



NYCPM
New York College of Podiatric Medicine

General Anatomy Exams Go Digital: No Paper, No Waiting, Better Scores!



Pre-Clinical faculty (left to right) Drs. Moschella, Reidenberg and Kirchgessner celebrate the new all-digital anatomy exam.

The general anatomy exam given to first-year students this January represented another leap forward into the digital domain by NYCPM. The exam has heretofore been given in two parts: a written half and the practical/ dissections half (in which the answers were also written). The latter was divided into 25 stations that the students had to rotate through. That had to happen four times to accommodate all of the students, meaning that the sequestered students waiting to take the practical portion of the exam could wait for up to three hours after taking the written part of the exam.

To alleviate these problems, a Pre-Clinical Sciences team – Eileen Chusid, PhD, Dean of Pre-Clinical Sciences and Associate Professor; Joy Reidenberg, PhD, Professor and Director of Anatomy; Maria C. Moschella PhD, Assistant Professor; and Annette Kirchgessner, PhD, Associate Professor -- tackled revising the exam and making it digital. Dr. Reidenberg created a different way to give the exam. She increased the number of dissection stations in the practical to 50, and raised the number of questions on that portion to

50, one question per station. She prepared the written portion of the exam and asked her three colleagues on the team to collaborate on preparation of the practical portion. Both portions of the exam are now multiple choice and both are taken on the students' iPads – no paper involved.

Practical considerations abounded: would the iPads work in the basement? Would Dr. Reidenberg have all of the samples, and the right ones, needed for the 50 practical questions that are keyed to the specimens? Would 50 students fit in the room at one time? A mock practical was tested on the TAs, with success! The result? Students didn't have to wait between parts of the exam, and scored better this year with the new format; a full day of grading was saved besides.

It took a village to help bring the new exam into use. In addition to the four doctors mentioned above, the digital transformation was aided by Greg Martinez, Jeremy Rambarran and Ryan Williams of IT; Eugenia Villalona, Charlotte Hairston and Judiana Olivera, administrators in pre-clinical sciences, and Erica Benoit, Educational Technology & Assessment Project Manager.