



Basic Science

The teaching of basic science is fundamental to any medical school curriculum—yet the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine model transcends the traditional approach. Students are expected not just to learn in lectures, but also to be active participants in the process. They use problem-based learning in small groups to master basic science across body systems.

Each week students explore real patient cases from the community. The students work together in small groups with a facilitator to pull out learning objectives from the case. Mid-week, the groups meet again and present what they have learned, in effect teaching one another.

After those presentations, the groups receive more details about the case. They again extract learning objectives and present their investigations at the end of the week. After the final presentations, students meet the actual patient, the doctor involved in the case, and the patient's family members, to learn from them the full impact of the patient's medical condition in a memorable way.

Patient-centered learning reminds students that the science they are learning relates to the diagnosis and treatment of real patients. It also teaches them to make patients the central focus of their professional practice.

The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine's educational program is organized into four value domains: Basic Science, Clinical Science, Research, and Interprofessionalism.

The school's curriculum provides students with a solid foundation in biomedical and clinical science, the opportunity to master clinical skills, and meaningful experiences in all the major clinical disciplines. Research and interprofessionalism are interwoven throughout the program to produce doctors highly capable of excelling in any branch of medicine.

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