

**Surgical Pathology Fellowship**  
**Program Description**

## A. PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>Fellowship:</b>	Surgical Pathology
<b>Host Institution:</b>	The George Washington University
<b>Program Address:</b>	2300 Eye Street N.W. Ross Hall, Suite 502 Washington, DC 20037
<b>Program Additional Location:</b>	The George Washington University Hospital UHS Department of Pathology
<b>Program Phone Number:</b>	(202)994-3391
<b>Program Fax Number:</b>	(202)994-2618
<b>Program E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:sboccanera@mfa.gwu.edu">sboccanera@mfa.gwu.edu</a> <a href="mailto:stabbara@mfa.gwu.edu">stabbara@mfa.gwu.edu</a>
<b>Program Director:</b>	Sana O. Tabbara, M.D.
<b>Alternate Program Contact:</b>	Mrs. Sandra Boccanera

## B. INTRODUCTION

**History:** The Surgical Pathology Fellowship program is a longstanding program that was started under the leadership of Steven Silverberg, M.D, in 1984. Since its inception the fellowship position has filled every year with residents that had completed their training either at the George Washington University (ACGME accredited program) or at other ACGME accredited pathology residency programs, nationwide. Twenty seven fellows have graduated from that program.

**Duration:** The surgical pathology fellowship length of training is 12 months, equivalent to a full academic year starting in July and ending the subsequent June.

**Prerequisite Training/ Selection Criteria:** The prerequisite training for a Surgical Pathology fellow is completion of AP/CP, or AP training in good standing at an ACGME accredited pathology residency program. Additional requirements include USMLE Steps 1, 2 and 3. Additional required documents include the application form, a copy of the applicant Curriculum Vitae, copy of the Medical School certificate, and a copy of the ECFMG certificate, if applicable. At least two letters of recommendation, one from the residency program director and the other one from a pathologist familiar with the candidate work and performance.

Candidates are evaluated and scored on a five point scale by each faculty member and fellow that participates in the interview process based on the following criteria:

1. Strength of the candidate training and reported fund of knowledge.
2. Candidate's level of maturity, responsibility and reported performance during residency.
3. Candidate's communication skills and professionalism.
4. Candidate's ability to project confidence and command respect of clinicians.
5. Candidate's experience and ability to be an effective teacher to residents and

- students.
6. Candidate's ability to handle the workload and demands of the Surgical Pathology Service.
  7. Candidate's fit into the Surgical Pathology group personality and work style.
  8. Candidate's ability to complete a research project during the Fellowship year.
  9. Candidate's likelihood to become an academic pathologist and/or finding an appropriate position after his/her Fellowship.

### **Overall Goals and Objectives for training:**

The overall goal of the surgical pathology fellowship is for the fellow to master the range of knowledge, technical skills, administrative principles, and attitudes necessary for the independent practice of surgical pathology.

### **Detailed Goals and Objectives:**

The surgical pathology fellow is to achieve and build on a set of competencies based on the six ACGME core competency areas. The following are competencies to be mastered by the fellow.

## **Major ACGME Core Competency Areas in the Overall Program**

### **I. Patient Care**

#### **A. Technical Skills**

The fellow will master the technical skills relevant for the practice of pathology. Some examples of these technical skills are dissection, gross and/or microscopic morphologic evaluation, interpretation of special stains, extraction of relevant clinical information from a patient's medical record, evaluation of quality control data, etc.

#### **B. Clinical Consultation**

The fellow will learn to provide appropriate and effective consultation to clinicians and other health care providers. Consultation may include providing a diagnosis, discussing the implications of a diagnosis in the management of a patient, providing advice regarding ordering of lab tests or blood products, assisting in the interpretation of test results, etc.

### **II. Medical Knowledge**

#### **A. Fund of Medical Knowledge**

The fellow will expand a fund of general medical knowledge and focused pathology knowledge relevant to the practice of all aspects of surgical

pathology. This will include an understanding of basic concepts of disease; the pathophysiology of common disorders; the epidemiologic, clinical, morphologic, biochemical, and/or molecular genetic features of common disorders; the prognostic and general therapeutic implications of common and less common disease states; and the societal impact and preventative aspects of common diseases.

