

June 15, 2020

Dear Students,

We are looking forward to your arrival on campus and to working closely with you in the first couple of months.

Pritzker students attend *Health Disparities in America: Equity and Advocacy*, an intensive **eight-week survey course** experience alongside the anatomy coursework. This survey course draws upon the skills and strengths of instructors from a variety of different educational backgrounds, levels of training, and perspectives, including senior medical students, residents, fellows and faculty. The course utilizes an innovative and dynamic approach to help students attain a solid knowledge base in this field, including historical perspectives and current conditions. The curriculum has a special focus on the local surrounding communities and neighborhoods of the South Side of Chicago. The goal is to arm you with the knowledge that will **begin** to help frame your medical education within the context of greater societal issues, especially the institutionalized racism that has driven the police brutality and health and health disparities during the pandemic. It will provide access to mentors in the field of health disparities, create a basis for future service and research projects in health disparities, and, ultimately, support the development of you and your classmates into the future leaders who will effect real-world change. You will learn about the impactful changes our students have already made on our patients' lives.

There are no required texts for this course. The syllabus will contain a number of reading materials that will be available on the first day of class. Previous students have had the following comments at the end of the course,

"The mood among my classmates was optimistic, that we, in our limited time at Pritzker, could effect change and help the people around us."

"One of the best things...was how relevant...[the course was] to the specific neighborhood that we now live in and will serve."

"..the ties to the local community really focused us on the issues our patients will face.."

"..an important learning experience for me was learning more about the South Side of Chicago, especially the poverty in the area."

Congratulations to you on your success and best wishes to you as you pursue your goals in medicine!

Sincerely,

Monica Vela, MD

Professor of Medicine

Course Director, Health Disparities in America

Associate Vice Chair for Diversity

Associate Dean of Multicultural Affairs