Internship

AE: Students as Teachers (registration is off-cycle and will occur in winter of 2025)

AE: Transition to Residency and Internship

AE: WikiMed

Special Studies

- Courses that are uniquely designed by the student in collaboration with Vanderbilt faculty AND not in the current course catalog
- To receive credit, course must be:
 - Requested at least 28-days in advance
 - 4-weeks long (128 hours minimum)
 - Have learning objectives with multiple assessment modalities
- Fulfills a competency/interest-driven requirement



Special Studies

- Graded as Pass/Fail
 - Exception—7100 AWAY Clinical Rotations may be graded as H/HP/P/F
- Enrollment will explain the process for petition and review at orientation in August

Form #	Course
Form 6100	Petition for Clinical Special Study (at VUSM)
Form 6200	Petition for Non-Clinical Special Study
Form 6150	Petition for Research Special Study (at VUSM)
Form 7100	Petition for Clinical Rotation (Away)
Form 7150	Petition for Research Special Study (Away)



C 2.0 Immersion Phase Requirements (traditional)

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[#]At least one must be clinical rotation

Foundations of Health Care Delivery (FHD)

Immersion Phase



School *of* Medicine

FHD Immersion Phase

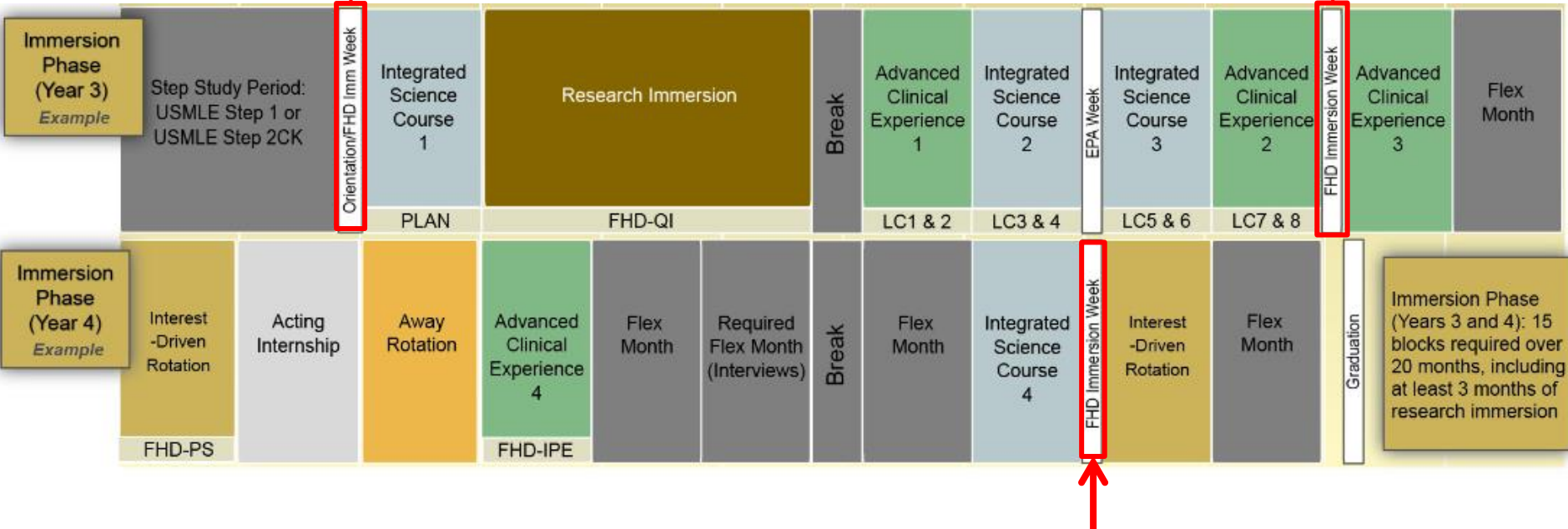
- 3 separate Immersion weeks between blocks
 - Auto-enrolled
 - August of Y3, May of Y3, March of Y4
- 5 individual courses to self-enroll during the phase
 - Quality Improvement 1, 2 & 3 taken in order
 - Interprofessional Education 2
 - Patient Safety



FHD Immersion Weeks

August Y3: Advanced Communications 1 & Public Health and Prevention
(Intro to Immersion Phase week)