B. Application of Medical Knowledge in the Practice of Pathology

The fellow will learn to effectively apply his/her general and focused medical knowledge in the day-to-day practice of surgical pathology. The fellow must be able to apply her/his knowledge of the diagnostic, prognostic, and general therapeutic features of common disease states to analyze clinical situations, construct a reasonable differential diagnosis, establish a definite diagnosis, and discuss the prognostic and general therapeutic implications of a disease state with clinicians.

### **III. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**

A. Evidence-Based Practice

The fellow will learn to make effective use of conferences, lectures, and reading of the medical literature (texts, journals, and other medical databases) to inform her/his day-to-day practice of surgical pathology. The fellow must develop the ability to critically evaluate the quality of research studies and to be discriminating in the selection of information sources used to support medical decision making.

B. Use of Information Technology

The fellow will master the use a variety of information technologies to inform and improve his/her day-to-day practice of surgical pathology. Examples of information technologies that must be mastered include electronic medical literature databases, Web-based information sources, and computer-based resources (CDs, DVDs, and other media).

### **IV. Interpersonal and Communication Skills**

A. Communication Skills

The fellow will learn to communicate effectively and courteously with health care providers, laboratory staff members, administrators, patients, and other individuals in the course of her/his practice. These communications will include verbal (face-to-face and telephone conversations) and written (written reports, notes, e-mail messages, etc.) formats. The fellow must strive to communicate in a clear, concise, accurate, and appropriately focused manner. Regarding the production of written reports, the ultimate goal is for the fellow to produce essentially letter-perfect reports that require minimal or no modification by the attending pathologist.

B. Teamwork

The fellow will learn to work as an effective member of the health care team in the course of his/her daily practice. The fellow must strive to perform her/his tasks in a responsible and timely fashion, facilitate the tasks of other team members, and be cooperative in his/her interactions with team members.

[Note: Other team members may include technologists, transcriptionists, residents, other fellows, attending pathologists, clinicians, administrators, and others.]

## V. Professionalism

### A. Courtesy and Collegiality

The fellow must learn to treat health care providers (including clinicians, nurses, other pathologists, technologists, transcriptionists, etc.), administrators, patients, and others courteously and respectfully. The fellow must learn to be collegial in all interactions with other members of the health care team.

### B. Professional Responsibility

The fellow must learn to take his/her professional responsibilities seriously and act accordingly. The fellow's professional responsibilities may include clinical service, teaching, administrative tasks, research, institutional tasks, and work with professional organizations. The fellow should strive to approach each of these responsibilities with enthusiasm and complete all tasks and assignments effectively and in a timely fashion.

## VI. Systems-Based Practice

### A. The Health Care System and the Role of Pathology

The fellow must acquire knowledge of practice and health care delivery systems and an awareness of the role of surgical pathology in the context of the greater health care system. The fellow will expand his/her working knowledge of different inpatient and outpatient delivery systems and the general regulatory and financial aspects of health care delivery. The fellow must learn the importance of providing effective and timely consultation to clinicians, advising health care providers in the provision of cost-effective care, and providing statistical and other data in support of quality care.

### B. General Laboratory Administration

The fellow will develop an understanding of the general administrative aspects of pathology practice. The fellow will learn to understand and apply the principles of quality control, quality assurance, and continuous quality improvement. The fellow will develop a working knowledge of laboratory staffing, laboratory instrumentation, workflow, turnaround time management, safety, customer service, regulatory accreditation, budget, and billing practices.

