

Drexel University College of Medicine
Psychiatry Clerkship Goals and Objectives
2025-2026

The format for this listing of goals and objectives for the Psychiatry Clerkship is modeled after the ACGME Core Competencies (Patient Care, Medical Knowledge, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Professionalism, Practice-Based Learning and Improvement, and Systems-Based Practice).

The goals listed for each competency mirror the goals stated in the Graduation Competencies for Drexel University College of Medicine.

The instructional strategies for achieving these objectives include a mix of supervised clinical experiences, bedside teaching rounds, didactic sessions/case conferences, participation in OSCEs (in-person or virtual), and virtual lectures. Clinical skills and medical knowledge are assessed through direct clinical observation, student completion of the clinical passport, and faculty/resident completion of DUCOM evaluation forms. Medical knowledge is also assessed through the NBME subject examination in Psychiatry.

Competency: Patient Care

Goal: Students should be able to participate in providing patient care that is compassionate, appropriate, and effective for the treatment of psychiatric problems and the promotion of mental health.

Objectives: By the end of clerkship, students are expected to be able to:

1. Use appropriate interviewing skills to elicit a comprehensive psychiatric history addressing the onset and course of illness by considering all relevant developmental, medical, social, and psychological factors.
2. Perform a detailed and accurate mental status examination.
3. Develop a problem list and prioritize problems.
4. Create a sufficiently broad initial differential diagnosis based upon the DSM-5 criteria.
5. Select, justify, and interpret appropriate diagnostic procedures (including psychological tests, elaboration of history from other sources etc.) and clinical tests with attention to benefits and harms.
6. Use clinical reasoning to interpret data to derive a working diagnosis and develop a clinical management plan based on evidence-based medicine.

7. Recognize suicidal behavior and signs of aggression directed at others resulting from psychiatric illness and identify the principles of management of such life-threatening conditions.
8. Recognize adverse effects of various treatment modalities, including medications, other physical treatments and psychosocial interventions and be able to identify principles of management of their untoward effects.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of the legal issues involved in the delivery of psychiatric care.
10. Participate effectively in the delivery of psychiatric care and discharge plans of assigned patients as a member of the psychiatric treatment team.

Competency: Medical Knowledge 7

Goal: Students must demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological, and social-behavioral sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care.

Objectives: By the end of clerkship, students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe common psychiatric disorders, including their characteristic signs and symptoms, etiology, epidemiology, and pathophysiology.
2. Describe the psychological, social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to the onset and/or continuation of psychiatric illness.
3. Describe the role of medical-surgical factors in causing psychiatric illness and vice versa.
4. Describe the principles of management of these disorders using biopsychosocial modalities.
5. Describe adverse effects of psychotropic medications, neuromodulation interventions and psychosocial interventions and the basic principles of managing such effects.

Competency: Practice-based Learning and Improvement

Goal: Students must be able to investigate and evaluate their approach to patient care, appraise and assimilate scientific evidence, and continuously improve patient care based on self-evaluation and life-long learning.

Objectives: During this rotation, students are expected to:

1. Identify strengths and weaknesses in knowledge and skills based on critical reflection and self-evaluation.
2. Seek out opportunities and self-directed learning activities to address areas of improvement.
3. Demonstrate maturity in soliciting, accepting, and acting on feedback to effectively make improvements.
4. Locate, appraise, and assimilate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health problems.
5. Use information technology to access online medical information, use clinical decision support, enhance their own education, and facilitate the learning of colleagues and other health care professionals.

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Competency: Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Goal: Students must be able to demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange and teaming with patients, their patients' families, and professional associates.

Objectives: During the clerkship, students are expected to develop the skills to be able to:

1. Demonstrate appropriate verbal and nonverbal techniques to elicit patient history.
2. Use appropriate communication skills to educate patients and to counsel them to modify health risk behaviors.
3. Engage patients and their families, as needed, in the patient care plan and discuss psychiatric information in terms understandable to patients and their families.
4. Demonstrate consideration to diversity in age, culture, disability, educational background, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background in communication with patients and their families.

5. Communicate effectively with physicians, other health professionals, and health related agencies in the day-to-day care of assigned patients.
6. Communicate appropriately in demanding situations including but not limited to disruptive and disorganized patients, communicating adverse events, and working with distressed patients and their family members.
7. Articulate and communicate an accurate clinical question when requesting consultation from other services.
8. Organize a case presentation to accurately reflect the chronology of the history, the details of the mental status and relevant physical examination findings, the differential diagnosis, and the appropriate management plan.
9. Document this information accurately and in a timely manner consistent with the expectations of the clinical service.

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Competency: Professionalism

Goal: Students must demonstrate adherence to ethical principles, development of physician attributes, and a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities.

Objectives: During the clerkship, students are expected to develop the skills to be able to:

1. Demonstrate respect for patient and family attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyles, with particular attention to cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic influences.
2. Demonstrate honesty, integrity, reliability, and responsibility in all interactions with patients, families, colleagues, and other professional contacts.
3. Demonstrate behaviors and attitudes that promote the best interest of patients and families and that supersede self-interest.
4. Demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, and informed consent.
5. Demonstrate a positive attitude and regard for education by demonstrating intellectual curiosity, initiative, academic integrity, and willing acceptance of feedback.
6. Demonstrate a professional image in manner and dress.
7. Demonstrate attention to self-care and work-life balance.

Competency: Systems-based Practice

Goal: Students must demonstrate an awareness of, and responsiveness to, the larger context and system of health care, as well as the ability to call effectively on other resources in the system to provide optimal health care.

Objectives: During this rotation, students are expected to:

1. Work collaboratively in interprofessional (IP) teams to enhance the quality of coordinated patient care.
2. Identify available community resources beneficial in caring for psychiatric patients.
3. Identify system errors and engage in if available quality improvement projects to identify system solutions to improve patient safety.