Course Information

This handout contains information about the philosophy of the course, tips to help you maximize your learning in the course, information about the website, and other miscellaneous information.

Course Philosophy

Embryology is a vast field of study that is still evolving as a science. While there is much we know about the development of the embryo, there are still many unsolved problems. The science of embryology is an active, dynamic field with new findings arising every day. The study of embryology encompasses the anatomy of development, the genetic factors associated with development, cellular aspects of development, and the chemical and hormonal compounds that play important roles in inducing specific events during development. While all of these are important in the overall developmental process, the anatomy of development is probably the best understood. The genetic, cellular, and chemical factors of development are areas of focus in most of the current research. My interest in embryology is the anatomy. This course is designed to help you see how developmental anatomy, which emerges during the embryonic stage, helps to clarify our adult anatomy and answers the questions as to why things have specific structural relationships. Therefore, this is an embryology course for anatomists.

Study Strategies

One of the most important keys for the effective study of embryology is a strong knowledge of postnatal anatomy. Remember, that is our goal — to learn how the emerging anatomy of development accounts for adult anatomy. Students who know their adult anatomy meet with much greater success in embryology. I strongly recommend that you look at the syllabus the day before each class and review the anatomy that pertains to the topic we will study in embryology. In other words, come prepared to lecture with a strong knowledge of anatomy. A second important tip is to stay on top of things and do not fall behind. Like the anatomy course, the embryology course will continue to build on past lectures and the student who keeps up with their studies will not get overwhelmed and fall behind. A third key to the study of embryology is to develop the ability to look at the body, both the adult anatomy and embryonic anatomy in sections. Much of the embryonic anatomy we will study will involve looking at sections through the body and relating this to the three-dimensional structure of the body. Finally, take advantage of my office hours and the teaching assistant review sessions to ask questions and get the help that you need. Again, DO NOT be afraid to ask questions for that is how you learn.

Website Info

Throughout the semester I will be posting questions to help you assess your knowledge and see if you are learning what I am teaching you in lecture. These will also help you prepare for exams. I encourage you to answer the questions weekly and if you have questions take advantage of the review sessions to discuss the questions and make certain that you understand them. The website will also have the lecture presentations posted for you to review.