The Surgical Pathology fellow will achieve all competencies by completing a ten (10) months rotation working on the Surgical Pathology Service, functioning as a junior attending pathologist with **appropriate supervision and instruction provided by our senior faculty** and two (2) months of elective rotation to pursue subspecialty experience in focused areas of Pathology. During this time, the fellow

1. Takes on sign-out responsibility for a large number of surgical cases (approximately 3500 specimens/year) including the acquisition of knowledge for the collection, accessioning, grossing, the performance of microscopic evaluation, special and immunohistochemical stains, and the rendering of final pathologic diagnosis on the cases and discussion of the clinical implication on the patient management with the appropriate health care team members involved in the care of each patient.
2. Covers the intraoperative consultation/frozen section service on a rotating basis providing rapid diagnosis to the surgeons for the management of patient during surgery.
3. Presents in a number of intra- and interdepartmental conferences, including multiple tumor boards where patient management is discussed and decided by a multidisciplinary team and attends a daily departmental consensus conference for difficult and/or interesting surgical cases.
4. Participates in the quality assurance and administrative activities of the department.
5. Participates in the teaching of medical students and pathology residents as an intrinsic part of the fellowship
6. Participates in research activities on a collaborative project or case report with members of the Pathology or other clinical departments.
7. Expands their knowledge in subspecialty areas of his or her interest in surgical pathology. To fulfill this requirement, the surgical fellow is provided with two (2) months of elective time, during which the fellow may pursue specialized experiences in the department or at an outside institutions, as approved by the program director and Graduate Medical Education institutional office.

There is to be a progressive increase in the fellow's responsibility commensurate with his/her level of training. This increase in responsibility will include clinical, teaching and administrative responsibilities.

**Program Certifications:** The Surgical Pathology fellowship[ Program resides in the Department of Pathology that holds an ACGME accredited Residency Training Program in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and an ACGME accredited Fellowship Program in Cytopathology.

**Resources:**

Teaching Staff: The Surgical Pathology fellow works directly under the supervision of the Surgical Pathology faculty and is given direct guidance, and teaching from them. The Surgical Pathology faculty consists of 9 members, and interfaces with 4 members of the Clinical Pathology team listed below.

- Dr. Sana Tabbara: Program Director and Surgical Pathology, Breast, Gynecologic, Salivary Gland Pathology, Immunohistochemistry
- Dr. Arnold Schwartz: Lung and Bone Pathology

- Dr. Robert Jones: Neuropathology
- Dr. Patricia Latham: Liver Pathology
- Dr. Michael Stamatakos: Gynecologic, Breast Pathology
- Dr. M. Katayoon Rezaei: Genitourinary Pathology
- Dr. Samantha Easley: Head and Neck, Thyroid, Breast Pathology
- Dr. Lysandra Voltaggio: Gastrointestinal Pathology
- Dr. Alejandro Luiña-Contreras: Oncologic, Molecular Pathology
- Dr. Donald Karcher: Hematopathology, Flow Cytometry
- Dr. Louis DePalma: Hematopathology, Molecular Pathology
- Dr. Elsie Lee: Hematopathology
- Dr John Keiser: Microbiology

Facilities: The Surgical Pathology Fellowship offers advanced comprehensive training in diagnostic surgical pathology in the setting of a busy academic hospital. The Surgical Pathology Fellowship is based at the George Washington University Hospital Department of Pathology. The case material consists of 14,400 cases per year and is varied and includes representative specimens from essentially all organ systems. Numerous ancillary services, including immunohistochemistry (5,800 tests/year), electron microscopy, flow cytometry, and molecular diagnostics, are available on-site.

### **Educational Program-Basic Curriculum**

- 1a. Clinical rotation on the Surgical Pathology Service at GW hospital : 10 months
- 1b. Clinical elective rotation in subspecialty areas of Surgical Pathology: 2 months
- 1c. Participation in research activities on a collaborative project or case report with members of the Pathology or other clinical departments is encouraged.
- 1d. Participation in the quality assurance and administrative activities of the department is required; the fellow contributes to the program by collecting and analyzing data that is required for CAP accreditation of the Laboratory.
2. The Surgical Pathology Fellow is supervised by the fellowship program director and the teaching faculty in Surgical Pathology. Supervision includes patient care activities as well as teaching and research activities. The Surgical Pathology Fellow in turn supervises pathology residents and medical students and provides guidance to technicians and support staff.
3. The Surgical Pathology Fellow should master the specimen grossing procedures and the intraoperative frozen section technique.
4. The Surgical Pathology Fellow attends the weekly didactic lecture given by the faculty and participates in unknown conferences, journal clubs and interdepartmental conferences offered weekly in the department (6 hours/week).

