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To: Participants in "Designing Clinical Research (one month)" Epi 150.03 (Summer 2017)

From: Peter Chin-Hong and Miriam Kuppermann

We look forward to seeing you on **Wednesday, August 2, 2017** for the first session of the Designing Clinical Research course. The lectures will be held every Monday and Wednesday August 2nd – 23rd from 9-10:15am. The first lecture will be in **HSW 301** (Health Sciences West building) on the Parnassus Campus. The subsequent lectures will be in **HSW 302**. Small group sessions will follow the lecture from 10:30 – noon. Small group assignments and locations will be announced during the first lecture. An additional peer review session is scheduled for Monday, August 28th from 10-noon.

This year we are pleased to offer this course online as well. The general description and instructions below apply to all students. Those of you taking the course online will receive separate additional instructions.

The lectures and small group sessions are designed to teach you the basic principles of clinical research and to help you develop a research question and protocol. We cover quite a bit of ground over a short period of time, but most students have found this course very useful for understanding clinical research in general and developing their projects in particular. In order to get the most out of this course, we ask for the following.

- Please be on time for the lectures. We are fortunate to have outstanding faculty deliver the course lectures – you won't want to miss these.
- Please be prepared for your small group sessions and participate in commenting on the protocols of others in your group. The small group sessions are crucial for helping you develop your protocols and becoming familiar with critiquing the work of others.
- Please turn in your assignments on time. Our goal is to help you develop your research ideas into a more complete research protocol, and each of the assignments builds towards this goal. In order to give the instructors time to comment on the protocols, these assignments need to be turned in on time.
- Please attend all of the sessions. Only one excused absence is allowed during the month.

Your first assignment is attached (this is not applicable to PUP and SF-BUILD scholars), and due at the start of the small group session on August 2nd:

- Read the Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Designing Clinical Research* textbook (Hulley et al.) purchased from the publisher or an online vendor such as Amazon.com. Note that we are using the **4th edition** of the text.
- Identify the research mentor who is willing to work with you on your proposal. Typically such a person is engaged in clinical research or may be someone who can provide access to a relevant database.
- Think up a research question for which you might design a study, and **write a one sentence version of your research question** to bring to your small group session on August 2nd. We strongly encourage you to think of a real question that is of interest to you and can be feasibly answered by a trainee at your level.
- Familiarize yourself with the literature related to your research question using PubMed and **write 3-5 sentences explaining the significance of your research question**. This initial draft of a “Significance Section” can take the form of a paragraph or logic statements as outlined in the sample protocol in the *Designing Clinical Research* textbook.
- Plan to learn Endnote or RefWorks, reference management software that will be very useful as you in your research. Information on how to get started with these programs is offered by the UCSF library.

Don't worry if your research question is not perfect---that is normal at this stage and is one of the reasons you are taking the course. Settling on a good research question is often the hardest part of the course, and many students will change topics entirely before the course is over. Your mentor should be able to help you develop your research ideas as you go along.

The course schedule as well as the course syllabus, presentations, and readings will be posted on the course website. We will finalize this schedule prior to the first class. If you have not registered to take the course, please also do so through the website. If you are taking the course for credit, you will need to register on the website AND with the UCSF Registrar's Office.

http://ticr.ucsf.edu/courses/schedule/clin_research_predocs.html

The *requirements* for successful completion of this course are the same for all participants (except PUP and SF-BUILD scholars):

1. Full participation in lecture and small group discussions. Only one excused absence is allowed during this month-long course.
2. Completion of the **four** assignments. The first is due on the first day of class. The due dates for the other assignments will be posted on the website.
3. Completion of a five-page protocol, due **Wednesday, August 23rd**.
4. Participation in the peer-review process on **Monday, August 28th**.

We look forward to seeing you on August 2nd in Room HSW 301. Please contact Clair Dunne (CDunne@psg.ucsf.edu) if you have questions. You may also contact the course director Peter Chin-Hong (peter.chin-hong@ucsf.edu) or co-director Miriam Kuppermann (kuppermannm@obgyn.ucsf.edu).

We look forward to seeing you next week.

Peter Chin-Hong and Miriam Kuppermann