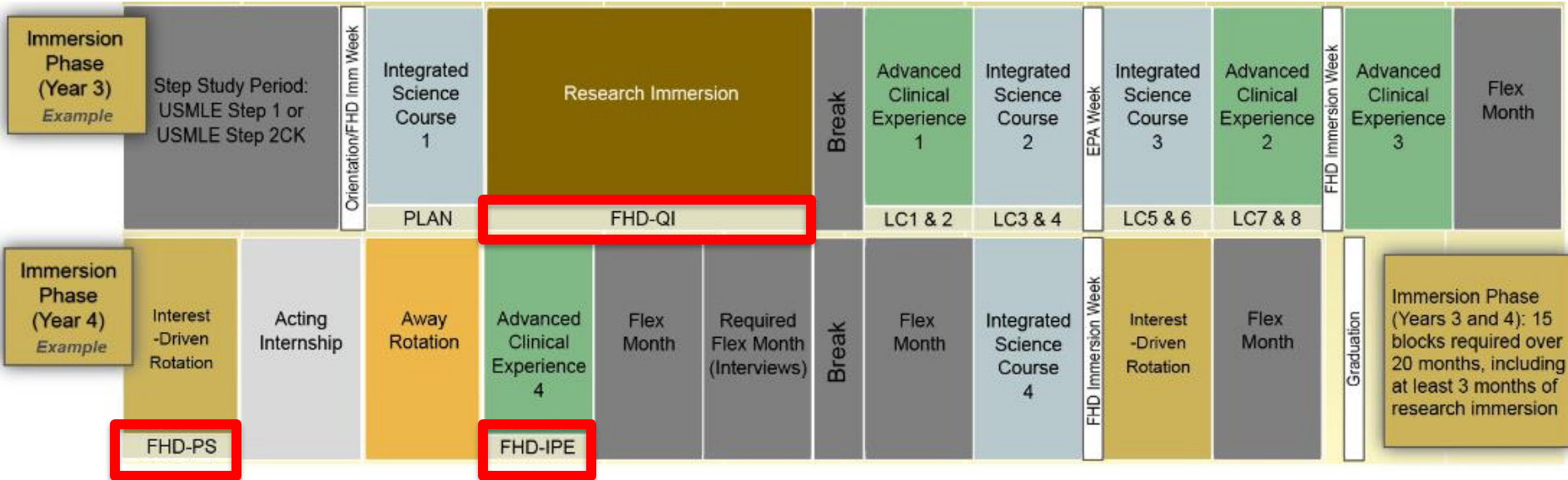
May Y3: Advanced Communications 2 and Interprofessional Education 1
(3rd year spring FHD Immersion)



FHD Immersions are required – you will be auto-registered

March Y4: Health Care Policy and Economics
(4th year winter FHD Immersion)

FHD: Self-Enroll Courses



QI 1-3 & PS longitudinally during phase
IPE2 fulfilled either via one month longitudinal or other approved experience (e.g., Nicaragua, Shade Tree elective, VPIL, or other approved interprofessional experience)

Self-enrolled courses

- QI 1-3 must be taken in order
 - **Must complete QI 3 by October of 4th year**
- Can be scheduled with other courses, but not away rotations, Acting Internship, or PLAN
- Required meetings at least once for each course on Tuesdays (some in CELA, some virtual)
- Only one FHD course per month



FHD Immersion Course Offerings

AY 25-26 Immersion Phase

If enrolled in FHD course, FHD: Immersion Phase course time is Tuesday afternoons, 1-5p

Course	Course #	Face-to-Face Sessions	Section											
			07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	05	06
IPE2	5722	4th Tuesday 1-5p		X			X	X					X	
Q11	5751	1st Tuesday 1-2p	X					X						
Q12	5752	1st Tuesday 2-3p	X					X						
Q13	5753	4th Tuesday from 1-3p	X					X						
PS	5714	1st & 4th Tuesdays 3-4p	X					X						

Course Offered
Course Not Offered

FHD Immersion Course Information

<https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/md-gateway/academic-resources/#fhd>

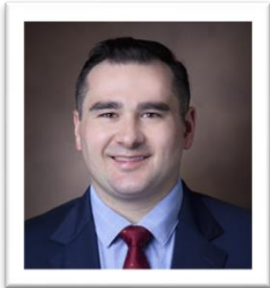
Lots of additional information on our website:

- Immersion course prerequisites and pairing suggestions
- Dual degree equivalencies for MBA/MPH students
- Links to all syllabi
- Wiki of QI projects
- Course policy details (add/drop, group work, etc.)



