COURSE DESCRIPTION
October 14, 2008 - November 14, 2008  30 half days

Course Directors
Cynthia Lance-Jones, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Neurobiology (clancej@pitt.edu)
Donald B. DeFranco, PhD, Professor, Department of Pharmacology (dod1@pitt.edu)
Larry Nichols, MD, Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology (nicholsla@upmc.edu)

This 5 week course focuses on structural and functional properties of cells and tissues in both normal and disease states. Basic principles in cell biology, histology and pathology are presented with basic biochemical and pharmacological principles discussed to illustrate molecular mechanisms of normal and abnormal cell function as well as strategies to use drugs to restore cellular function.

Goals for this course are:
1. To introduce students to core principles and the terminology of cell and tissue biology and pathology
2. To introduce students to the biochemical and molecular basis of cell function
3. To encourage students early in their medical school career to integrate basic science and clinical knowledge
4. To enable students to assess normal and disease states at gross anatomical and histological levels and understand the molecular and cellular basis of disease
5. To introduce students to basic principles of pharmacology with a focus on the cellular and molecular mechanisms of drug action

Faculty involved in this course have expertise in topics including cell biology, pharmacology, tissue development and repair, and pathology. The 46 faculty are from 10 departments: Cell Biology and Physiology, Emergency Medicine, Medicine (Divisions of Gastroenterology and Rheumatology, Renal-Electrolyte [Division Chief]), Neurobiology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Otolaryngology, Pathology, Pediatrics (Department Chair), Pharmacology, and Surgery.

EDUCATIONAL METHODS
Sessions are designed to illustrate the relationships between basic science concepts, tissue/cellular response to injury or disease, clinical practice, and future progress in therapeutics.

- Lectures
- Physiology/Pharmacology workshops
- Histology workshops
- PBL sessions
- Laboratories
- Review sessions

EVALUATION
Evaluation in this course is based on two examinations that include multiple-choice and short-answer items, and a histology practical examination.

Grading: This course comprises 40% of the grade for the Fundamentals of Basic Science Block, Section 2. Grading for the block section is Honors, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory.

FACULTY NOTES
Course Director Cynthia Lance-Jones, PhD, is a recipient of the Kenneth E. Schuit Award, recognizing the Dean’s Master Educators. Course director Don DeFranco, PhD is a recipient of the Provost’s Award for Excellence in Mentoring. Faculty member Georgia Duker, PhD, is a recipient of the Chancellor’s Distinguished Teaching Award, the Kenneth E. Schuit Award, Excellence in Education Awards for Problem-based Learning Facilitator and for Small Group Facilitator multiple times, and the Pre-Clinical Golden Apple Award. In addition Dr. Lance-Jones and Dr. Duker are members of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Academy of Master Educators.