**Evaluation:** Trainee evaluations covering all six competencies utilizing both objective and subjective methods derived from the ACGME toolbox and Pathology Quadrad suggestions.

**Subjective Evaluations:**

The Surgical pathology fellow is evaluated (E\*Value) biannually by the program director with input from the faculty members, residents and cytology staff. If the fellow's performance is perceived as unsatisfactory at anytime it is discussed in a timely fashion. Sharing face to face with the fellow any written evaluation by the evaluator is strongly encouraged. At the end of the year the fellow receives a global evaluation (360) from a clinician, histology staff and laboratory administrator. A final evaluation is written by the program director to the GME.

## **Evaluation Sample forms for Fellows**

**Office of Graduate Medical Education**  
**The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences**  
**Summative Evaluation and Confidential Verification/Reference Form**

*NOTE: This confidential final written evaluation will be maintained in the permanent personnel record of the resident and used to verify training for outside agencies.*

**Fellow's Name:**

**I. Verification of Training**

Dr. ----- successfully completed -----fellowship training at The George Washington University Medical Center as follows:

July 1, 200 - June 30, 200

**II. Disciplinary Action**

During the dates of training at this institution, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ was not subject to any institutional disciplinary action

**III. Ability to Practice Medicine**

*Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ has demonstrated sufficient professional ability to practice competently and without direct supervision in the field of \_\_\_\_\_*

**IV. Clinical Procedures/Privileges Requested**

The education of Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ received from our training program was sufficient for the practice of \_\_\_\_\_. Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ was recommended for the certifying examination administered by the American Board of \_\_\_\_\_

At the conclusion of Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ fellowship training, \_\_\_\_\_ was judged capable of performing the following procedures independently.

**V. Summative Evaluation:**

The following is derived from a composite of multiple evaluations by supervisors in this resident's rotations during his or her residency training.

The evaluation is based upon the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) General Competencies, which define the essential components of clinical competence.

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Superior	No Knowledge
Medical Knowledge				
Patient Care				
Professionalism				
Communication and Interpersonal Skills				
Practice Based Learning and Improvement				
Systems Based Practice				

**VI. Comments**

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ distinguished herself with her excellent diagnostic skills, fund of knowledge and dedication in teaching the residents. Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ is graduating with a high level of professional ability to practice competently and independently. On a personal level, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ is professional, personable and applies the highest moral and ethical standards in her daily work.

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Program Director Name/Title

Date

GLOBAL EVALUATION OF SURGICAL PATHOLOGY FELLOW

Name of Fellow: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Evaluator:

Position (please check one):

Physician\_\_\_\_\_ Technologist\_\_\_\_\_ Administrator\_\_\_\_\_ Secretary\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the extent to which you agree with each of the items below using the rating scale.

N/A = not applicable, 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly agree

- |  |     |   |   |
|--|-----|---|---|
| 1. Physician is friendly and courteous to staff.<br>3 4 5 6                  | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 2. Physician is friendly and courteous to patients.<br>3 4 5 6               | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 3. Physician is supportive of staff.<br>3 4 5 6                              | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 4. Physician is compassionate.<br>3 4 5 6                                    | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 5. Physician is attentive to staff needs and is helpful.<br>3 4 5 6          | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 6. Physician gets along well with staff.<br>3 4 5 6                          | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 7. Physician understands clinical procedures.<br>3 4 5 6                     | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 8. Physician is knowledgeable.<br>3 4 5 6                                    | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 9. Reports and notes are legible.<br>3 4 5 6                                 | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 10. Physician is ethical.<br>3 4 5 6   | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 11. Physician is punctual in the FNA clinic.<br>3 4 5 6                      | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 12. Physician is considerate by not assigning unreasonable tasks.<br>3 4 5 6 | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 13. Physician is professional.<br>3 4 5 6                                    | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 14. Physician is a good communicator.<br>3 4 5 6                             | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 15. Physician is willing to be present past 5 PM when necessary.<br>3 4 5 6  | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 16. Physician is willing to do his or her share of the work.<br>3 4 5 6      | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 17. Physician has good diagnostic skills.<br>3 4 5 6                         | N/A | 1 | 2 |

