

UC Davis Pathology and Lab Medicine Gynecologic and Breast Pathology (Surgical Pathology) Fellowship Goals and Objectives

Introduction

The goal of the 1-year Gynecologic and Breast Pathology (Surgical Pathology) fellowship is for the Fellow to develop expertise in Gynecologic and Breast Pathology while maintaining exposure to other areas of general surgical pathology. Applying candidates will have already completed a 4-year pathology residency (or a program with at least equivalent experience in surgical pathology) and should have already met the goals and objectives for surgical pathology as enumerated for our own residency program. The fellowship is based on a model of practice under supervision, with graduated independent attending-level sign out privileges that will be offered during the second half of the fellowship, as the Fellow's diagnostic skills progress. Opportunities to engage in research are encouraged and tailored to the Fellow's career goals, whether they plan to practice in an academic setting, community hospital-based group practice, or commercial laboratory practice. Our goal is to provide the best possible training, help you secure the best possible job, and continue to mentor you as needed in your future career. While our fellowship is relatively new (founded in 2021), our fellows have interviewed competitively and secured their first job choices. We continue to be in touch with all of them.

Goals and Objectives

1. To develop expertise in the diagnosis of non-neoplastic diseases of the GYN system and breast.
2. To develop expertise in the diagnosis of GYN and breast tumors, their precursors, and mimics
3. To develop an understanding of special techniques in the characterization of GYN and breast diseases (immunohistochemistry, FISH, molecular testing)
4. To develop an understanding of the clinical features of GYN and breast diseases, including diagnostic evaluation of patients, treatment algorithms, and tumor staging parameters and prognostic indices
5. To become an integral member of the multidisciplinary team that treats patients with these diseases
6. To enhance teaching abilities through the interaction with pathology trainees, students, and clinicians

At the end of the 1-year Pathology Fellowship, the successful Fellow will be expected to:

1. Provide expert diagnostic opinions for GYN and breast specimens. The Fellow's expertise will include the following:
 - Complete and systematic gross examination of surgical specimens
 - Biopsy diagnosis/interpretation
 - Appropriate work-up and reporting of cancer resections
 - Intra-operative consultations, including immediate gross evaluations and frozen section diagnoses
2. Develop an analytical approach to diagnoses that includes the appropriate selection, interpretation, and integration of ancillary techniques such as immunohistochemistry and molecular testing.

3. Recognize his/her own limitations and ask for appropriate consultations.
4. Serve as a consultant to other health care providers:
 - Effectively communicate results with clinicians in a concerted effort to better patient care
 - Discuss cases in Pathology and clinical conference settings (ie present at tumor board meetings)
5. Demonstrate effective teaching of medical students and residents:
 - Instructing residents in proper grossing technique
 - Previewing surgical pathology cases with pathology residents who are on service to assist and guide them in their work-up
 - Preparing and providing teaching/slide conferences for the above groups
6. Learn how to critically evaluate the medical and scientific literature and, if involved in research, present research findings

Professional Responsibility to Patient Care

The Fellow will inform the fellowship director and the attending pathologist of any unplanned absence and will make every necessary effort to ensure the transfer of cases to someone who will see to their completion. The Fellow is expected to attend:

- Department Grand Rounds (generally held on the first and third Monday of each month), the annual UC Davis Pathology Diagnostic Symposium and the Stowell and Vogt lectureships
- Resident Presentations (generally at the end of the month)
- The Residency Program Director's meetings with the pathology residents (to facilitate communication of information related to graduate medical education)

GYN and Breast Pathology Fellowship Rotations and Graduated Responsibilities

The curriculum can be tailored to the Fellow's diagnostic needs but generally involves:

- GYN and Breast/ Thoracic rotations 4-5 months
- Additional general surgical pathology (GU, GI, +/- Bone/Soft Tissue) 1-2 months
- Frozen section service 1 month
- Junior Surgical Pathology Faculty 4-6 months

After completion of the first month of GYN service, the Fellow will be responsible for covering the weekly GYN tumor board for the remainder of the year.

When assigned to the GYN or Breast/ Lung services, the Fellow shall:

- Demonstrate appropriate grossing techniques and oversee the resident or Physician Assistant (as needed) to ensure assigned cases are grossed and photographed appropriately and on time
- Triage cases based on clinical urgency
- Previewing cases with the resident

- Develop differential diagnoses and, when necessary, guide the additional work-up (e.g. IHC, molecular)

Junior Surgical Pathology Faculty Experience

At the end of 6 months of assignment, including at least 2 months on the GYN service, 1 month of Breast/Lung service, and 3 months of other surgical pathology rotations (GI/Liver, GU, Frozen section), the Fellow will be allowed to serve as a junior attending for the Gyn and Breast/Lung service - with graduated and eventual full sign-out privileges. This opportunity is offered at the discretion of the fellowship director and is contingent upon approval from hospital credentialing. The junior attending will be expected to serve as faculty in all respects while on service in this capacity, utilizing the assigned faculty member as a consultant and co-signer for their reports. Any discrepancies discovered at the time of sign-out and co-signature by the faculty member will be discussed.

Research

The Fellow will be encouraged to undertake a research project that aligns with their career goals. Internal departmental funding is available for research projects. In addition, extramural institutional funding opportunities can be discussed, depending on the scope of the project. UC Davis is part of the Caris Precision Oncology Alliance (POA), a research group comprised of 99 institutions in the US, Europe, and Asia, including 47 NCI-designated cancer centers. Dr. Karnezis (fellowship director) is currently the Chair of the Pathology Working Group of the Caris POA. As such, Fellows have access not only to UC Davis cases but also to >480,000 tumors with whole exome and whole transcriptome sequencing data for research, including >85,000 gynecologic cancers and >40,000 breast cancers.

Teaching

The Fellow will be expected to informally teach residents and medical students while on service. In addition, the GYN and Breast Fellow will be responsible for representing the UC Davis Pathology department at the weekly GYN tumor board and at least one weekly breast conference.

Frozen Section Coverage

The Fellow will have 1-2 months of frozen section service (typically in the first 6 months of the fellowship), where they will render gross intraoperative evaluations and histologic diagnoses for all areas of surgical pathology except neuropathology and hematopathology. No overnight on-call service is involved.

Vacation / Time off

The Fellow receives 28 days of vacation (20 weekdays, 8 weekend days), 12 sick days, and 2 half-days for Wellness activities.

Evaluations

The Fellow will be evaluated monthly by the attendings on service through an online platform. In addition, the Fellow will meet with the Fellowship Director to discuss their progress quarterly. The Fellow will review the fellowship program biannually through an online platform. Their review be available for review only after 4 or more Fellows have provided reviews, which ensures anonymity.

The fellowship aligns with the 6 ACGME competencies, which are reflected in evaluations:

Patient care	All months; Fellowship is centered on work-up of active patient cases
Medical knowledge	All months; Continuous feedback and evaluation from pathology attendings; Formal quarterly evaluations; Grand Rounds presentation
Practice-based learning and improvement	Months 1-6 are practice-based in a team setting (attending signs-out cases); Months 7-12 consist of independent practice (i.e., fellow has sign-out privileges, with proctoring)
Interpersonal and communication skills	All months; Interactions with rotating medical students, pathology residents, other pathology fellows, pathology faculty, clinicians; Fellow covers clinical and educational conferences (i.e., interactions with clinicians, nurses, other staff, trainees outside the department); Communicates critical values to clinical team
Professionalism	All months; Teaching, independent sign-out, and clinical and educational conferences
Systems-based practice	All months; Fellow represents pathology in multidisciplinary clinical and educational conferences; Communicates critical values to clinical team