



# Physicians & Social Responsibility

a 2-elective sequence in advocacy & activism  
for medical students

## **Q: What are these electives about?**

The responsibility of a physician is not only to deliver excellent care, but to work to change systems when they conspire to make it difficult to do the right thing. These 2 electives give med students tools to identify areas that need change and to work effectively to make that change happen. They also provide opportunities to reflect on healthcare-related volunteer and advocacy activities. These electives leverage your experiences to equip you to address the policies, systems, and assumptions underlying the health care system's inadequacies and injustices.

We developed these electives, "Physicians and Social Responsibility" [PSR] 1 & 2, to:

- help students see how physicians' responsibilities extend from individual patient care to caring about institutional, social, and global forces and contexts.
- encourage and equip students to act in ways that fulfill these responsibilities.
- provide opportunities to formulate and carry out a project designed to bring about change.

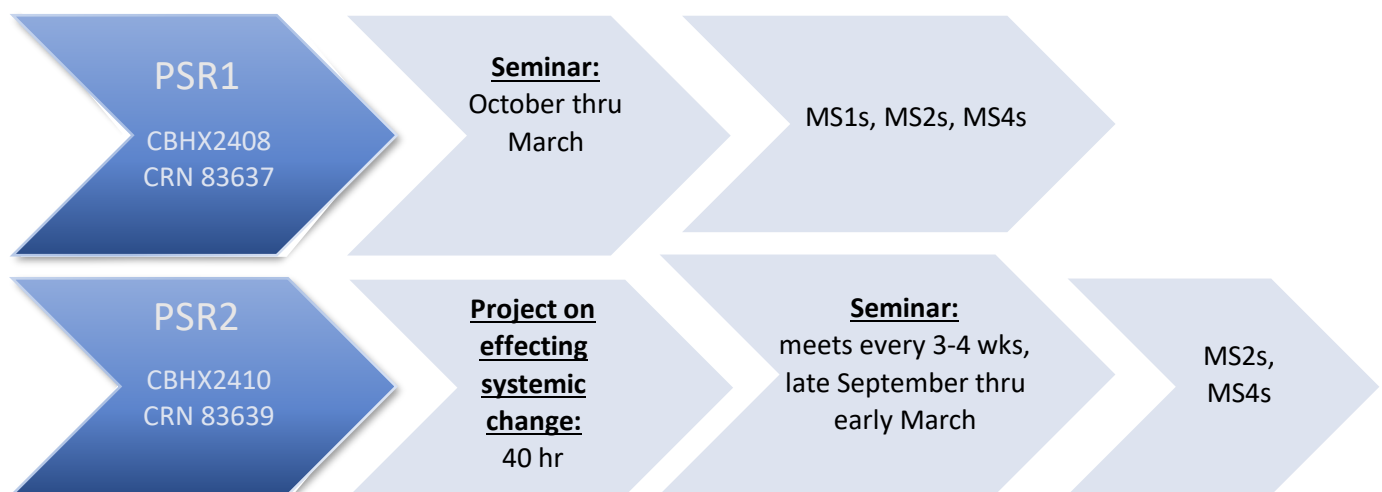
## **Q: How do the two electives differ?**

PSR1 (CBHX2408) is a 1-credit seminar addressing fundamentals. Topics include health systems & finance; socio-economic disparities in health & illness; history, impact, and challenges of safety net care; basic advocacy skills; global health inequities; environmental issues in health; refugee & immigrant health. Topics vary year to year.

PSR2 (CBHX2410, 2 credits) includes a project to effect change and seminars on levels of systems change and advocacy skills for physicians. The project requires 40 hours outside of class. The project may be based on a service-learning site (with instructor approval), but need not be.

## **Q: When is the best time to take these electives?**

You can take PSR1 and PSR2 any year except when you are an MS3. One approach that works well with students is to take PSR1 when you are an MS1, and (if interested) PSR2 when you are an MS2; this gives you the chance to work on your project in the summer between your first two years. Other options are possible, depending on your schedule.



# PHYSICIANS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FAQs

**Q: When are the seminars?**

Each elective includes an 8-session (2-hr/session) seminar on Wednesday afternoons, 1:15-3:15. We avoid meeting immediately before exam days.

**Q: Can I just take PSR1?**

Yes.

**Q: Can I just take PSR2?**

Yes.

**Q: What kinds of projects qualify for PSR2?**

Projects may be focused exclusively on a specific advocacy effort or may also include clinical service in settings providing care for the marginalized (e.g., refugees, the homeless, the uninsured, developing countries) or policy work for professional organizations, advocacy groups, or health care institutions. Projects must directly relate to health care. We strongly encourage you to develop an advocacy project in partnership with existing organizations or advocates, and we'll assign you a course faculty mentor to help guide you.

**Q: Who teaches the electives?**

Core faculty members are:

James Dwyer, PhD (Director, PSR 1)

Rachel Fabi, PhD, MD (Director, PSR 2)

Amy Caruso Brown, MD, MSc

All of us are reachable by email. A faculty member will be identified to oversee your PSR 2 advocacy experience.

**Q: How is this graded?**

P/F with a narrative; like other, non-clinical concurrent electives.

**Q: How do I register?**

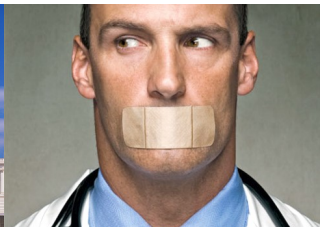
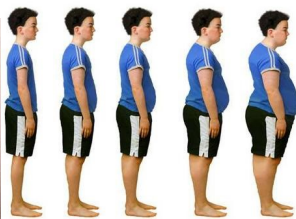
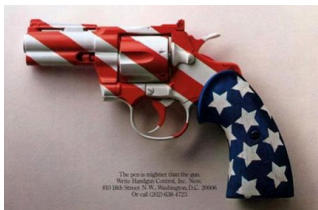
PSR1 (CBHX2408/CRN 83637) and PSR2 (CBHX2410/CRN 83639) are listed on My Upstate.

If you have difficulty registering, please contact Kathy Szczech at [szczechk@upstate.edu](mailto:szczechk@upstate.edu).

**Q: Who do I talk with if I still have questions?**

Email Dr. Dwyer (PSR 1 Director) or Dr. Rachel Fabi (PSR 2 Director).

Rev 1.16.20



GUN VIOLENCE

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ADVOCACY

GAG ORDERS

GLOBAL HEALTH

## PSR DATES

**8 WEDNESDAYS, GENERALLY 1:15-3:15**