Introduction to Medical Decision Making
MS-1

COURSE DESCRIPTION
August 27, 2008 – December 19, 2008 16 sessions

Course Director
Goutham Rao, MD, Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics (raog@upmc.edu)

This course provides an introduction to tools of analysis of particular relevance in clinical work and in the reading of medical literature.

The goals of this course are
1. to give students a foundation for using the basic and clinical sciences in medical decision making;
2. to teach students to think critically about concepts relevant to medical decision making, including
   a. diagnostic reasoning,
   b. biostatistics and experimental design,
   c. etiology, prognosis and survival,
   d. therapies and studies of their effectiveness.

The 27 faculty for this course are from 5 departments: Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Medicine (Division of General Internal Medicine), Pediatrics, and Psychiatry.

EDUCATIONAL METHODS

• Lectures  • Small-group learning sessions  • Writing and presenting a self-directed research paper

EVALUATION
Evaluation for this course is based on attendance at small-group sessions, a presentation of a self-directed “Honors exercise” research paper and a written examination.

Grading: This course comprises 100% of the Scientific Reasoning in Medicine Block, Section 1. Grading for the block section is Honors, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory.

FACULTY NOTE
Ashok Bharucha, MD, is a recipient of the Excellence in Education Award for Small Group Facilitator. Donald Middleton, MD, is a recipient of the Kenneth E. Schuit Award and the Excellence in Education Award for Small Group Facilitator. In addition, Course Director Goutham Rao, MD, is a member of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Academy of Master Educators.