Block Directors

Public Health & Advanced Communication



Michael McCann, MD
Assistant Professor of
Emergency Medicine



Brittany McCann, MD
Assistant Professor of
Anesthesiology & Critical
Care

Interprofessional Education 1

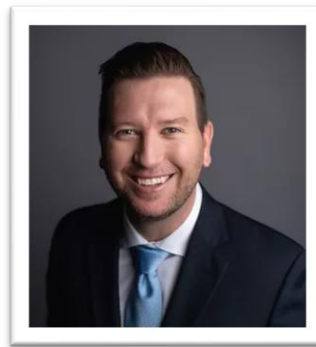


Jennifer Hunt, DNP, RN, CNE
Assistant Professor of Nursing
Vanderbilt School of Nursing



Natalie McCall, MD
Assistant Professor of
Medicine

Quality Improvement and Patient Safety



Brian Bales, MD, DTMH
Assistant Professor of
Emergency Medicine



Martha Presley, JD, MD
Assistant Professor of
Clinical Medicine



Block Directors

Advanced Communication 2



Tom Doub, PhD

Assistant Professor of
Pediatrics



William Cooper, MD MPH

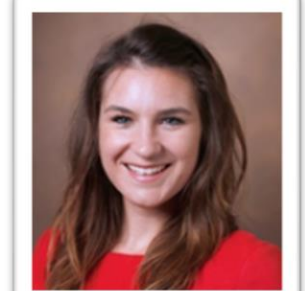
Professor of Pediatrics &
Health Policy

Interprofessional Education 2



Jennifer Hunt, DNP, RN, CNE

Assistant Professor of Nursing
Vanderbilt School of Nursing



Natalie McCall, MD

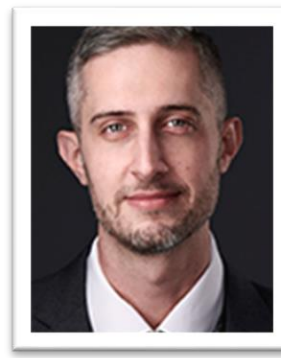
Assistant Professor of
Medicine

Health Policy & Economics



John Graves, PhD

Associate Professor
Health Policy



Kevin Griffith, PhD

Assistant Professor
Health Policy



School of Medicine

Administrative Staff



Program Manager
Jared Austin



Program Coordinator
Laura Leigh Pettaway

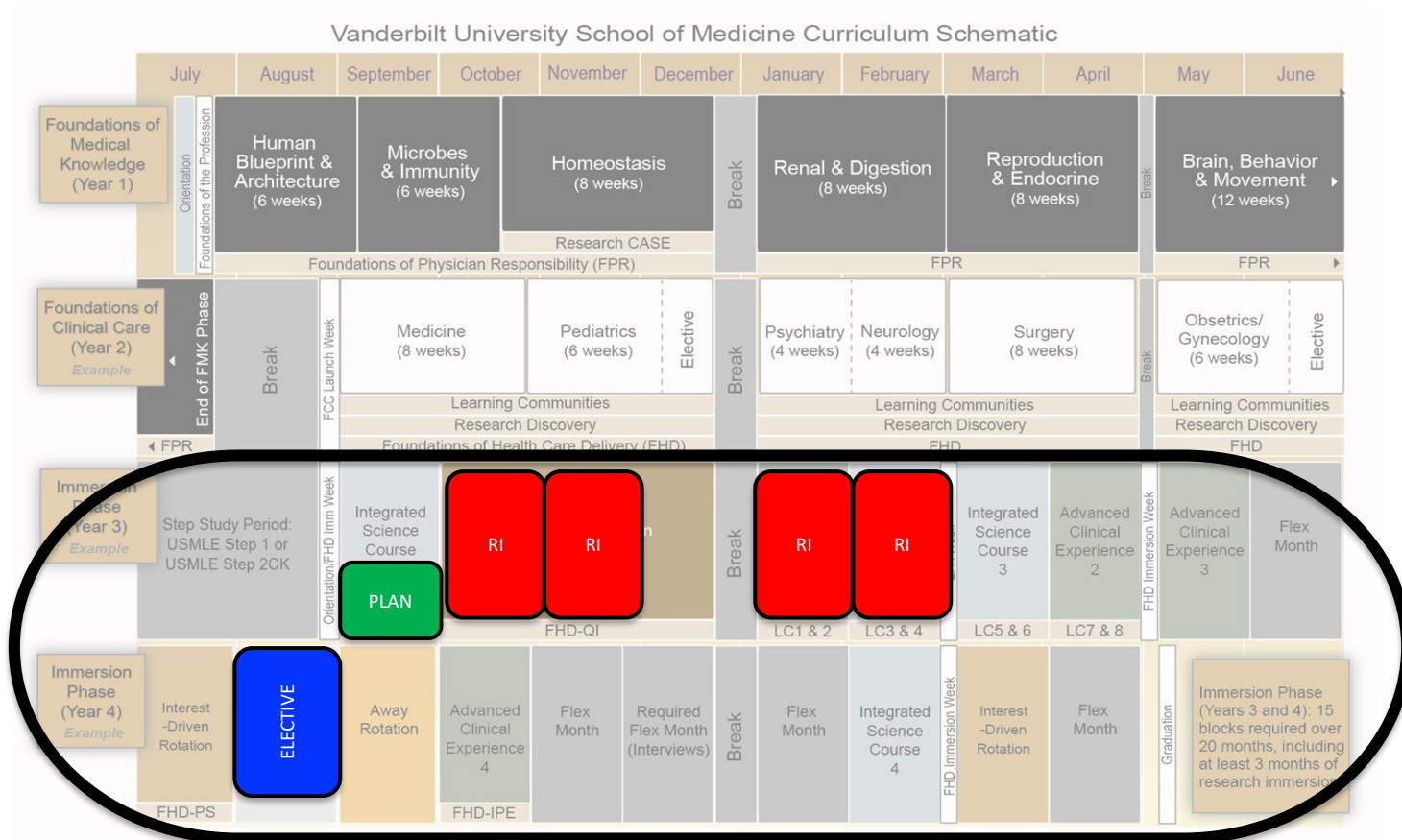


Program Coordinator
Reilly Wade

Eskind Biomedical Library (EBL) – 4th Floor
fhd@vanderbilt.edu

Inquiry Program

Inquiry Program: Courses During the Immersion Phase



Inquiry Program: **PLAN**

- September *or* March, Tuesdays, 1pm – 5pm
