Purpose:

The Distinction in Anatomy allows students with a special interest in clinical anatomy to attain a higher degree of expertise in this subject and receive recognition for their academic accomplishments in anatomy.

Eligibility Criteria for Distinction in Anatomy Program:

Applicant must be in good academic standing and have a good record of professionalism; students placed on Academic Watch Level 2, or who fail any remediation, or semester, of any required course, or who have recorded issues with professionalism verified by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs are not eligible and must withdraw from the program if enrolled.

Applicant must not participate in another formally defined curriculum program or dual-degree program, but may also apply for Distinction in Research.

Application Guidelines and Process:

The application deadline is April 1st of the MS1 year. Acceptance is competitive and determined by a committee consisting of the participating anatomy faculty members, a College Master from each PLFSOM College, and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Acceptance is to be based primarily on1) the applicant’s general academic record; 2) an essay explaining the applicant’s motivation and professional goals as related to the Distinction in Anatomy Program; and 3) the applicant’s performance on anatomy summative exam items. Application materials should be submitted to the Chair of the Department of Medical Education.

Application Review Process:

Applications to the Distinction in Anatomy Program will be reviewed by the anatomy faculty members and the Chair of the Department of Medical Education. The number of students accepted for the Program is to be determined each year by the participating anatomy faculty members and the Chair of the Department of Medical Education, with final approval by the Associate Dean for Medical Education.

Required Activities to attain Distinction in Anatomy:

During the MS1 summer break, students will engage in dissection for a minimum of 100 hours, developing high quality anatomical specimens under the guidance of the anatomy faculty. Dissections should be performed in the morning, Monday through Friday, beginning at 9AM and continuing until complete. Dissections vary in length but average 3 hours. Students will be given practical exams covering the lab sessions of each region. Students must attain an average score of 70% or above on the five practical exams to remain in the Distinction in Anatomy Program.

Participating students are also expected to develop anatomy-based SARP projects. Such projects may entail studies of anatomical variations, development and testing of novel anatomical teaching materials, investigations of modifications to surgical procedures or invasive techniques, or the relationship of anatomy to other fields of medicine, such as radiology, anesthesiology, obstetrics and gynecology, internal medicine, etc.

During the MS2 year, students will participate in a minimum of 2 demonstration sessions of MS1 and MS2 anatomy labs as teaching assistants. TA obligations will be shared, and will be coordinated by the supervising anatomy faculty

Students must take the TTUHSC Anatomy Cumulative Exam (ACE) within 2 weeks of finishing the core MS2 curriculum (including exams but not including NBME Step 1). Students must score at or above the 75% percentile on the ACE. If unsuccessful, students may remediate this requirement by re-taking the exam prior to the end of the first semester of the MS4 year. Students are also required to schedule and take the NBME Anatomy Subject exam within a week of the ACE in order to benchmark their performance against a national measure of competence.

Distinction in Anatomy Program students will, under the supervision of the anatomy faculty, develop and administer practical examinations, based on the faculty and student prosections, to be offered on an optional basis to MS1 and MS2 students at the end of every SPM Unit in which anatomy is presented.

Students will complete their anatomy based SARP project by the MS4 year, and they will submit their anatomy scholarship for peer-reviewed publication or presentation at a regional or national meeting. Poster or platform presentation at a regional or national conference is the minimum requirement for the research component of the Distinction in Anatomy Program.

Students will be required to enroll in and successfully complete a clinical or surgical anatomy elective of at least 2 weeks in length.

Distinction in Anatomy Award:

Summary of Requirements for Distinction in Anatomy

1. Perform 32 required dissections - Summer MS1

2. Attain average score of 70% or above on the five practical exams - Summer MS1

3. Identify an anatomy-related SARP project - Summer MS1

4. Serve as Teaching Assistant in 2 anatomy labs for MS1 and MS2 students - MS2

5. Help to prepare and administer optional practical exams for each SPM Unit - MS2

6. Pass the TTUHSC Anatomy Cumulative Exam at 75% and take the NBME Anatomy Subject Exam - End of MS2 (remediate ACE Fall MS4 if needed)

7. Present and/or publish the SARP project findings - MS3 or MS4

Upon successful completion of all the above outlined elements of the Distinction in Anatomy Program, with review and verification by the program committee (as described above for the acceptance process), students receive a designation of “Distinction in Anatomy” on their diplomas indicating completion of the Distinction in Anatomy Program.