- |  |     |   |   |
|--|-----|---|---|
| 18. Physician is sensitive to culture, age, gender, and disability issues. | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 3 4 5 6  |     |   |   |
| 19. Physician practices cost-effective medicine.                           | N/A | 1 | 2 |
| 3 4 5 6  |     |   |   |

Comments:

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The above evaluation will be anonymously discussed with the fellow.

Return completed form to:  
Sana Tabbara, M.D.  
George Washington University  
Department of Pathology  
Ross Hall, 512  
2300 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC, 20037

**Department of Pathology  
The George Washington University Medical Center  
Fellow Evaluation of Surgical Pathology Program**

*Please evaluate the program according to the listed criteria. For any rating of Poor or Below Average, please explain in the Comments Section.*

	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
1. Physical working environment and adequacy of equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Cooperation of support staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Quality and mix of cases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Workload level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Scheduling of conferences and other educational activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Appropriateness of responsibilities given fellows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Overall educational value of the program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:
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Upon completion, please return by mail to:  
Sandra Boccanera  
2300 I Street, NW Ross Hall ste. 502  
Washington, DC 20037  
Or fax to: (202) 994-2618

**Department of Pathology  
The George Washington University Medical Center  
Fellow Evaluation of Surgical Pathology Faculty**

*Please evaluate the faculty member according to the listed criteria. For any rating of Poor or Below Average, please explain in the Comments Section.*

**Evaluation of (circle one): S. Tabbara, MD/ Katy Rezaei, MD/L. Voltaggio, MD/ A. Schwartz, MD, PhD/R. Jones, MD/ M. Stamatakos, MD/ S. Easley, MD/A. Luina-Contreras, MD/ P. Latham, MD.**

	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
1. Teaching Effectiveness: Ability to transmit knowledge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Challenge: Ability to challenge and stimulate fellows.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Direction: Appropriateness of the direction you were given.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Knowledge: Attending's apparent fund of relevant knowledge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Rapport: Attending's ability to work and communicate with fellows.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Dependability: Availability to provide assistance when requested.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Feedback: Quality and timeliness of feedback.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Encouragement: How well good performance is reinforced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Overall Assessment: Rate the Attending's overall contribution to program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Comments: (Please comment on any aspect of the Attending's performance.)</b> ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... .....
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Upon completion, please return by mail to:  
Sandra Boccanera  
2300 I Street, NW Ross Hall, Suite 502  
Washington, DC 20037  
Or fax to: (202) 994-2618

Measure of Educational Outcome  
Surgical Pathology Fellowship Graduate Survey

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Cytopathology Fellowship: \_\_\_\_\_

Cytopathology Board Certification: \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of pathology practice of current employment**

- Community Hospital
- Academic Institution
- Independent Laboratory
- Other

**How do you rate your fellowship experience in preparing you for your job?**

- Unsatisfactory
- Satisfactory
- Excellent

**Did the fellowship program accomplish the following?**

- |  |                              |                             |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Advanced training in diagnostic cytology                     | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Application of ancillary techniques to cytologic specimens   | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Performance of superficial Fine Needle Aspirations           | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Ability to handle challenging cases and difficult situations | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

**Comments and recommendations for Program improvement:**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Upon completion, please return in the enclosed envelope to:  
Sandra Boccanera  
2300 I Street, NW -Ross Hall- 502  
Washington, DC 20037  
Or fax to: (202) 994-2618