- Developing a Research Project Plan
 - Work with SGF during class
 - Work with mentors outside of class
 - **Set up your meetings before you leave for STEP studying in July/August of Y3**
 - **WE** register you for PLAN
 - **YOU** Register for **RI months**



Inquiry Program: Research Immersion

- Implement a Mentored Research Project
- Full-time, immersive experience; 3 – 6 blocks
- Expected to be in Nashville
- 2 OMSR meetings per block; 2nd & 4th Weds.
- 1(+) Area meeting per block
- 1 RD 1-1 meeting per block



Inquiry Program



Important Upcoming Dates:

March 10 – Mentor Meetings & Selection

May 12 – Research Immersion Planning Form

June 6 – IRB or IACUC Approval (P2P6)

FYI:

The Office will register you in **PLAN**

You will register for your **RI** blocks*



C 2.0 Immersion Phase Requirements

Impact of Increasing Research Months

To extend research beyond 3 months:

Student must be in good academic standing and complete an approval process

4 months: Additional research month fulfills one competency/interest-driven rotation

5 months: Additional research month fulfills two competency/interest-driven rotations

6 months: Additional research months fulfill two competency/interest-driven rotations and requires the use of one flex month

Inquiry Program

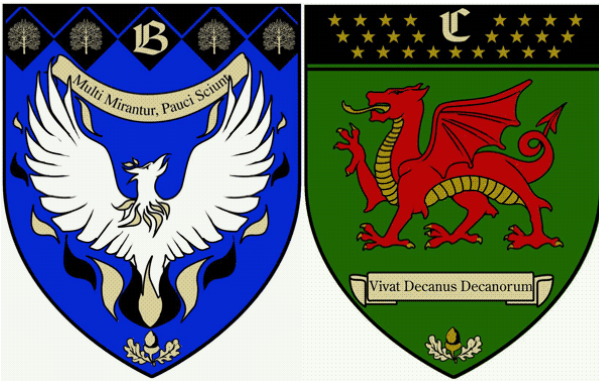
QUESTIONS?

vms.research@vanderbilt.edu

4th floor EBL

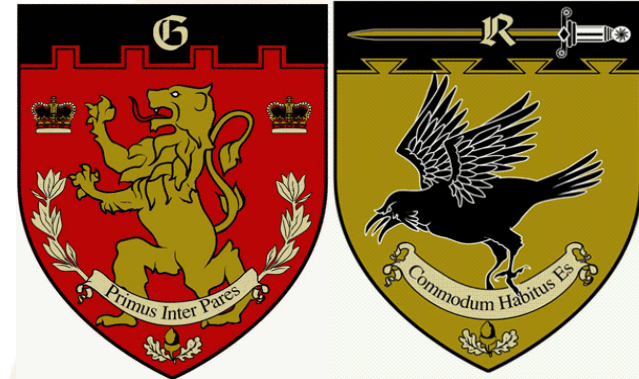


Learning Communities



Goals of Learning Communities

- Lead Well
- Practice Morally
- Know Thyself
- Act Responsibly
- Think Critically
- Appreciate Systems



