

The University of New South Wales

Medicine 3

DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY

PATM3101

Newsletter No. 1, March 2005

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to 3rd Year Pathology.

For those of you who are wondering whether, as the last year of Medicine 3 in the 3801 program, you might be neglected by the Department of Pathology, let me assure you that nothing could be further from the truth. Your course (PATM3101) has been steadily evolving and improving for the past 10 years. Development of a comprehensive student manual was initiated by Prof Denis Wakefield in 1996 – this has been progressively enhanced each year; in 1997, online formative assessments with automated feedback were introduced by Dr Gary Velan, your course convener; and in 2004 we broke new ground with the introduction of virtual microscopy alongside conventional glass slides in practical classes. All of these innovations have been enthusiastically received by your predecessors in Medicine 3. It is therefore with some regret that the Department notes that this is the final iteration of the course – just when we thought we'd got it right!

Of course, we are actively involved in the new Medicine 3802 program as well, which means that 2005 is the busiest of the transition years for us. However, that isn't going to put a stop to innovation – in fact it has triggered one of the most interesting one-off experiments in teaching that we have ever attempted. This year, one-half of the session 1 tutors for PATM3101 will be Medicine 6 students – a selected group of academically capable and articulate survivors of the system, from whom I am sure you will learn a lot. The Department was overrun with responses to its call for volunteers to teach in Medicine 3 in 2005, which may tell you something about how much your peers value teaching and learning in Pathology; hopefully they will be able to share this enthusiasm with you as well.

With immaculate timing, the busiest year for us is also going to be the most chaotic, because renovations in the Wallace Wurth building will lead to relocation of the Museum of Human Disease part way through session 1 and of tutorial rooms at various other times. If you find this a nuisance, be assured you're not alone – all of the staff will be displaced from the offices they have occupied for years. Apologies in advance, and please bear with us.

So what is Pathology all about anyway? Put simply, this is the discipline dealing with the scientific study of the causes, mechanisms, manifestations and consequences of disease. Not surprisingly, this means that the amount of information embodied in Pathology is vast. It is simply not possible for you to acquire a grasp of the discipline in one year. Teaching in Pathology therefore extends through Medicine 3 and 4: in Year 3 the focus is on scientific principles of disease illustrated by examples of common and classical diseases, while in Year 4 it is on clinico-pathological correlation and the discipline is examined as a component of Integrated Clinical & Community Studies.

The teaching program in Pathology comprises *lectures, tutorials and practical classes*, as well as private (non-supervised) study in the (outstandingly user-friendly) Museum of Human Disease. Lectures are intended to provide you with an overview of disease processes. Lecturers will not attempt to summarise all knowledge on the topic but will instead aim to

guide your thinking. You will be expected to develop concepts and acquire additional understanding by participating in tutorials and practical classes; by attendance in the Museum; by your own reading of the recommended textbook; and by reflecting on and questioning the information you encounter. Tutorials and practical classes are planned to amplify lecture material. In tutorials, you are encouraged to apply the principles of Pathology in the context of macroscopic specimens ("pots") while in practical classes, glass and virtual slides will provide a microscopic Pathology context.

It is impossible to overemphasise the need *to work consistently throughout the year*. Each segment of the course builds on that which precedes it. *If you sit through tutorials and/or practical classes in a blank state of mind because you are not up to date with the lecture material, you will progressively fall behind*. To help you avoid this unfortunate outcome, the Department of Pathology encourages active student participation in problem-solving in all forms of teaching: tutorials, practical classes and lectures. Please do not be alarmed when you are called on to publicly participate – it is an excellent way for both you and your fellow students to learn. Aim to get into the spirit of the teaching program and to get involved as much as you can. Remember you often learn best from mistakes; if you are not prepared to show the teaching staff when you are having difficulties, it is hard for us to estimate your progress.

Some notes will be distributed at lectures. If you should not receive any of the handouts etc, please see Ms Salome Apostolopoulos at the enquiries desk of the School of Medical Sciences (ground floor, Wallace Wurth Building). General notices will be posted on the 5th Floor Notice Board (at least until the builders make it disappear).

We will give you the *Pathology Student Manual* and the *Images of Disease CD-ROM* free of charge – the latter is provided exclusively for the purpose of private study.

You need to purchase the *recommended text* which is Robbins Pathologic Basis of Disease by Kumar, Abbas and Fausto (7th Edition, 2005). The first author of the textbook is no relation to the writer of this newsletter!

The PATM3101 *WebCT course* contains links to a number of helpful resources including the online self-assessments, lecture slides and iLecture recordings.

If you have concerns about your progress in the course, please make an appointment to see your tutor, or the course convener Dr Gary Velan, or Dr Priti Pandey who is the grievance officer for the School of Medical Sciences. Dr Pandey should be contacted through Ms Lorraine Brooks in the SoMS Administration Wing.

Because of theft, access to Teaching Laboratories and the Museum is restricted to the hours of 8 am to 8 pm Monday to Friday. Students are required to carry their swipe cards *at all times* to enter these areas. Note that you will need to visit UNSW Security to have your swipe card activated. There are specific conditions of entry to the Museum of Human Disease, which should be observed at all times. Video cameras are installed in the Museum and there is constant surveillance. Do not prop the door to the Museum open or let other people enter without cards.

Assessment in PATM3101

- a) *Mid-year assessment*: This comprises 30% of the total mark in Pathology and will consist of a theory paper including short answer questions and objective items, as well as a practical examination emphasising microscopic Pathology.
- b) *End-of-year assessment*: This is an in-depth assessment of your capacity to integrate all aspects of the material presented throughout the year and will comprise a 3 hour theory paper and a 3 hour practical examination dealing with both macroscopic and microscopic Pathology.

More details on assessment in Pathology can be found in the Student Manual.

Some general information:

Museum of Human Disease: currently room 503, 5th floor, Medical School; will move to the ground floor of the Samuels Building in mid-session.

Teaching Laboratories: rooms 502 (5th floor, through Museum) and 106/108 (1st floor); note that there will frequently be crowds of Science students in the Anatomy dissecting room assembly area, so you should approach Room 106/108 via the stairwell at the corner of the Medicine and Biological Sciences buildings.

Tutorial Rooms: tutorials are currently scheduled in rooms 106/108, 501 (Athol Lykke Lecture Theatre, through Museum), 502, 507 (Hall of Health) and the Museum; these locations will change so stay alert!

Pathology Enquiries and Lost Property: currently Room 411 (4th Floor of the Medical School) although this too will change.

Academic and teaching staff are listed in the Student Manual. In Year 3 you will mostly have contact with UNSW campus-based academic staff. Staff from the major teaching hospitals do participate in the teaching program and assessments, but they play a greater role in the program in Year 4.

In addition, you may meet the following members of staff:

Ms Soo Han Chup (Room 411) assists with student enquiries; Ms Salome Apostolopoulos (ground floor Reception) can help with missed handouts; Mr Alan Mitchell is the Museum technical officer and provides practical class support; Mrs Jenny Horder is the Museum Manager and Ms Carolyn Cuello provides Museum support; Ms Maria Sarris and Mr Gavin McKenzie (Room M101) of the Histology & Microscopy Unit provide practical class support.

Students wishing to see members of academic staff outside of lectures, practical classes and tutorials should see Ms Soo Han Chup in Room 411 to make an appointment.

With my best wishes for a pleasant and successful year in Pathology,

Rakesh K. Kumar
Head of Teaching in Pathology