Improving the delivery of ethical, empathetic, well-reasoned healthcare to the populations we serve



Learning Communities

- 1) Managing Medical Error
- 2) Lifelong Learning
- 3) Situational Leadership & Followership
- 4) Change Management
- 5) Priority Setting
- 6) Sustaining Well-being in Medicine
- 7) Managing Ambiguity
- 8) Our Social Mission in Medicine

*In person attendance required



Learning Communities

- 8 LC - Each Unit is offered 4x during Immersion Phase
- Can be taken in any order (with ACE, ISC, Research)
- Register via YES for each unit
- You may NOT enroll during:
 - AI, Away, Year-out, Prior to completing LC-FCC
 - 4th year December Flex Month (with some exceptions)
- Must be physically present for discussions

	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Year 3	STEP 1										No LC Offered	No LC Offered
			LC1/LC2	LC3/LC4	LC5/LC6	LC7/LC8	LC1/LC2	LC3/LC4	LC5/LC6	LC7/LC8		
Year 4	No LC Offered	No LC Offered									Graduation	
			LC1/LC2	LC3/LC4	LC5/LC6	LC7/LC8	LC1/LC2	LC3/LC4	LC5/LC6	LC7/LC8		



Learning Communities

- Flipped Classroom Structure
 - Pre-session learning modules on TopHat (2-3 hours)
 - **MODULES DUE 5pm THURSDAY BEFORE SESSION**
 - In-person context talk & college-based discussion (3rd Monday of Block)
 - Meets 1-3pm and 3-5pm
- Continued focus on
 - Learning from and with your peers
 - Building community
 - Professional Identity Formation
- Assessment
 - Preparation & Participation (Pass/Fail – see syllabus)



Timing of LC sessions

- September block 2025 → Monday 9/15/25
- October block 2025 → Monday 10/13/25
- November block 2025 → Monday 11/10/25
- December block 2025 → Monday 12/8/25
- **January block 2026 → Monday 1/26/26**
- February block 2026 → Monday 2/16/26
- March block 2026 → Monday 3/23/26
- April block 2026 → Monday 4/29/26



Course Director
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Associate Program Coordinator
Longitudinal Elements Team
Cori Covington



Senior Program Manager
Longitudinal Elements Team
Jared Austin

C2.0 Longitudinal Requirements Summary

Longitudinal Course Requirements				
Foundations of Health Care Delivery		Learning Communities— 8 units	Research—3 months	
5 taken as 4-week courses (self-enroll)	3 Immersion Weeks (auto-enroll)	All taken as 4 week-courses (self-enroll)	PLAN Required	3-6 block Research Immersion

Careers in Medicine

<https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/md-gateway/pathway-to-match/>

Pathway to Match

Timeline

September – December

- Begin the immersion phase of the curriculum. Use this time to continue exploring career opportunities and spending time in areas of interest.
- Start thinking about dual degree and year-out programs.

January – March

- Select faculty advisors and schedule initial and follow-up visits with them.

April

- Write [curriculum vitae \(CV\)](#) and begin working on [personal statement](#).

May

- Send your college mentor your CV and personal statement via email for review prior to your [MSPE](#) appointment.
- Arrange MSPE interview with the Associate Dean for Medical Student Affairs - do this early and have CV and personal statement ready by time of interview.
- Upload your "Noteworthy Characteristics" to the MSPE online system no later than 2 weeks prior to your MSPE appointment.
- Begin gathering residency information.
- [Military match](#) – check deadlines, even if applying for deferments.



VMS2 Registration Timeline

You are here



Meet with your Coach (3/17-4/4): You will upload your schedule template to review with your coach

Feb March April May June July Aug Sept

2/11 3/5 3/27 3/31 4/7 4/14 4/23 8/25-29



Elective Counseling:
Planning Your Imm
Phase Reg & ISC Fair
at 5:15p



Rising VMS3
Elective Counseling:
Imm Phase Intro

How to Register
March 27
at 5 pm

Registration opens
for rising VMS3
April 14 at 6 pm

Registration opens
for rising VMS4
April 7 at 6 pm

Registration opens
for rising VMS4 MSTPs
March 31 at 6 pm

Registration reopens
for ALL
April 23 at midnight

**Immersion
Phase 2025-26
begins**

Immersion Phase
Orientation and
FHD AC1 & PHP for
VMS3



Opportunities for course/elective counseling

Questions?

Please direct questions related to the overall phase to:

Immersion.Phase@Vanderbilt.Edu

FHD: fhd@vanderbilt.edu

LC: LC@vanderbilt.edu

Research: vms.research@vanderbilt.edu

